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"ECONOMIC NEWS FROM RUSSIA IN THE WASHINGTON POST AND
THE OTTAWA CITIZEN: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS"

by

Alexandre Drojjine, Dip. of International Journalism

A thesis submitted to
the faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Journalism
School of Journalism and Communication

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
July, 1997

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and Research acceptance of the thesis

submitted by Alexandre Drojjine, Dip. of International Journalism
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Journalism

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1997

ABSTRACT

This work examined and compared post-Cold war coverage of economic affairs in the Russian Federation by the *Washington Post* and the *Ottawa Citizen*. Systematic content analysis was undertaken to document the nature of media portrayal and to determine whether the major patterns of coverage were affected by changes in political climate and by the relations between the countries. The data obtained revealed that the coverage of the current ambiguous transitional period of the Russian economy in the two newspapers was remarkably similar and overwhelmingly superficial, politically fixated, and ignorant of specific economic problems. The findings of this case study suggested that selection and substantial treatment of foreign news in the North American press is heavily influenced by organizational routines and traditional news values, and that neither the nature of the topics, nor the geographic focus of coverage seem to have a significant effect on the patterns of coverage.

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PREFACE

The importance of international news presented by the mass media and its crucial role in forming public opinion and influencing the process of decision-making at both the governmental and the individual level are almost axiomatic and have been widely discussed among politicians and communication scholars.¹ Recognizing its importance, a great deal of international communication research has developed over the last few decades. The majority of this research, however, has been primarily concerned with either identification of the determinants of foreign news selection (Gatekeeper research), or the international - or more precisely global - news flows, the latter being inspired by UNESCO and the debate over the New World Information and Communication Order. Relatively little attention has been paid to the analysis of news coverage between individual countries, and when this analysis has occurred, it has been overwhelmingly focused on the coverage of particular events (elections, military conflicts, political assassinations etc.) in Third World countries by the media of the First World.

While this North-South dimension is well explored by communication researchers, it is surprising that very few attempts have been made to pay equal attention to the East-West axis of global communication. Considering the former

¹ See for example Cohen, B. *The Press and Foreign Policy*, (1963); Schlitz, T., L. Sigelman, and R. Neal, Perspective of Managing Editors on Coverage of Foreign Policy News, *Journalism Quarterly*, vol. 50 (Winter, 1973); Risse-Kappen, T., Public Opinion, Domestic Structure, and Foreign Policy in Liberal democracies, *World Politics*, vol. 43 (1991)

strategic role of the Soviet Union in the global balance of power, and with the dramatic change of the international environment after the collapse of Communism and the end of Cold War, it is striking that the communication link between the East and the West has largely been ignored. Apart from the issues of international security and trade, the end of the Cold War, as is discussed below, has challenged the old model of international communication. How have the Western media “caught up” to the new realities of a world deprived of the two confronting political systems? Have they abandoned the old stereotypes? What are the new priorities? What aspects of life in the countries, no longer hidden behind the ‘iron curtain’, are they willing to cover? To what extent? These and many other questions raised by popular political writers and discussed by the media practitioners ² have failed (with few notable exceptions) to draw the attention of communication researchers. The purpose of this work is to partly fill this gap in foreign news research by looking at the post-Cold War performance of two major newspapers of two North American capital cities, the *Washington Post* and the *Ottawa Citizen* by conducting a quantitative analysis of their coverage of economic affairs in the Russian Federation.

² See such works as Izyumov, A., Before and After Glasnost, *Media Studies Journal*, (Fall, 1995); Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, *The Media and Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War World*, Columbia University (1993); Global News After the Cold War, *Media Studies Journal* (Fall, 1993)

I. Introduction

Introduction

The “shrinking world” metaphor is probably the most frequently used to describe global developments of the second half of the twentieth century. Newly improved and highly advanced transportation and communication systems have made possible an unprecedented level of international co-operation in almost every sphere of human activity, which in turn, has greatly increased the interdependence of individual countries. The impact of the oil crisis of 1973-74 on the Western world and the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident for Eastern Europe are but two examples. As much as our daily lives depend on developments in foreign lands, our dependence on the mass media³ for information about these developments is even greater. While we have a certain power to verify newspaper reports on the events in our local community, we have no choice but to rely almost exclusively on the news media for information on complex and fast-moving foreign affairs. Moreover, after the Vietnam war and events like Watergate and the Iran-Contras affair, the credibility of government has been significantly undermined, whereas the media has gained additional power and their rating for reliability in public opinion polls has increased. All this led an American communication scholar Barry Rubin to conclude that “...the media have become the most important single institution in shaping our views of the outside world.” (Rubin, 1977)

³ The US and Canadian mass media are considered here as a unified “North American media system”, generally characterized by the same patterns. The specific differences between the two countries’ foreign coverage are discussed in later chapters.

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Western democracy, at least its historical model, implies that the people decide on the general direction of foreign policy, be that through direct referendum on a particular issue, or indirectly by electing the legislators and the heads of state. A well-informed public, therefore, "is essential to a political system based on humanistic values and democratic principles" (Kaplan, 1979). Being the primary source of information on contemporary international events, the media assume responsibility to provide the nation with the best possible information on international affairs. Apart from being business organizations, the media perform an important public service. Fair and accurate reporting of foreign news is one of the preconditions of an effective foreign policy, since, besides everything else, the legislators themselves receive much of their data on overseas events through the press and television. It follows that the impact on the direction of the foreign policy is particularly great among newspapers based in capital cities. While the significant role of the mass media in educating the public and directly influencing the process of decision-making on international issues is generally recognized and rarely, if ever, challenged, their success in carrying out this role is much more problematic.

Foreign news coverage is perhaps the weakest point of the North American mass media. Downfalls and shortcomings of the press and television in providing an adequate and reliable picture of the outside world are serious, numerous, and well-

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documented.⁴ The general consensus of concerned observers is that the public is dramatically ill-informed on international affairs.

First of all, the Western media have been criticized for their lack of foreign coverage. There has been a constant decline in the amount of international news reporting and in the number of foreign correspondents in the past three decades. While the independence of African and Asian states and the collapse of the Communist bloc greatly extended the territory to cover, the actual coverage has at best remained unchanged, but in most cases has decreased (Rubin, 1977; Emery, 1989). Another frequently mentioned complaint is that foreign news is often oversimplified and treated on a superficial basis, or to put it another way, there is an acute lack of evaluation and analysis of often-times very complex and not-so-obvious international developments. While this problem is also characteristic of domestic coverage, it is stressed that the reporting of events from abroad, by its very nature, is an exercise in translation and therefore requires substantial explanation (IPI: The Flow of News, 1972). Editors and journalists are also accused of playing up the sensational and “human interest” angles of the stories, assuming that the “mass” audience does not want deep and serious analysis. This leads to an otherwise unjustified emphasis on conflicts and controversy, involvement of elite personalities, and negativism.

⁴ The most coherent and well-supported examples of such criticism can be found in: Lent, J., Foreign News in American Media, *Journal of Communication*, vol. 27, no 4 (1977); Rubin, B., International News and the American Media, *The Washington Papers*, vol. 49 (1977); Rosenblum, M., *Who Stole the News? Why We Can't Keep Up with What Happens in the World and What We Can Do about It* (1993)

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Further, foreign coverage is characterized by ethnocentrism (direct involvement of the home country in the events abroad) and proximity limitations (geographic, economic, or cultural), which result in a great imbalance in the distribution of attention among different world regions (Gerbner and Marvanyi, 1977; van Dijk, 1984). Along the same lines follows “domesticism”, or the tendency to cover foreign events and see the world through the comfortable but distorting lens of a country’s own experience. The next charge is the uniformity of content. The majority of news outlets tend to pick up on and develop the same “safe” story of the day (usually determined by a leading wire service), sacrificing thematic diversity of global issues.

Persistence and reinforcement of stereotypes and clichés is another pitfall frequently pointed out. The stereotypes usually have deep political and historical roots and heavily affect coverage by framing and modifying reality to fit the preexistent “approved” picture. The obligatory compatibility with “national interests” and framing of the news in the Western ideological or cultural perspective leaves no room for a meaningful and accurate reflection of the multiplicity of a contradictory and unpredictable world, and often leads to stereotyped accounts of a limited scope of events. Similarly, a few major global political trends, like the tension between nuclear superpowers, often set the general ideological framework within which any foreign news - economic, cultural or environmental - is then being reported.

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In his speech to the Inter-American Publisher Association, Peter Kann singled out foreign coverage for special criticism. He accused it of employing double standards:

Our media don't call the mayors of home towns "corrupt" without having facts to back it up. The same ought to apply in writing about foreign leaders. The US media has become sensitive to stereotyping ethnic groups in our own society. We ought to stop stereotyping whole societies abroad. We can't cover our own society as a series of crises, and we ought not to do it in other countries (Kann, 1994).

Finally, international news has been blamed for focusing on short-term events rather than long-term processes. Highlighting immediate "objective" results, the media neglect causes and consequences which may sometimes be more important than the event itself. Failing to provide some type of background commentary or to follow up on long-term trends, the news media present entertaining and highly dramatized content, yet an incoherent and disjointed view of the world. In other words, by presenting spotty, narrowly defined and uneven foreign news coverage, the North American media have failed to fulfill their public duty to properly inform and educate the people.

However serious the charges, the "crimes" and faults of foreign news coverage are not, of course, a product of a Fourth Estate conspiracy against the people. Foreign news content is heavily affected by professional routines, technical difficulties, increased emphasis on profitability, institutional pressure, personal idiosyncrasies or general societal and political factors. Either seen as naturally

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inherent in the news gathering process, or as imposed by artificially created standards, the downfalls of the press have been traditionally explained by a number of factors, which can be conditionally divided into two major categories: *organizational* and *ideological* constraints.⁵ Both categories result in the complication of international reporting in terms of *availability* of the news, *space* allocation, and *content* focus.

First, organizational constraints have to do with the nature of the business of mass media as well as with technical-economic considerations. Foreign news is influenced by mass consumption and the general market rules apply to the full extent: only a few outlets can afford to deviate from the mainstream news market, which results in its inevitable homogenization. The North American press is privately owned, advertising sponsored and operates within a certain established publishing cycle. "Economics determine the available newshole for foreign coverage, while organizational practices encourage the selection of certain kinds of events" (Robinson, 1976). The inaccessibility of sources, unavailability of transmission facilities, increasing costs of maintaining overseas bureaus, and lack of adequately trained journalists make the task of foreign reporting much more difficult compared to domestic coverage. And in the end, news is only a commodity that must catch "readers' interest" which, in turn, is defined in terms of what will "sell". The general assumption, however, is that the demand for international affairs coverage is

⁵ For *general* consideration of constraints affecting foreign news coverage see: Epstein, 1974; Desmond, 1978; Rosenblum, 1979; Gaunt, 1990. The outcome of the specific *organizational* constrain will be discussed in more details below.

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extremely low on the market (Hess, 1996). Newspaper publishers and editors are convinced that their audiences are not particularly interested in what goes on in distant lands.

Secondly, the media are not an isolated institution, but are embedded in a larger socio-political context. Ideological constraints stem from geopolitical, historical, and to a certain extent, cultural backgrounds. The mass media have to adjust to the interests of national security and international diplomacy. They are an inseparable part of the Western social system and therefore necessarily carry its values, reflect the capitalist liberal ideology, and - whether consciously or unconsciously - work to reinforce the status-quo. The press and television operate in general sociocognitive frameworks which determine certain news-value models, for example a fight against Communism or terrorism (van Dijk, 1988).

The Cold War ideology set the framework for international coverage, which governed the flow of information in terms of both certain expectations from foreign correspondents in their home papers and the availability of information in the Soviet bloc countries. On the one hand, the anti-Communist consensus dominated and distorted foreign affairs coverage for a long time. On the other hand, censorship and persuasive propaganda activities of many foreign governments have long impinged upon the fair and accurate coverage of events in those countries. Journalists have been denied access to information and the right to report on certain events and facts. They have often been threatened, harassed and deported, which, of course, has affected their performance (IPI Surveys, 1972; Fascell, 1979; Bassow, 1989).

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Although difficulties of foreign news reporting are great and obvious, the validity of many of the explanations and justifications of the media's poor performance described above can now be challenged. Some of the traditional "objective constraints" (both organizational and ideological) in these arguments are no longer acceptable, particularly in regard to the specific focus of this case study: contemporary coverage of economic affairs in Russia by major Canadian and American capital newspapers.

The collection and transmission of print information today is technically and technologically easy. Both papers chosen for this analysis, the *Washington Post* and the *Ottawa Citizen*, to a large extent originate their foreign coverage and have Moscow bureaus, and therefore are less dependent on the syndicated news services. Moreover, Moscow does host the third largest foreign press-corps in the world (Cohen, 1995), and is by no means on the margins of international communications. Conversely, since the country accumulates a massive amount of coverage in the North American media, Russia can be considered as rather representative of foreign news reporting as a whole. Further, economic information should be more accurate and precise, and less subject to political and ideological influences than other information, since everybody's material well-being depends on availability of undistorted and reliable data. In addition, the popular assumption that the reading audience is indifferent to international events has been questioned on more than one occasion by empirical researchers (Rosenblum, 1979; Soderlung et al., 1988; Hess,

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1996). Finally, with the collapse of the Communist regime in Russia, state censorship and propaganda interference in the business of foreign media have largely disappeared.

But most importantly, now, as the East-West competition and confrontation is significantly reduced, many of the ideological constraints seem to have no justification. The whole notion of foreign coverage has changed with the disappearance of the bipolar world. Formerly, the US - Soviet competition consciously and unconsciously dominated government policies, affecting the bent of newspaper coverage as well. It created a considerable market for foreign coverage, since virtually any foreign story could have some East-West, and therefore war-peace resonance (Gwertzman, 1993). As Grunwald puts it, "The Cold War outlook could turn anything into an issue of national interest". But, he continues, this easy link has since disappeared (Grunwald, 1993). Today, there is no danger that some new Central American junta will seek support from the Soviet Communist regime, and the influence of the Communist faction in European Parliaments is not quite as important. The anti-Communist frame of reference has been removed and foreign news coverage should be based on new principles and values. A rather long quotation by Bernard Gwertzman addressing new realities and the demand for new journalism specifically in regard to the international economic coverage seems to be appropriate:

We have been quietly and not so quietly urging more and more stories on economic affairs for the foreign report. Every correspondent must make a very major effort to become literate in economic affairs, to be able to write about macroeconomic trends such as monetary policies, as well as on micro stories such as new business in former Communist states. It is now just as important for a

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foreign correspondent to understand economics as it has been to study exotic foreign languages.

On a broad, strategic, level, we want to know how countries are doing in supplying their people's needs and wants and how they do it. [...] And special attention must continue to be paid to the economies of the former Communist states of the Soviet union and Eastern Europe (1993).

In recent years, a number of communication scholars and media practitioners have called for revision and re-evaluation of media performance in the post-Cold War environment.⁶ In contrast to the wide theoretical and political discussion, little empirical research has been done to actually test these anticipated changes in Western media approach. The present study aims to contribute to this on-going discussion. It is designed to collect empirical data that will help to answer the question: Is this dramatic change in the global political situation actually being reflected on the pages of newspapers, and how do the media perform their duty under these new circumstances? From the outset this research is concerned with the comparison of the amount, structure, type and content of the economic information on Russia, collected and disseminated by the *Washington Post* and the *Ottawa Citizen*.

⁶ See Kirtz, B., *Covering Foreign News Is Different Now*, *Editor and Publisher*, New York (March 31, 1990); Grunwald, H., *The Post-Cold War Press*, *Foreign Affairs* vol. 72, no 3, New York (1993); Everette, D., *Images of the Soviet Union in the US: some impressions and an agenda for research* in Everette E. D., G. Gerbner, and Y. N. Zassoursky, (Eds.), *Beyond the Cold War: Soviet and American Media Images*, Newbury park, Sage (1991)

II. Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the general theories of news values and content, as well as on the findings of previous researchers in the field of foreign news coverage. A general overview of the main assumptions concerned with the nature of the values and structural and environmental influences that affect international news content is crucial in defining the field of inquiry and in indicating the place of this particular analysis in a wider context of international communication research. But most importantly, the findings of available works serve as a necessary starting point and valuable basis to generate hypotheses tested in the present study.

A review of the body of related literature did not reveal any research attempting to compare the post-Cold War economic coverage of Russia by Canadian and American newspapers. However a significant number of studies with general relevance to this specific focus have been published. They can be conventionally divided into four main categories.

Gatekeeper Research

“Gatekeeper” research is a broad term used to describe a field of communication studies concerned with the identification of criteria for news selection and the general constraints affecting this selection. The classical 1950 study by David Manning White suggests that a wire editor at a small mid-western newspaper sets the

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standard for coverage by selecting news based on his subjective set of personal experiences, attitudes and expectations. Since White, however, the gatekeeper scholars have gone a long way to investigate a number of determining factors, such as the news organization production requirements and bureaucratic routines, and further, have exposed and examined external variables such as customer needs and the impact of the raw material sources. Gertrude Joch Robinson traces back the evolution of gatekeeper research, pointing to three subsequent periods or stages in its development: individualistic, institutional and cybernetic studies.

In a quarter of a century gatekeeper research has moved from static linear to dynamic institutional and cybernetic models to explain the process of news selection. To develop these models there have been taxonomic studies describing the behavior of different kinds of gatekeepers as well as research probing the interrelationships between different segments in the news stream (Robinson, 1973).

While the early researchers were primarily concerned with understanding the foreign news selection process, the later ones turned to predictions. Numerous studies developed over the last four decades have differed in many respects, but they have shared the fundamental assumption that certain characteristics have made the flow of news stable and predictable over time. Thomas J. Ahern (1984) suggests a useful division of the related research into two main categories: 1) the purely gatekeeper approach and 2) the logistics approach. The former is primarily based on psychological theory and factors initially codified by Galtung and Ruge (1965). It examines the personal and institutional criteria under which items are selected as newsworthy. The logistics approach considers newsgathering as a *production* rather

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than a selection process and focuses on economic, political and ideological factors affecting the news flow outside the chain of personal gatekeepers. Ahern's analysis of three elite US newspapers led him to conclude that the two approaches complement one another, and certain characteristics of foreign news influence the volume and direction of the international news flow at both gatekeeper and logistics levels (Ahern, 1984).

Whatever classification is used, theoretical studies and further empirical research ⁷ have identified and tested a significant number of foreign news "predictors".

Galtung and Ruge (1965) suggested that events tend to become news if they meet the following conditions: intensity, threshold, continuity, unexpectedness, unambiguity or simplification, meaningfulness (relevance to the Western interests), consonance (predictability or desirability), elitism (involvement of elite people or nations), negativism, and personalization (events as individual acts of people instead of the result of social forces).

In addition to the factors inherent in the news process (timeliness, simplification, identification, sensationalism, and cultural and geographic proximity) Ostgaard (1965) introduced economic and political factors such as government control of media, ownership, transmission costs and bureau location. Rosengren

⁷ - For results of the empirical research testing the news-factors suggested by Galtung and Ruge see Peterson, S., Foreign News Gatekeepers and Criteria of Newsworthiness, *Journalism Quarterly*, Iowa City (Spring, 1979) and Smith, R. F., On the Structure of Foreign News: A Comparison of the New York Times and Indian White Papers, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 6, London, Sage (1969)

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(1974) discussed such factors as the degree of importance of the event, the physical or cultural distance, and the level of trade between the countries.

Hester (1973) further extended the list of determinants of the international news flow to include the hierarchy of nations (according to size, population, GNP, stability of political system etc.), cultural affinities (common language, migration etc.), and economic association (amount of trade between the countries, foreign aid etc.). Chang, Shoemaker and Brendlinger (1987) also found potential for social change and normative deviance to be important predictors of the coverage of foreign events in the US media.

Because the present work concentrates on the content of the news, it is not primarily concerned with tracing organizational, economic, or social processes through which the content becomes news. However, certain characteristics of newsworthiness identified by gatekeeper researchers can be usefully applied to this case study.

International Coverage

As previously noted, there is a great deal of research concerned with the issues of international communication. Although very few works are of direct relevance to the topic of this study, many conclusions of previous researchers may have some general implications. While the great focus and subject diversity of

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available material make the strict classification very difficult, for the purpose of this analysis findings of several streams of research should be considered.

The political controversy and scholarly debate over the New World Information and Communication Order ⁸ stimulated a number of studies examining quantity, quality and direction of news flows between the nations. The documented imbalance in the international news flow need not be analyzed here, however some characteristics of the information being delivered *into* the North American continent are important. The study by the International Association for Mass Communication Research (UNESCO, 1985) found that terrorism, human rights, and ethnic antagonism are the themes most frequently reported by the American mass media from abroad. North America dominates the news in terms of region covered and the nationality of the main actor, followed by Western Europe and the Middle East. Domestic and international politics, military affairs, and crime were found to be the main topics reported. Socialist countries of Eastern Europe were identified by this study as “areas of invisibility”. Stevenson and Shaw’s report (1984) demonstrates that foreign news in the American media is uneven, sketchy and dominated by hard news of international affairs and politics. The thesis of “invisible socialists” was also supported by Gerbner and Marvanyi (1977) who found that events in North America, Western Europe, and the Middle and Far East occupy over two thirds of the US foreign news.

⁸ The tenets of this debate is discussed in much detail in Richstad, J. and Anderson, M.H., (Eds.) *Crisis in International News*, New York, Columbia University Press (1981)

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In the wake of the “free flow” controversy a number of studies have looked specifically at the coverage of the Third World. The famous cliché introduced by Mort Rosenblum (1979) describes reporting on the Third World as a series of “coups and earthquakes”. Bary Rubin has shown that editorial and technical pressures, and cultural differences inevitably lead to a focus on crisis without examining “causes of conflict, analysis of important political and economic factors, and preparation of the audience for possible future developments” (Rubin, 1977). Teun van Dijk (1988) points to the tendency in the Western press to pay too much attention to Western-related topics and actors, and to the standardized and stereotypical nature of coverage. A survey of leading Canadian dailies (Walker, 1989) found the coverage of the Third World episodic, cursory, Western-oriented, politically fixated and reluctant to comment on and explain the issues.

Different properties of foreign coverage have been extensively analyzed in terms of volume, source, topics, themes, subject, type of medium, and other variables. Overall it has been repeatedly characterized as crisis-, event-, and politically-oriented, personalized, generalized, superficial, and sensational (Rubin, 1977; Pfaff, 1981; Schroeder, 1980, Rosenblum, 1993; Hachten, 1985; Epstein, 1974). Several authors suggest that international news coverage is significantly determined by considerations of international diplomacy and national government policy (Lent, 1977; Hachten, 1981). Yoel Cohen (1995) explores and confirms the elitism hypothesis in terms of uneven distribution of foreign press corps. Hess (1996) divides the news world into “constant” and “crisis” regions demonstrating that only 6

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countries (Russia, UK, Israel, Germany, France and Japan) receive constant coverage in the US media. In terms of the subject Hess finds that top priority is given to combat, domestic government and diplomacy. Emery (1989) reveals that in the US press, the size of the foreign “newshole” (a percentage of the total newspaper content, excluding advertising, devoted to international news) from 1977 to 1988 decreased from 10.2% to 2.6%. His study shows that the *Washington Post* had the biggest (5.4%) international “newshole” among all American elite newspapers.

A great body of research focuses on the crucial role of the world news agencies in determining events, actors, issues and regions covered by other media, and the secondary role of newspapers’ foreign correspondents, who are expected to provide background and develop themes imposed by wire services (Weaver and Wilhoit, 1984; Richstad, 1981; Tunstall, 1981). However, Chang (1991) and Emery (1989) demonstrate that the *Washington Post* tends to rely exclusively on its own correspondents and special contributors and runs very few foreign items based on information from news agencies. While confirmed data on the *Ottawa Citizen* are unavailable, some studies suggest that in Canada even the prestige press rely heavily on the wire services for foreign stories (Walker, 1989; Royal Commission, 1981).

A number of researchers have assessed international coverage from the point of view of the medium. While public opinion polls demonstrate that most people tend to gather their knowledge of international affairs primarily from television, analysis proves that the newspapers’ presentation of the world is better both in quantity and quality (Rubin, 1977; Walker, 1989; Hess, 1996; GCJ, 1989).

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Television, by its nature, focuses on visual elements: riots, battles, natural disasters etc. Ideas are simply not photogenic. Furthermore, the pace of the broadcast does not allow for discussion of long-term sophisticated problems and trends. TV goes lightly and quickly over immediate issues without sufficient follow-up or any consideration of conceptual matters. Laura Hendrickson (1989) compared foreign news coverage by the two media and found that reliance on newspapers has a positive effect while reliance on TV has a stronger negative effect on the complexity of one's perspective on international relations (Hendrickson, 1989)

Newspapers editors' perspective on the coverage of international affairs has been studied both in Canada and the US. Survey results show that editors in the two countries believe that newspapers have a greater influence on policy than other mass media; they evaluate press performance as very good, and feel the lack of reader's interest in international news (Schiltz et al, 1982; Soderlung et al, 1991; Schroeder, 1980).

When comparing the foreign coverage in the US and Canadian news media, researchers find similarities rather than gross differences (Soderlung, 1988). This is explained by the sameness in the media systems' patterns of ownership, internal structure, and operations. However several specificities have been documented. Robinson (1976) notices that foreign news in Canada is a much more important category than in the US, occupying more than double the space of the total newshole. A lack of Canadian perspective and a tendency to "see the world through the US eyes" have been repeatedly emphasized (Senate Committee, 1969; Royal

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Commission, 1981). Schroeder (1980) points out that the majority of foreign stories printed in Canadian newspapers are written by American, British and French news agencies. In terms of the story type, Schroeder finds a disproportionately great amount of short and cursory straight news items. Canadian coverage is characterized by the absence of investigation and interpretation and the publication of very few backgrounders, columns or editorial pieces on international issues. Walker (1989) reports the recent tendency in the Canadian press to re-print foreign features from the U.S. newspapers. It may be concluded that an average Canadian paper presents a broader, but more superficial picture of the world than its American counterpart.

Economic Coverage

Economic discourse in the mass media is a relatively new phenomenon. Mike Emission (1983) traces the first use of the word “economy” with its contemporary definition back to the end of the 1930s, however it was not until the 1970s that television and the press recognized the vital importance of economic issues and gave them prominence. Only in the 1980s did economic stories regularly make it to the front pages and across national borders. This relative immaturity, terminological complexity, and initially non-controversial nature of economic reporting put it on the margins of communication research. There is no substantial body of literature on this topic. Apart from journalism textbooks and handbooks on how to read financial

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pages, very few authors have analyzed the patterns of economic coverage either quantitatively or qualitatively. Nevertheless, several important observations can be made.

Insignificant in amount and narrow in focus, coverage of the economy of the 1950s and 1960s, was shaken in 1971 by Richard Nixon's decision to take the dollar off the gold standard. Americans realized that their currency and economy were linked to the global economy, and the media responded promptly to this new realization. Following shortly, the coverage of the oil embargo consolidated the position of economic news (Parsons, 1990; Rosenblum, 1993). In the 1980s the introduction of Reagan's supply-side economic policy directly affected every sector of American society and increased the common understanding of the interdependence of the world markets. It gave the economic news top priority and ever since then, the space for economics on the front pages has been secured. Supply-side policies also stimulated a greater focus on international economic news which previously had not been considered a separate beat (Bonafede, 1981).

Exaggerated media focus on the markets, in turn, increased the markets' ability to influence policy (Gittins, 1995). However, the attention of economic reporters at the international level was devoted exclusively to the developments and influences of highly advanced capitalist markets. Less developed or non-capitalist countries continue to be covered by "police reporters far from home" (Rosenblum, 1993), and economic issues always give way to issues of politics, military and defense topics, and diplomacy, and are usually dealt with only insofar as they directly affect

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interests of leading Western economies. This leads to a dangerous lack of profound understanding of long-term global economic trends. As Rosenblum puts it “If American journalists are sometimes confused about international economies, so are a lot American politicians who make decisions about it” (1993).

Criticisms of economic coverage fall into the same line of general media criticism. Kendall accuses economic reports of lacking balance, emphasizing the topical over the substantial, and using frightening headlines (cited in Williams, 1975). Stein criticizes the overuse of the word “crisis”, often when there is no substantial evidence to support the claim (ibid.). Gittins points out that “costs get more attention than benefits; the media tend to highlight problems rather than solutions” (1995). And finally television, once again, is considered to be the least effective purveyor of economic information (Bonafede, 1981). While problems of economic coverage are similar to those of general media coverage, its major positive trends and characteristics are quite different.

Unlike general domestic or international coverage, the boom in economic reporting over the last two decades has created a market for specialists rather than generalists, stimulating the micro-orientation of publications. Specific requirements of the financial markets and businesses have generated the demand for in-depth and particular rather than superficial and general information. Meeting these requirements, the coverage of economic issues has acquired a clearly expressed tendency for disaggregation and specialization (Parsons, 1989). The greatly expanded market for reliable economic news has dictated that the quality of the

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“product” be improved, i.e. news become specific, accurate and detailed. While this rule tends to be generally followed by the quality newspapers in their coverage of domestic economies, its application to overseas events is more than questionable.

Coverage of Russia

Russia (or earlier the Soviet Union) has traditionally attracted much attention from both the Western media and media scholars. The latter have published a great deal about the Russian media system, Russian coverage of the West, government propaganda, censorship, and harassment of journalists.⁹ Considerably less attention has been paid to the analysis of Western perceptions of Russia and to the image of the country constructed by the American press and television. A few notable studies were carried out right after the end of the World War II and at the beginning of the Cold War.

Martin Kriesberg (1946) analyzed the coverage of the Soviet Union in the *New York Times* from 1918 to 1946. He discovered that the nature of the themes, the amount of attention, and the manner of reporting news were determined by the relationship between American and Soviet interests and not by journalistic values of objectivity. He found that news that placed the Soviet Union in an unfavorable light

⁹ See Abshire, D., *International Broadcasting: A New Dimension of Western Diplomacy* in Fascell, D. B. (Ed.), *International News: Freedom Under Attack*, Beverly Hills, Sage (1979); Bassow, W., *The Moscow Correspondents: Reporting on Russia from the Revolution to Glasnost*, New York, Paragon House (1989); Stevens, E., *This is Russia - Un-Censored* (1951)

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received more attention than news that was sympathetic, and concluded that *Times* reporting on Russia had a strong tendency to be “Pollyanna, climactic and opportunistic” (Kriesberg, 1946). In 1948 Simmons surveyed the coverage of Russia in 25 American large-city dailies. His overall conclusion was that the US press has contributed significantly to the confrontation between world superpowers by inadequate and unfair reporting on the events from the Soviet Union (Simmons, 1948). Cohen describes the prevailing image of the Soviet Union created by American mass media as a crisis-ridden, decaying caricature system; a stagnant and unworkable economy; a cynical, sick society; with a reckless, paralyzed leadership (Cohen, 1985). He suggests three partial explanations for such an inadequate picture: Soviet secretiveness, lack of journalists-specialists in Soviet affairs, and the “media’s tendency to assume the worst about the Soviet Union” (Cohen, 1985).

While these studies are obviously outdated (at least historical and political circumstances that brought them to light have changed), contemporary works offer more reflective speculations than analysis and research data. Although the end of ideological pressures, censorship, and information shortages was declared and welcomed, the reflection of the new era in media performance has passed overwhelmingly unstudied and unnoticed. Again there are a few notable but inconsistent exceptions.

Riffe et al. (1993) finds that, from 1978 to 1993, the amount of borrowed news (material first disseminated by and attributed to another news organization) from the former Communist countries dropped dramatically. That trend, first of all,

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reflects the increased availability of sources other than official state documents. In the wake of Gorbachev's years of *perestroika* and *glasnost*, Chang (1991) conducted a brief content analysis of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*. He examined a general portrayal of the Soviet Union in 1988 and found that the three newspapers tended to cover Soviet reforms neutrally or favorably. At the same time the coverage remained skeptical about the future of reforms and continued to use value-laden Cold War language. In terms of the subjects covered, the newspapers concentrated on politics, military affairs and diplomacy.

Izyumov (1995) suggests that with the final breakdown of Communism and the end of Gorbachev's *perestroika*, the rules of the media game have changed again: the last remains of state control have disappeared and the availability of information is essentially limitless but its quality and reliability have become problematic. The Western press, however, has continued to apply simplified models and media techniques to a society that has been undergoing unique changes and is and will continue to be very different from the West. While destroying old stereotypes they have created new ones. In their political coverage, the Western press exploits the clichés of "good guys" (Yeltsin) and "bad guys" (Communists) extensively. Similarly, economic reports are painted in "black and white" delivering "a Marxian-like picture of miserable, almost starving masses at one end, and money-wasting Mafia and 'New Russians' at the other. While there is an element of truth in this,

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generally it is off the mark. The economic crisis in Russia is real, but so is economic growth and a consumption boom” (Izyumov, 1995).

Finally a discourse analysis of the *New York Times*’ coverage of the Russian Parliament crisis of 1993 and the failed Soviet coup of 1991 has showed that the construction of the post-Cold War Russia has not changed much from that of the Soviet Union during the Cold War era. The study suggests that through linguistic choices, these events were presented as “rivalry between hard-core Communists and reformers, and between state-controlled and free market economy” (Wang, 1995).

Although these isolated and fragmented works shed some light on certain aspects of the media coverage of Russia, they do not provide a meaningful overall picture. Much more research on media images is needed and remains to be done.

III. Questions and Hypotheses

Questions and Hypotheses

As demonstrated above, a review of related literature and previous research suggests rather a complex and, in many respects, contradictory picture of what the post-Cold War coverage of the Russian economy might be expected to be. On the one hand, the removal of many of the technical obstacles and ideological lenses should have cleared the view and improved the focus, especially since the media focus is on such a specific matter as economics. On the other hand, organizational constraints and long-cultivated stereotypical attitudes have proven to be powerful distorters of the mass media optics. The question, then, is: What picture of economic affairs in the Russian Federation *are* the people in North America exposed to by their press? In order to test different theories, it is important to document the actual media portrayal of the fast-changing and highly ambiguous transitional period that the Russian economy is undergoing. Content analysis appears to be a valuable tool to exemplify the press construction of post-Cold War Russia, and would be likely to reveal possible underlying factors affecting the coverage. This research method allows the assessment, in general terms, of the content of a given medium as concerns a particular topic, as well as the identification, with a high level of reliability, of major persistent patterns of coverage, providing specific quantitative data for further evaluation.

In this context a number of conceptual questions seem to be particularly important to discuss. Is the Russian economy portrayed as one of the market economies with all the attributes of its own structural complexity, multitude of

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players, functional diversity, and multidimensional issues? Or is it treated as a battlefield of major political forces, with Western self-interest (both in terms of economic profit and long-term security considerations) being one of them? Secondly, are the Western media reports considerate of specific economic issues and problems, or do they employ a traditional set of values which characterizes foreign affairs as general, simplified, negative, and elitist? And finally, is there any significant difference in approach to the coverage of the Russian economy between the U.S. and Canadian newspapers? The present study seeks to collect quantitative data that may help in addressing these questions. To a large extent, this analysis was conducted as an exploratory exercise to document the current portrayal of the Russian economy by the two capital newspapers. To perform this task and to present a systematic assessment, it examined the actual media content from a number of different perspectives utilizing a variety of content analysis measurements. At the same time, three hypotheses derived largely from the findings of previous research described in the chapter above were tested. The hypotheses were broadly formulated in order to take into consideration a greater number of various aspects of coverage and to allow for a rather extensive discussion of foreign reporting problems and underlying theoretical assumptions. Hypotheses I and II are related to one another and explore different characteristics of the Western approach to international news coverage. Hypothesis III deals with similarities and differences between Canadian and American approaches.

Questions and Hypotheses

Hypothesis I *The coverage of Russian economic issues tends to be overloaded with political matters and reflective of Western self-interest.*

A number of communication scholars suggest that foreign events are most likely to become news and get covered in the Western media if they involve top level political considerations or prominent political figures and meet the criteria of proximity or “meaningfulness”, understood as relevance to the Western self-interest (Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Chang et al. 1987; van Dijk, 1988). These theoretical observations have been confirmed by the numerous findings of empirical research (UNESCO, 1985; Walker, 1989). Moreover, the dominance of political issues over economic, cultural, environmental and virtually any other issues in the international news has been repeatedly singled out as a persistent feature of all Western media in regard to any foreign country (Rubin, 1977; Hatchen, 1981; Rosenblum, 1993). The same has been said about ethnocentrism and domesticism of international reporting. The validity of these assumptions applied to the case of the coverage of the Russian economy can be assessed by examination of certain measurable and codifiable characteristics¹⁰ of news items.

Is the *main topic* featured in the majority of items exclusively domestic, domestic affecting western business interest, bilateral or multilateral international? How often is the *principal actor* featured in the stories a politician, Russian or foreign businessman, Russian or foreign government body, private enterprise, or

¹⁰ All the definitions and coding procedures are explained in details in the next chapter.

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joint venture? What percentage of items have a direct reference to *politics*, be that at a governmental, parliamentary or political party level? How often are the activities of Communists mentioned? How many economic articles are concerned with the future of Russian *reforms* in which the West has a vested interest in many respects? Do they tend to report events supporting or threatening these reforms? Combined and cross-tabulated by the *length of items* and *attention score* to indicate the prominence given to certain types of events, data on these and other variables are likely to provide sufficient evidence to either support or disapprove the above-stated hypothesis. If the majority of *economic* stories feature politicians and governments or constantly refer to the activities of the state and political parties at the expense of detailed economic analysis, the overwhelming news value of politics in international coverage would be confirmed. Similarly, if foreign actors and bilateral relations dominate the content and the majority of stories deal with issues of foreign investments and present Russian economic news in light of reforms widely supported by the Western nations, it would be possible to conclude that ethnocentrism is a persistent general characteristic of international news which does not depend on specific geographic or thematic (economic) foci.

Hypothesis II *Russian economic issues are treated and presented as 'international' rather than 'economic', when the coverage of the former is characterized by generalization, simplification, superficiality and negativism,*

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while the latter has a tendency for disaggregation, specialization and thoroughness.

Pointing to the increased dependence of the markets on the availability of analytical, accurate and reliable data, Parsons (1989) emphasizes the recent tendency of economic reporting to provide detailed and specialized information. Referring to the end of the Cold war and the changing global environment, Gwertzman (1993) has anticipated the increasing number of detailed and quality stories on economic affairs in foreign reporting. On the other hand, Russia is not an elite capitalist economy and is unlikely to be covered accordingly by professional economic specialists. In addition, the existence of well-known institutional and organizational pressures generally determining the nature of international coverage suggests that Russian economic news will attract attention only insofar as it satisfies the standard requirements of simplicity, generalization, superficiality and negativism. To measure the amount of attention and evaluate the depth of the economic coverage, this study analyzes such quantitative characteristics of the stories as their *type* (the correlation between the number of straight news items, backgrounders, and commentaries), *reporting source* (how many items are picked up from the wire services, written by the staff analysts, or written by third party experts?), and *placement* (what percent of Russian economic news is actually treated adequately and published in the business section?). Other valuable indicators of the thoroughness of the reporting of

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economic news are the *level* at which economic issue is covered (how many stories cover general economic issues at the national level and how many are concerned with particular industries and enterprises?), the *sector* of the economy discussed (what sectors and industries accumulate maximum attention and how many stories deal with the economy in general?), *functional aspects* of economic issues, the *geographic distribution* of coverage etc. To assess the negativism of reporting, it is also important to look at the frequency of *criminal motifs* in economic stories from Russia and the correlation of *positive* and *negative* events selected for publication. If the majority of stories are short wire items published in the opening section of newspaper and covering general economic issues, ignoring particular industries or specific economic aspects of events, and emphasizing negative developments, it would be reasonable to suggest that the approach to the coverage of the Russian economy differs from that of domestic economies and is consistent with the pattern of general foreign news reporting in the Western press.

Hypothesis III *Canadian and American coverage does not differ significantly in the selection and general treatment of events; at the same time, the former tends to be broader in scope and more straight news-oriented, while the latter is more interpretative and analytical.*

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A number of communication scholars concerned with comparison of foreign coverage in Canadian and American press ¹¹ have demonstrated that newspapers in the two countries present a very similar picture of the outside world to their audiences. No significant divergence in the major patterns of international coverage and the substantial treatment of foreign events have been documented in previous studies. However, under apparent similarity of general trends, American foreign coverage has been found to be less diverse but more innovative and investigative, while Canadian coverage has been found to be more informative and less analytical. Sharing news values and organizational structure, the two press systems should only differ in their sources, style, and manner of presentation of foreign news, not in the nature and direction of coverage. The authenticity or falseness of this hypothesis and the manifest differences between Canadian and American approaches - if they are to be found - should become evident from the analysis of such basic structural variables as the *size*, *type* of item, *reporting source*, and *locale* from which the story was reported. The uniformity of content should be confirmed by the persistence of the same pattern of coverage across a number of variables dealing with thematic and subject categories such as *main actor*, *type of event*, *sectors of economy*, *functional aspect*, *type of event* etc.

¹¹ This refers to the works of Robinson (1976), Soderlung (1988), Senate Committee (1969); Royal Commission (1981), Schroeder (1980), and Walker (1989) discussed in the section *International Coverage* in previous chapter.

IV. Design and Methodology

Design and Methodology

As previously noted, the method used for this work was systematic content analysis. Some elaboration on the design of the study and employed methodology is necessary.

The present research examined the content of the *Washington Post* and the *Ottawa Citizen* in a twelve month period from November, 1995 to November, 1996. All corresponding economic news items published in this period in the two newspapers were included in the study. The articles used as a basis for analysis were compiled through research on the news and information electronic databases *Infomart* (for the *Ottawa Citizen*) and *Lexis-Nexis* (for the *Washington Post*). The initial search for the data from the *Ottawa Citizen* was conducted by the keywords "Russia" and "Economy" and "Business". Due to the fact that the *Infomart* has a maximum limit of 60 entries per single search, a number of other randomly chosen, economy-related keywords were used in order to produce a representative sample. The additional search was also necessary because a significant number of stories found by the keyword method were repetitive or irrelevant. Apart from "Business" and "Economy", the search was performed by the words "Investment", "Industry", "Enterprise", "Privatization", "Securities", "Management", "Finance", "Banking", "Money" and "Ruble". Altogether the above searches resulted in 488 stories; 103 of them were selected for the analysis as relevant and non-repetitive. The criteria for selection as relevant were as follows. All items with Russian or foreign datelines directly referring to Russian economic issues, events or personalities were included.

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Those stories in which the word “Russia” and at least one corresponding searchable word were used in relation to each other and in the same context were included. All the articles in which the word “Russia” and at least one economy-related keyword were used without direct logical connection or in different contexts were excluded. For example, the report on hearings in the Parliament of Canada in which Russia was mentioned among potential strategic political partners and economic issues were discussed in regard to internal developments of the Canadian North was excluded. So was “The World Digest”, which in one place described Russian cultural achievements, while in another it reported on the economic problems of South-East Asia. On the other hand, stories on the Russian parliamentary and presidential elections were included when economic issues were considered even briefly, as were stories on the International Monetary Fund if its prospective loan to the Russian government was mentioned.

Although *Lexis-Nexis* does not have a limit as to the number of stories per search, in order to maintain consistency and make the sampling of the two newspapers comparable, the same search methodology¹² was used for compiling the data from the *Washington Post*. The search resulted in over 700 news items; 152 stories were included in the study as relevant and non-repetitive. Further careful examination by hand of 20 random hard-copy issues of each newspaper revealed no related articles omitted by electronic search.

¹² Due to a significantly higher number of irrelevant random cases found in The Washington Post, and in order to narrow down the search to a manageable number of entries, the word “Russia” was used twice for each keyword search on the Lexis-Nexis, i.e. the search command was: “RUSSIA ATLEAST TWICE AND ECONOMY OR BUSINESS AND [DATE]”.

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With the main purpose of providing a detailed examination of the portrayal of the Russian economy, all generated stories from both newspapers were then categorized based on a 21-variable coding sheet (Appendix I). The coding schedule used in this study was similar to the initial model employed earlier in a number of content analysis studies undertaken by McQuail (1977), Stevenson and Shaw (1984) and other researchers. Considerable modifications and additions were made in accordance with the specific focus of this work. Several definitions and analytical measures used in this sheet, as well as coding procedures, require clarification and discussion. Below are the 21 variables which were defined for the study. Each news item was allocated to one and only one category for each variable.

1. Date (dd.mm.yy)

2. Name of Newspaper

3. Reporting Source This study examined the sources of the news items.

They were divided into 7 categories: stories were coded *staff correspondent*, *staff editorialist* or *staff columnist* if they originated in Canada or the US or were written by newspapers' staff writers respectively; *bureau*, if the article was attributed to the papers' own foreign correspondents; *third party expert*, if there was a reference to special contribution exclusively for publication in this newspaper; *wire services*, if the item was originally published by any other media, including re-prints from other newspapers; and *other*, if the source did not fall into any of the above categories, or was unattributed or otherwise unidentifiable.

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4. Type of item Five type categories were used in this study: *news*, *backgrounder*, *editorial*, *column/commentary*, and *other*.

5. Number of words Content, excluding pictures¹³, was measured in number of words. Items of any length were taken into account and divided into 5 size categories: *1-250*; *250-500*; *500-1000*; *1000-2000*; and *above 2000* words.

6. Locale from Which the Story Was Reported This refers to the dateline of the item and whether it was submitted by a source outside of the home country or had domestic origins, regardless of the geographic location of the event reported. Correspondingly, every story was classified into one of 4 categories: *Russia*, *Canada*, *US*, and *other*.

7. Placement *Opening section*, *business section*, and *other*

8. Main Topic Featured in the Item This concerns the kind of event or situation with which the item was mainly concerned, and was classified into one of the 5 broad categories:

exclusively domestic - if no direct involvement of foreign actors was mentioned or their business interests discussed, even if theoretically the reported event might have had some potential implications for such interests. For example, elections were coded as exclusively domestic topics.

domestic affecting western business interest - if the event or situation occurred in Russia as a result of the activity of Russian actors, but directly involved a foreign

¹³ The actual pictures were unavailable by electronic search, but if the story was accompanied by a picture, both *Infomart* and *Lexis-Nexis* provided references and descriptions, and so all illustrations were taken into consideration in calculating attention scores.

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actor; or if foreign business interests in regard to this event or its consequences were discussed in the item.

multilateral international - if the event, situation, or its consequences involved the participation or interests of more than two nations.

bilateral international - if the event or situation involved the participation or interests of Russian, Canadian or US actors.

other

9. Type of Event Covered *Negative, neutral and positive* were the three categories used to evaluate and typify the nature of the central event reported in the story, and to measure the character of the papers' economic reporting from Russia. The definition of these three categories is as follow.

Negative refers to economic disorganization, disintegration and decline and emphasizes social or economic conflict, instability or tension, leading to negative consequences for the economy or for society in general. Stories centered around issues such as strikes, bankruptcies, trade wars, and criminal activities were coded as negative.

Positive refers to the acts of cooperation and moves toward the improvement of economic situation, emphasizing social and economic cohesion, stability or growth. For example, reports on the growth of production, consumption boom, charity acts or any kind of "success stories" were coded as positive.

Neutral is a content that is balanced, betrays no manifest controversial intention, and has no direct and immediate positive or negative effect on the economy or society in

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general. For example, the reports on the growing popularity of Communists in rural areas, or on the replacement of the popular pro-reform economist in the government were coded as neutral.

10. Principal Actor Featured in the Story This study used the UNESCO definition of the principal actor: “Actors are the subjects of the story; individuals, groups or other entities doing things or affected by events in a way that is essential to the story or comment. Where a person or group could be omitted from the story without altering its substance, they should not be considered as actors... Actors may be individuals, plural or institutional. The main actor is the main subject of the story, usually first mentioned.” (cited in Stevenson and Shaw, 1984). In accordance with this definition, each item was coded into one of the following 11 categories: *politician(s)*; *supranational body* (United Nations, The World Bank, IMF and similar international institutions); *Russian purely private business*; *Russian business with strong government affiliations* (strategic industries partially controlled and governed by the state, such as space, nuclear, and oil and gas); *Russian government body*; *foreign business*; *foreign government body*; *joint venture*; *Russian businessman* (if the person was at the same time a prominent politician, he/she was classified as a politician); *foreign businessman*; and *other / indefinite*.

11. Sector of Economy Covered This study also examined the distribution of the coverage between different industries and sectors of the economy. These were classified into 15 categories: *general economic issue* (if the story reported on the economy as a whole with respect to no particular sector, usually in broad terms);

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stock market; oil and gas; coal industry; nuclear industry (production of electrical power and other non-military purposes); *natural resource extraction; banking; telecommunications; retail trade; agriculture; heavy industry* (including military production and space industry); *other services* (including consulting, design, publishing, education etc.); *entertainment; and other.*

12. Level at Which Economic Issue is Covered This characteristic was used to measure the scale and scope of coverage. The levels were categorized into *indefinite, individual enterprise(s), industrial, municipal, regional, national, international, and other*, depending on the primary focus of the story.

13. Functional Aspect of Economic Issue Covered This variable was included in the study based on the assumption that economic activity within and across any sectors can be considered and reported on from different perspectives. According to the functional aspect primarily emphasized in the item, it was assigned to one of the following 9 categories: *investment, privatization, management, currency issue, technology, taxation, accounting, trade, and other* (if the story did not fall into any of the above categories or the functional aspect was unidentifiable or not applicable).

14. Region of Russia Covered in the Item Seven geographic categories were used: *all Russia, Moscow, St.-Petersburg, European Russia, Siberia, Far East, and Northern Russia*

The presence and nature of five conventional “dimensions” of the economic event or situation reported in each story were also measured.

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15. “Political Dimension” of Event Covered This concerns the immediate involvement of political figures, forces, or interests in the economic event or situation reported in the story. The story was considered as having a “political dimension” if at any point it made a direct reference to elections, campaigns, appointments, government changes, legislative or regulatory activities, political parties, or any activity of the state on the domestic or international arena. Defined in this way, “political dimension” was categorized into 7 levels: *no reference*, *government level*, *parliament level*, *political party level (primarily Communist)*, *political party level (primarily non-Communist)*, *combination of both*, and *other political*.

16. “Reforms Dimension” of Event Covered This refers to economic and political reforms that Russia has been undergoing since Gorbachev’s *perestroika*. This category was included in the study because the course and direction of reforms serves for Western commentators as a major indicator of the success of Russia’s climb towards establishing democracy and a free-market economy, and might be frequently used in newspaper reports to interpret particular economic developments in light of general changes. Again, the item was coded as having a “reforms dimension” if economic reforms were directly mentioned and the actual or possible impact of the reported event on the course of reforms discussed. Four categories were used to classify this variable: *no reference*, *supporting reforms*, *threatening reforms*, and *neutral*.

17. “Social Dimension” of Event Covered This refers to the impact of the economic event or situation on particular factions of society or on the population in

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general, and measures the level of priority given to the social aspect in the story. The following 3 categories were used: *no reference*, *secondary topic*, and *major accent*.

18. “Criminal Dimension” of Event Covered It was assumed from previous familiarity with media coverage of Russia that economic issues might be frequently associated with criminal activities. Each item was examined with respect to its “criminal dimension” and coded into one of the following 5 categories: *no reference*, *mafia-related*, *mafia and government corruption-related*, *government corruption-related*, and *other*.

19. “Environmental Dimension” of Event Covered Similar to “social dimension” it examines the priority given to the environmental aspect of the economic event or situation. The same 3 categories were used: *no reference*, *secondary topic*, and *major accent*.

20. Forecast (if any) Subjective speculations, opinions and predictions expressed by the writer (if they were present in the story) were also examined. The item was coded as having a forecast if the predictions as for what sort of consequences for the Russian economy the reported event or situation may have in the future were clearly articulated in the story; or a certain outcome of the event in progress was anticipated. Correspondingly, all items were divided into 4 categories: *no forecast*, *optimistic* (positive consequences), *mixed*, and *pessimistic* (negative consequences).

21. Attention Score Finally, each story analyzed in this study was measured and coded for prominence using attention scores. The degree of attention was

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determined by three criteria: i) placement of the story on the front page of the opening section, ii) placement on the front, third or editorial page of any section, and iii) accompaniment of the text by photograph or cartoon. The first criterion was assigned two points, the second and third - one point each. The highest possible attention score, therefore, was 3, and the lowest was 0. According to the points, all items were coded in three categories of attention: 0 - *low*, 1-2 - *medium*, and 3 - *high*. It follows that only front page stories with an illustration were coded as high attention stories.

The question of external validity might be raised, especially since all the coding was accomplished by one person. It should be noted that content analysis necessarily involves occasional judgments on the part of the researchers, and this study, being no exception, may contain some slight observer biases. On the other hand, the use of one coder in this study eliminates the problem of differences in coder biases and thus provides reliability and consistency to the analysis.

After all the coding was done, the data were systematized, cross-tabulated, and organized in comparable tables, using the statistical software SPSS.

V. Findings and Analysis

Findings and Analysis

This chapter reports the results of the research procedures described above. First, *overview* presents the general statistical outline of the amount and structure of coverage of the Russian economy provided by the two newspapers studied. It compares the performance of the *Washington Post* and the *Ottawa Citizen* from the point of view of such categories as the reporting source, the type of item, the length, the geographical origin, the placement, and the prominence given to the stories. Then, *thematic analysis* looks into subject categories which describe the nature, direction, and focus of the coverage of the Russian economy by the two newspapers.

It should be noted that this project generated a substantial amount of data, not all of which require detailed consideration here. With a coding schedule of 21 variables, simple cross-tabulation of any single variable across two newspapers generates 20 tables when the analysis is extended to include all other variables. Where it was possible and applicable, three-way cross-tabulation was also done resulting in sufficient data for analysis of structure, nature, and direction of coverage. It would be impossible and unnecessary to include and comment on all possible combinations of figures that may have some remote relevance to the study. Some categories do not relate precisely to or provide only partial evidence for the hypotheses tested. They were initially included in order to give extra context to this study, to describe the portrayal of Russian economic issues from a variety of perspectives, and to make the assessment many-sided and complete. This seeming abundance of measurements allows exclusion of the element of chance and to make

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sure that patterns of coverage this study seeks to determine persist across a number of variables. This chapter examines in general terms what the data tell about some aspects of foreign economic reporting discussed previously. Each of the variables is examined in turn, then the *conclusion* considers how data from various tables relate to the three hypotheses. Selected data tables, not discussed in detail in this chapter, are included in Appendix II.

Overview

The major events concerning the economic development of the Russian Federation covered during the 12 month period in the two papers included macro political issues such as Parliamentary and Presidential elections and changes in the cabinet; international matters such as the IMF \$10 Billion loan to Russia and the controversy over the export of American chicken legs to the Russian market; as well as the nation-wide strike of the coal miners, and a number of local developments within and between individual industries and businesses.

During the 12 month period of the study the two newspapers published a total of 255 items dealing with the issues of The Russian economy. 103 (40%) stories appeared in the *Citizen* while 152 (60%) appeared in the *Post*, indicating that the latter devoted considerably more attention to the subject. This 40%-60% proportion is not surprising, although it is not quite congruent with the earlier findings regarding

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the Canadian and American coverage of international affairs in general. It was observed that in Canada foreign news is generally a much more important category than in the U.S., which is usually reflected in a larger proportion of foreign stories published in Canadian newspapers (Robinson, 1976). However, among the two papers considered in this study the *Post*'s leading role is generally recognized and its foreign reporting is undoubtedly more voluminous. It is often considered the best newspaper in the country and its international newshole was found to be the biggest among all the U.S. elite newspapers (Emery, 1989) which is not the case with the *Citizen* among Canadian newspapers.

Table 1.
LOCALE OF THE STORY BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Russia	74	62	67
2. Canada	14	0	6
3. US	3	34	21
4. Other	10	4	6

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Approximately two thirds of the material on the Russian economy appearing in both newspapers carried Russian datelines (Table 1). However if we look at the frequency of domestic datelines - Canada for the *Ottawa Citizen*, and the U.S. for the

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Washington Post - we find the first relatively notable difference: one third of all items published in the *Post* originated in the U.S., while only 14% of the *Citizen's* stories had domestic origins. This can be explained by the fact that American newspaper run a significant number of editorials and features on Russian economic issues written by domestic analysts and experts.

Table 2.
REPORTING SOURCE BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Staff reporter	5	14	10
2. Staff editorialist	3	7	6
3. Staff columnist	3	0	1
4. Bureau	19	57	42
5. Third party expert	2	10	7
6. Wire services	68	8	32
7. Other	0	4	2

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Data on the *source* of the content (Table 2) seem to support the above explanation¹⁴. The combined percentage of items written by newspaper's staff members (excluding foreign bureau) and third party experts is 31% for the

¹⁴ Tables 1 and 1.1 *Locale of the story by reporting source* and by newspaper in the Appendices, provide additional data to further illustrate and support this hypothesis

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Washington Post and 13% for the *Ottawa Citizen*, which coincides almost exactly with the number of domestically originated stories for both papers. This table also demonstrates some other major differences. As expected, the *Washington Post* relied very heavily on its own staff and foreign correspondents (78%). The Moscow bureau was the largest single source of content (57%), with only 8% of items picked up from the wire services. A significant 10% of all stories (the third largest single source) were contributed by third party experts, indicating the newspaper's commitment to explaining and commenting on the economic news. On the *Ottawa Citizen* side the pattern is quite different. An astonishing 68% of material dealing with Russian economic issues were provided by the wire services, followed by the bureau (19%) and staff reporters (5%). It should also be noted that the stories attributed by the *Citizen* to its own foreign bureau were written for the *Citizen* by the *Southam News* Moscow correspondents who furnish all newspapers of the *Southam* chain, while the *Washington Post* really has its own Moscow bureau working exclusively for this newspaper. Such a heavy reliance of the *Citizen* on the short standardized wire stories inevitably leads to a type of coverage which is extremely diverse in focus, but is deprived of profound analysis and in-depth elaboration on any particular topic. Overall, this distribution of sources among the two newspapers is consistent with expectations, and anticipated differences in the amount, structure and manner of presentation of Russian economic issues are also reflected in such categories as *type* and *length* of stories.

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Table 3.
TYPE OF ITEM BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. News	74	53	61
2. News backgrounders	14	30	23
3. Editorial	6	13	10
4. Column/commentary	5	4	4
5. Other	1	1	1

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

The tendency of American foreign news to present more investigative reporting is reflected in the findings on the *type of item* by newspaper (Table 3). Straight news was a prevailing category of coverage in both newspapers. However, in the *Post* only slightly above half (53%) of all items were straight news, while in the *Citizen* they constituted almost three quarters (74%) of the total economic content. Data on categories 2 and 3 in the table further indicate greater American attention to explanation and interpretation of economic events. The percentage of coverage devoted to such explanatory genres as backgrounders and editorial pieces is markedly different in the two newspapers. In the *Citizen* backgrounders constituted 14% of all items against 30% in the *Post*. The distribution of editorials was respectively 6% vs. 13%. The percentage of 'columns/commentaries' and 'other' was not significantly different. Although these numbers say nothing about the actual content of the news, they do confirm findings of previous researchers who expressed concerns that the

Findings and Analysis

Canadian manner of presentation of foreign news was informative but conventional and superficial.

Table 4.
NUMBER OF WORDS BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. 1-250	15	5	9
2. 250-500	30	9	18
3. 500-1000	42	40	40
4. 1000-2000	13	38	28
5. 2000+	0	9	5

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Data on the *length* of economic stories (Table 4) are presented in relation to the variables discussed above and clearly indicate that in addition to carrying more material and providing the audience with more analysis, the *Washington Post* tended to run considerably longer stories on issues concerning the Russian economy. While in the *Ottawa Citizen* 85% of all related items were 500-1000 words long or shorter, in the *Post* 87% of stories were 500-1000 words long or longer. In the twelve month period of the study, the *Citizen* published no items on matters related to the Russian economy longer than 2000 words. Given that the reporting in the *Ottawa Citizen* was dominated by straight news wire stories, such a size pattern is not surprising.

Table 5.
PLACEMENT BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Opening section	66	74	71
2. Business section	8	13	11
3. Other	26	13	18

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Data in Table 5 show the distribution of Russian economic news among the different sections of the two newspapers. While we do not find any major differences between the placement in Canadian and American media, the numbers in this table demonstrate that content as specific as that analyzed in this study is overwhelmingly presented as general interest information. Over two thirds of all economic stories were printed in the *opening* section in both newspapers and only 8% (in the *Citizen*) and 13% (in the *Post*) appeared in the *business* sections. This finding is particularly important for our analysis because it demonstrates that, in most cases, Russian *economic* news is not being treated as such. While the realization of the importance of domestic economic news has led to the creation of a separate business section in almost all newspapers, economic news from Russia is clearly not considered to be of adequate interest for professional consideration and specific coverage. Further cross-tabulation of the variable *placement* by the *length* and *attention score* makes these

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conclusions even more palpable: two thirds of the stories that *were* printed in the business section were low attention items of less than 500 words.

Table 6.
ATTENTION SCORE BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Low	54	29	39
2. Medium	45	56	51
3. High	1	15	9

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Finally, Table 6 presents the information on the prominence given to the stories on the Russian economy in the two newspapers. Taking into account that attention points were given, among other things, for editorial and opinion page stories, the distribution of attention scores shown in this table is in consonance with the general structural differences in the coverage of the two newspapers studied. More than a half (54%) of all the stories published in the *Ottawa Citizen* were low attention items, which reflects the newspaper's adherence to the short hard-news stories provided by the wire services. In the *Washington Post*, on the other hand, the majority of reports (56%) fall into the medium attention category. Furthermore, only one story (1%) related to the Russian economy appeared on the front page of the

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Citizen, while in the *Post* front page stories constituted a high 15% of all items on the subject.

As demonstrated above, the analysis of the first basic statistical variables provides sufficient evidence to conclude that there were substantial differences in the amount, structure and general presentation of material on Russian economic affairs between the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Washington Post*. These findings are entirely consistent with the expectations expressed in the second part of Hypothesis III. Indeed, the Canadian coverage was dominated by a great number of straight-news wire stories and news items tended to be shorter in length, while the American newspaper devoted a lot of space and attention to rather long, analytical pieces.

Thematic analysis

Beginning with data in the next table, we move to the examination and discussion of the substantive treatment of Russian economic issues and the direction of the reporting in capital newspapers of the two countries. First of all, this includes the examination of news selection: what kinds of stories and what aspects of events were chosen for publication as newsworthy. Secondly, this examines the focus of coverage: which sides of economic reality tended to be overemphasized, and which -

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underrepresented. The overall picture is composed of the analysis of several important components presented below.

Table 7.
MAIN TOPIC BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Exclusively domestic	50	53	52
2. Domestic, affecting western business interest	12	8	9
3. Multilateral international	11	13	12
4. Bilateral international	22	22	22
5. Other	6	4	5

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

The issues included in Table 7 provide data that allow partial assessment of the aspect of coverage which is frequently referred to as “self-interest”, “meaningfulness” or “proximity” in communication theory. The stories were analyzed in terms of relation or, more precisely, relevance to the West. Three important observation suggested by the data in this table can be made. First of all, the attention is drawn to the fact that as far as the selection of *main topic* is concerned, the coverage of the Russian economy by the American and Canadian newspapers is remarkably identical. Although the one relies on its own staff and the

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other on the news agencies, the overall picture of foreign events they present to their audiences is almost the same in terms of the relevance of those events to their readers. Such similarity is consistent with the first part of Hypothesis III which anticipated no significant differences in the selection and general treatment of events. Secondly, the proportion of *exclusively domestic* topics constituted approximately one half of the total coverage in both newspapers. In itself, this figure shows that the Russian economy per se is perceived to be as newsworthy as is the Russian economy in relation to foreign developments; this cannot be taken as direct evidence of ethnocentrism and domination of self-interest in North American foreign news reporting. However, one should take into account that a large number (if not a majority¹⁵) of stories classified as “exclusively domestic” had to do with economic aspects of the Russian Parliamentary and Presidential elections, the outcome of which was of a particular interest to the West. Given all that, the percentage of *exclusively domestic* main topics may be somewhat overstated. Finally, the data demonstrate that the second largest topic category of economic coverage was *bilateral international* events (22% for both newspapers). Apart from Russian internal developments, both the *Washington Post* and the *Ottawa Citizen* paid maximum attention to those sides of Russian economic issues that involved the participation of their respective home countries. This finding lies within the framework of theoretical

¹⁵ Further cross-tabulation of *main topic* by *main actor* and *political dimension* revealed the dominating majority of *exclusively domestic* stories involving politicians and government as actors, which overwhelmingly included political dimension at all levels.

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expectations; it reflects and confirms the existence of a correlation between the involvement of domestic actors or interests and the likelihood of coverage.

The tendency of North American international reporting to be ethnocentric and reflective of self-interest was hypothesized in this study based on the early psychological theory of news values presented by Galtung and Ruge (1965) and on numerous further empirical studies which found that the geographic, economic, political, and cultural proximity of the foreign country was an important determinant of the selection of events for general news coverage. The present study is different from previous works in the sense that it is concerned with pre-selected content (economic news) on an initially determined country (Russia). Moreover, it deals with very specific historical circumstances, when the once inevitable and necessary juxtaposition and projection of events in Russia on the domestic grounds is no longer justified by the competition of social systems and by considerations of national security. Although the data collected on this variable provide no strong and positive indication of the prevalence of Western interests in reporting of the Russian economy, the findings do show that the involvement of the home country in the event abroad has universal value as a determinant of foreign coverage. Findings on several other variables below provide more data to assess the proximity and ethnocentrism of coverage.

Data in Tables 8 and 8.1 evaluate the negativism of coverage. “Negativism” is often considered to be the major problem of international news in the North

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American press. The tendency of the Western mass media to cover exclusively “coups and earthquakes” was one of the main and most persistent complaints of the Third World countries in the debate over the New World Information and Communication Order. “Crisis-ridden, paralyzed, decaying and sick” (Cohen, 1985) was also the image of the Soviet Union traditionally presented to American audiences by their press and television. The validity of this generally recognized situation in foreign coverage was challenged by Stevenson and Shaw (1984) whose study did not confirm the negativism of reporting on the Third World. A few years later Chang (1991) found that welcoming Gorbachev’s changes, the coverage of Soviet Union by three major American dailies tended to be more neutral and favorable than unfavorable.

Table 8.
TYPE OF EVENT BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Negative	34	14	22
2. Neutral	57	84	72
3. Positive	9	3	5

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author’s calculations)

Findings of this study show that the general direction of reporting contemporary Russian economic affairs tended to be more neutral and negative than

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positive (Table 8). The majority of the stories published in both newspapers were concerned with economic events deprived of positive or negative connotation: 57% of the items in the *Ottawa Citizen* and 84% in the *Washington Post* covered neutral events. The second largest category (34% in the *Citizen* and 14% in the *Post*) was stories on negative economic developments. Only 9% of the content in Canadian and 3% in American papers dealt with positive events. In absolute figures, the *Ottawa Citizen* printed 59 neutral, 36 negative, and 9 positive stories and the *Washington Post* 127, 20, and 4 items respectively. As we can see from these numbers, the picture of the Russian economy presented by the American newspaper was considerably more neutral. However, despite certain differences in percentage in each category between the two newspapers, the general pattern of coverage was notably the same: while neutral items clearly dominated reporting, there were, on average, four and a half times more negative than positive events covered.

This tendency was also confirmed by cross-tabulation of *type of item* by *attention scores* and by newspaper (Table 8.1). The data here support and further emphasize the findings on the general direction of coverage in terms of attention ascribed to certain types of events. Again, neutral events were given maximum prominence, followed immediately by negative reports, while positive stories received only low or medium attention. 22% of all stories on The Russian economy that appeared on the front page of the *Washington Post* reported on different economic problems and pitfalls, and not a single positive story during the year was given high

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prominence. In the *Ottawa Citizen* 36% of medium attention items¹⁶ were concerned with negative events, while only 6% covered positive. Overall, not only did negative coverage in both papers outnumbered positive by several times in absolute figures, but it also received considerably more prominence.

Table 8.1
TYPE OF EVENT BY ATTENTION SCORES BY NEWSPAPER

	low		medium		high*
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Post (%)
1. Negative	33	7	36	14	22
2. Neutral	56	90	57	82	78
3. Positive	11	2	6	4	0

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

* Only one high attention story dealing with issues involving the Russian economy was published in the *Ottawa Citizen* during the 12 months studied. It was omitted while calculating the distribution of attention scores as statistically insignificant.

(Source: author's calculations)

These findings show that the current portrayal of Russia is much different from that documented by Chang 6 years ago. To explain this change it seems reasonable to suggest that the euphoria of the early years following the collapse of Communism has been replaced by a fear of Communist revival. The newspapers have started to pay more attention to various economic problems such as the increasing role of organized crime, the government's failure to collect taxes, or cases

¹⁶ In the case of the *Ottawa Citizen*, medium attention items were counted as representative of higher prominence, due to the absence of high attention stories on the subject published during the period of the study.

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of bad management leading to bankruptcy and massive cut backs, which potentially can be used by the opposition to undermine the government's credibility and endanger the course of Russian reforms.

Table 9.
PRINCIPAL ACTOR BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Politician (s)	25	34	30
2. Supranational body	5	5	5
3. Russian purely private business	5	5	5
4. Russian business with strong government affiliations	11	7	9
5. Russian government body	9	6	7
6. Foreign business	7	7	7
7. Foreign government body	9	7	8
8. Joint venture	3	0	1
9. Russian businessman	1	2	2
10. Foreign businessman	3	1	2
11. Other / indefinite	22	28	26

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

The politicization of economic news and the comparative role of political institutions and businesses in economic development, as perceived by the media, are addressed in Table 9, which shows the data on the *principal actor* of story by

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newspaper. As is clear from this table, in terms of the *principal actor* featured in the story, politics dominates economic news just as it dominates coverage of international affairs in general. *Politician* or *politicians* was the largest category of the main actor in both newspapers studied. Every fourth story (25%) concerned with Russian economic issues in the *Ottawa Citizen*, and every third (34%) in the *Washington Post* was mainly about politicians. Combined, the five principal actors related to politics (*politician, supranational body, Russian business with strong government affiliations, Russian government, and foreign government*) were featured in 59% of total number of stories in both newspapers. Six business-related categories of principal actor (*Russian purely private business, Russian business with strong government affiliations, foreign business, joint venture, Russian businessman, and foreign businessman*) constituted 30% of all items in the *Citizen* and 22% in the *Post*. Finally, actual Russian business (categories 3, 4, and 9 in the table) was featured as *principal actor* in only 17% of the stories in the Canadian and 14% in the American paper.

When we examine the data item by item, they demonstrate that apart from *politicians* and *other : indefinite*, four categories of principal actor were covered most extensively: *Russian business with strong government affiliations* (9% on average), *Russian government* (7%), *foreign government* (8%), and *foreign business* (7%). The latter two reflect the proximity hypothesis. As far as the former two are concerned, the high attention of the press to industries such as space, energy and nuclear is perhaps explained by the higher level of co-operation between North

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America and Russia in these sectors; and the high visibility of the Russian government once again shows the media emphasis on political aspects of economic affairs.

It also follows from Table 9 that the relation between Canadian and American approaches to the coverage of the Russian economy continues to be largely consistent with expectations. No substantial divergences in regard to such a variable as *principal actor* of the story were found. At the same time the *Ottawa Citizen* provided its readers with slightly broader (in 3% of the stories the principal actor was a *joint venture*, while in the *Post* this category of business was not covered at all), and more even coverage. The content in the Canadian newspaper was 9% less fixated on *politicians* (25% vs. 34% in the *Post*) and 6% fewer of the items were classified as *other / indefinite* (22% vs. 28%). These 15% were distributed among categories 2 to 10, resulting in wider and more even representation of various actors.

Cross-tabulation of the *principal actor* by *attention scores* (Table 2 in Appendix II) produced no surprises. 48% of the front page economic stories in the *Washington Post* featured *politicians*, followed by *Russian business with strong government affiliations* (13%). In the *Ottawa Citizen*, stories on *politicians* were also given maximum prominence (34% of all medium attention items), followed by *Russian business with strong government affiliations* and *foreign government* (11% each).

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What is the place of the Russian economy on the global map of division of labor drawn by the Western media? In other words, what industries and sectors of the economy are covered more often than the others, and are there such industries? In fact the latter question is the most important one. Traditionally, the Soviet economy was in the shadow of political and military events, and as a state-planned economy, defied detailed analysis and attentive reporting by the news media of the West. Partially, this was due to a lack of sources of accurate data and expertise in a different economic system, but largely because particular developments within separate industries did not matter, since the real question was: how much longer would the whole system last? Today, however, the situation is dramatically different: the Russian economy is not isolated from the rest of the world, it is complex, diverse, and has its strongest and weakest points and a lot of Western money and other resources are involved in its development. Do the media follow and cover the Russian economy as economy, i.e. evenly, thoroughly, and specifically? Addressed theoretically this question implies two exactly opposite answers: “yes” because the Russian economy should be perceived by the media as a fully-fledged world market economy, and “no” because in reality it is not. The way it is perceived by the media determines the priorities and focus of the coverage. The pattern that emerges from the data in Table 10 (and further in tables 11 and 12) seem to point to the negative answer to this question. There is considerable support for the argument that the coverage tends to be general, superficial and ignorant of particular aspects of the

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Russian economy. The standard used by the North American media for the coverage of domestic economies is not found in the foreign economic news coverage.

Table 10.
SECTOR OF ECONOMY BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. General economic issue	35	56	48
2. Stock market	1	3	2
3. Oil and gas	2	4	3
4. Coal industry	4	2	3
5. Nuclear industry	5	3	4
6. Natural resources extraction	2	0	1
7. Banking	2	3	2
8. Telecommunications	1	1	1
9. Retail trade	3	3	3
10. Agriculture	4	2	3
11. Heavy industry	2	3	3
12. Light industry	0	0	0
13. Other services	6	2	4
14. Entertainment	7	3	5
15. Other	26	16	20

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

The main point that can be immediately noted in Table 10 is that the largest percentage of stories covered general economic issues with respect to no particular

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sector. The *Ottawa Citizen* devoted 34% and the *Washington Post* 56% of total items to the coverage of the Russian economy as a whole. No sector or several sectors were singled out for more detailed consideration or received close attention. Even industries of mutual interest and co-operation between Russia and North America, like *oil and gas* and *agriculture*, failed to attract substantial coverage. Converted from percentage into absolute figures, the data show that, in any given sector of the economy included in the table, there were published from none to a maximum of seven items during the year, and the category best covered was *entertainment*.

Again, while the general pattern of coverage in the two newspapers was very similar, the *Ottawa Citizen* covered more sectors, distributing attention more evenly than the *Washington Post*, which again can be attributed to the difference in content sources. This pattern also reflects the *Citizen's* commitment to broader coverage at the expense of depth of analysis.

Additional cross-tabulation by *placement* and *size* (Tables 3 and 3.1 in Appendix II) also showed that stories on particular industries (categories 2 to 14) constituted four fifths of the content published in the business section. These tended to be shorter items, while *general economic issues* were as a rule covered by longer pieces and printed in the opening section.

*Findings and Analysis***Table 11.****LEVEL OF COVERAGE BY NEWSPAPER**

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Indefinite	18	32	26
2. Individual enterprise	13	10	11
3. Industrial	10	9	9
4. Municipal	5	1	3
5. Regional	3	2	2
6. National	37	30	33
7. International	13	15	14
8. Other	3	2	2

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

As another measure of thoroughness, all stories were analyzed in terms of the scale of coverage. To evaluate the depth of economic news, it was important to examine how closely the events or situations were followed and reported on by the press. Data on the *level of coverage* by newspaper are presented in the Table 11. It becomes apparent from this table that Russian economic issues tended to be covered at *indefinite* or general (*national* and *international*) levels. More than two thirds (68%) of the content in the *Ottawa Citizen* and over three quarters (77%) in the *Washington Post* fall into these three *macro* level categories. A rather significant divergence in the percentage of stories covering the economy at an *indefinite* level (18% in the *Citizen* compared to 32% in the *Post*) is perhaps explained by a relatively

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large number of analytical and speculative pieces (such as editorials and columns) dealing with general economic phenomena printed in American newspaper.

Among other level categories, both newspapers covered *individual enterprises* and separate *industries* much more extensively than *municipal* and *regional* economic developments. And finally, the comparison of the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Washington Post* in Table 11 provides additional evidence that Canadian foreign economic news content is slightly more diverse and more evenly distributed among different levels of coverage.

Table 11.1
LEVEL OF COVERAGE BY ATTENTION SCORES BY NEWSPAPER

	low		medium		high*
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Post (%)
1. Indefinite	18	19	19	33	48
2. Individual enterprise	16	16	9	7	9
3. Industrial	11	5	9	11	9
4. Municipal	5	2	4	1	0
5. Regional	4	0	2	4	0
6. National	33	33	40	29	26
7. International	14	23	11	13	9
8. Other	0	2	6	2	0

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

* Only one high attention story dealing with the issues of The Russian economy was published in the *Ottawa Citizen* during the 12 months studied. It was omitted while calculating the distribution of attention scores as statistically insignificant.

(Source: author's calculations)

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Data in Table 11.1 give some extra highlights to the above findings on the variable *level of coverage*. Cross-tabulation by attention scores shows that economic issues covered at *indefinite*, *national* and *international* levels were on average at least three times more visible than stories dealing with economic events at *micro* levels. Only 18% of high attention items in the *Post* and 24% of medium attention stories in the *Citizen* were concerned with *individual enterprise*, *industrial*, *municipal*, and *regional* levels of economy combined.

To complete the assessment of “specific economic vs. general international” approach to the coverage, this study also analyzed the content to determine whether events were reported from any certain economic perspective or angle, and, if so, what angles (or “functional aspects”) of Russian economic reality tended to be prioritized. The results of this inquiry are shown in Tables 12 and 12.1, which present the data on *functional aspect* of event by newspaper and by *type of event*.

In this area, do we find differences between US and Canadian coverage? The data demonstrate that 65% of items in the *Washington Post* and 60% in the *Ottawa Citizen* classified in the category *other/indefinite* (Table 12). This means that in the majority of cases, reports in both newspapers similarly did not consider any specific functional aspect of the economic issues they covered. The stories did not single out any one side of economic reality for close consideration but briefly went over a number of aspects or covered the economy as a general phenomenon. A good example of such coverage was frequently published articles on the economic

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platforms of the different political parties and what the Russian economy would look like if they were elected. This reluctance to look into particular aspects of events, or superficiality is characteristic of foreign news in general, and may be taken as another indication that the Russian economy is a subject of “international” rather than “economic” coverage (dichotomy expressed in Hypothesis II).

Table 12.
FUNCTIONAL ASPECT OF EVENT BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. Investment	10	11	11
2. Privatization	12	3	7
3. Management	6	9	8
4. Currency issue	2	2	2
5. Technology	5	2	3
6. Taxation	0	2	1
7. Accounting	0	0	0
8. Trade	6	6	6
9. Other / indefinite	60	65	63

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Apart from this broad observation, the data show considerable differences in distribution of percentages among categories 1 to 8 in Table 12. 31% of the stories (total average for two newspapers) were concerned with *investment*, *privatization*,

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management and *trade* issues, while the other four categories shared 4% of the coverage. The order of priorities in this case is directly related to the involvement of or importance to the West of the particular economic event covered. While *investment* and *trade* aspects of the Russian economy are immediately linked to North American money, *privatization* and *management* issues are important to the West because theoretically they should reflect the stability of the present system and irreversible nature of the new Russian capitalism.

Table 12.1
TYPE OF EVENT BY FUNCTIONAL ASPECT BY NEWSPAPER

	Negative		Neutral		Positive	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (5)	Post (%)
1. Investment	6	5	10	10	22	75
2. Privatization	8	10	15	2	0	0
3. Management	14	5	0	9	11	0
4. Currency issue	6	0	0	2	0	0
5. Technology	8	5	3	2	0	0
6. Taxation	0	0	0	2	0	0
7. Accounting	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Trade	0	15	9	5	11	0
9. Other/indefinite	58	60	63	67	56	25

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

These ethnocentric tendencies were also reflected in the data produced by the cross-tabulation of *functional aspect* by the *type of event* (Table 12.1). Three

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interesting points can be noted in this table, when examining categories 1 to 8. The highest percentage of stories covering *positive* events in both newspapers was concerned with foreign *investment* (category *other / indefinite* excluded). Coverage of *privatization*, on the other hand, tended to be associated with neutral or *negative* events. The Western media were alarmed by the series of scandals over privatization, which, in the case of the Communist victory in the elections, could result in a re-evaluation and cancellation of the whole privatization program. Finally, there was a visible difference between newspapers in presentation of *trade*-related issues. The *Washington Post* tended to report on *neutral* and *negative* developments, while the *Ottawa Citizen* on *neutral* and *positive*. This is unlikely to be a conceptual divergence and can perhaps be explained by a rather serious tension over the export of American poultry to the Russian market which happened in the studied period and was heavily covered by the *Post*, while Canadian - Russian trade relations during the same twelve months were stable and involved no controversy.

Data on the geographic distribution of coverage are presented in Table 13, *region* of Russia by newspaper. The function of this variable is twofold: apart from merely determining the evenness of coverage and showing the amount of attention paid to different parts of the country, it serves as another tool to exemplify the thoroughness of economic analysis in the sense that particular economic events take place in particular locations, which should theoretically be reflected on the pages of newspapers. To use a simplified analogy from the U.S. domestic coverage of

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economic affairs, the news on the oil industry is most likely to come from Texas or Alaska, on electronics from the Silicon Valley, on automobiles from Detroit, on the stock-market from New York or Chicago, and so on. Only reports on the budget deficit or foreign trade balance would originate in Washington, D.C. and talk about the American economy as a whole. Purely economic events, as a rule, are geographically specific and rarely affect or spread across the whole country. The latter is a privilege of politics and related macro-economic policy. Geographic focus, therefore, is another criteria to measure specificity or generalization of coverage.

Table 13.
REGION OF RUSSIA BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. All Russia	54	84	72
2. Moscow	25	7	14
3. St.-Petersburg	2	2	2
4. European Russia	10	3	6
5. Siberia	3	1	2
6. Far East	5	3	4
7. Northern Russia	1	1	1

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

The way in which stories were classified in this study did not relate the content to the story dateline - the place where the news was announced and from where it was reported - because traditionally most press-conferences are held and

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news-releases distributed in Moscow. Instead, the items were coded according to the region whose economy was mainly covered in the report. Data in Table 13 indicate that the coverage of the Russian economy was indeed primarily concerned with macro-economic national issues. 54% of all items in the *Ottawa Citizen* and 84% in the *Washington Post* covered *all Russia*. Among the regions, *Moscow* was covered most extensively in both newspapers (25% of the stories in the *Citizen* and 7% in the *Post*). Such an obvious overrepresentation of the nation's capital is explained by three main factors: a) bureau location and accessibility of sources; b) high concentration of foreign business (from night clubs to investment banks); and c) the city's own economic boom. The second largest region covered was *European Russia*, which again might be explained by easier accessibility. The key industrial region of *Siberia*, and the fast-developing free-trade zones of the *Far East* accumulated disproportionately small amounts of coverage (respectively 2% and 4%) indicating lack of attention to essential economic problems and conventional rather than innovative coverage.

It is clear from this table that overall the two newspapers tended to focus on general economic issues, and the distribution of attention among the regions was determined by foreign activity in those regions and technical reasons like bureau location and easy availability of sources. Once again the data suggest a pattern similar to that observed above, the *Ottawa Citizen* covered regions more widely than its American counterpart.

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To further explore the current portrayal of economic affairs in the Russian Federation by the two North American newspapers, this study used five conventional “dimensions” of coverage, data on which are presented below. Each “dimension” was concerned with a certain non-economic aspect of reported events, the measured frequency of reference to the aspect, and the prominence given to it. These additional “dimensions” provide more information to assess such characteristics of foreign coverage as politicization, relevance to the West, and negativism.

The findings on “*political dimension*” of the events indicate that, in the presentation of the capital newspapers of both countries, the Russian economy almost equals politics (Table 14). Only 21% of the economic stories in the *Ottawa Citizen* and 12% in the *Washington Post* did not contain direct reference to political matters in one way or the other. According to the picture delivered by the two newspapers to their audiences, economic issues in Russia constitute an inseparable part of political developments. In this respect, the coverage does not differ much from the times when the Soviet economy was an element in the monolithic state system, and it is not quite reflective of contemporary market conditions. Moreover, the role of the state (government) was emphasized in half of the articles printed in both newspapers: 50% of economic events reported by the *Ottawa Citizen* and 49% by the *Washington Post* involved political activity at the *government level*.

Table 14.

POLITICAL DIMENSION OF EVENT BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. No reference	21	12	16
2. Government level	50	49	49
3. Parliament level	2	2	2
4. Political party level (primarily communist)	8	7	8
5. Political party level (primarily non-communist)	3	2	2
6. Combination of both	6	5	6
7. Other political	11	23	18

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Among other categories of “*political dimension*”, significant attention was devoted to the coverage of the *Communist party* (8% of the content in Canadian and 7% in American newspaper). This certainly does not relate to the role of the party in the Russian economy, but reflects the fact that a Communist revival was the major concern of the West on the eve of the Russian Parliamentary and Presidential elections. On the whole, in respect to “*political dimension*” of the events, the coverage in the two newspapers was characterized by persistent similarity. The only significant difference was noted in the category *other political* (11% in the *Citizen* compared to 23% in the *Post*). This divergence can be explained by the fact that the

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American newspaper provided wider coverage of international politics which was classified as *other political*.

Table 14.1
POLITICAL DIMENSION BY ATTENTION SCORES BY NEWSPAPER

	low		medium		high*
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Post (%)
1. No references	26	23	17	7	4
2. Government level	47	47	51	49	52
3. Parliament level	0	2	4	2	0
4. Political party level (primarily communist)	5	5	11	6	17
5. Political party level (primarily non-communist)	4	0	2	4	0
6. Combination of both	5	5	6	5	9
7. Other political	12	19	9	27	17

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

* Only one high attention story dealing with the issues of The Russian economy was published in the Ottawa Citizen during the 12 months studied. It was omitted while calculating the distribution of attention scores as statistically insignificant.

(Source: author's calculations)

The high value placed by the Western media on political issues in the coverage of the Russian economy is confirmed and strengthened by the higher prominence given to politically "charged" stories. Table 14.1 portrays attention scores by "*political dimension*". In the *Washington Post* only 4% of the high attention stories did not refer to politics. 52% of the front page items on the Russian economy had to do with *government*, and stories concerning *Communist party's*

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activities and *other political* issues occupied 17% each. In the low attention category, on the other hand, content free of politics constituted 23% of total number and Communists'-related items only 5%. In the *Ottawa Citizen* 83% of all medium attention stories on the Russian economy had "*political dimension*", with 51% referring to *government* and 11% (second largest percentage) to *Communist party*.

Table 15 presents data on the "*reforms dimension*" of events by newspaper. Ever since Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost*, Russia has been undergoing a series of radical economic and political reforms. In general terms, these reforms were initiated in order to change the *administrative-command* systems in accordance with the liberal, free-market Western model adapted to local conditions. For the West, which enthusiastically welcomed and supported the changes, the course (speed and consistency) of reforms has become the ultimate criterion for determining whether the country is moving in the right (Western) or wrong (any other) direction. This study anticipated that economic events would be perceived and covered by the press in the general light of the reforms, since complicated economic developments acquire meaning and can be judged by the audience insofar as they fit a simple, understandable and relevant scheme. Theoretically, in order to attract maximum attention, this criterion of "meaningfulness" should also be complemented by negativism and sensationalism, which in this case would guarantee better coverage of the events threatening reforms.

Table 15
REFORMS DIMENSION OF EVENT BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. No references	33	42	38
2. Supporting reforms	9	9	9
3. Threatening reforms	30	19	23
4. Neutral	28	30	29

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Findings shown in Table 15 seem to support these assumptions. 67% of all stories on the Russian economy printed in the *Ottawa Citizen* and 58% in the *Washington Post* did refer to reforms. In other words, the majority of items were reflective and relevant to the Western perspective and most events were presented through the prism of its long-term interests. The Canadian newspaper tended to be more alarmist, devoting 30% of its coverage to the events *threatening reforms* and 28% to *neutral*. The *Washington Post* published more neutral (30%) than negative (19%) stories in respect to “reforms dimension”. Both newspapers quite distinctly regarded economic events *supporting reforms* as least important, devoting only 9% of the total content to the coverage of such events.

Table 15.1
REFORMS DIMENSION BY ATTENTION SCORES BY NEWSPAPER

	low		medium		high*
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Post (%)
1. No reference	42	61	23	37	26
2. Supporting reforms	11	7	6	11	9
3. Threatening reforms	33	16	25	14	44
4. Neutral	14	16	45	39	22

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

* Only one high attention story dealing with the issues of The Russian economy was published in the *Ottawa Citizen* during the 12 months studied. It was omitted while calculating the distribution of attention scores as statistically insignificant.

(Source: author's calculations)

The results of a cross-tabulation of the “*reforms dimension*” by *attention scores* are shown in Table 15.1. An imbalance in the percentage of stories covering events classified as *neutral* and *threatening reforms* between the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Washington Post* seems to be equalized by the amount of attention ascribed to these categories in each newspaper. There were fewer stories on events *neutral* to the future of Russian reforms in the Canadian paper but they received more prominence (45% of medium attention items) than reports on events undermining free-market initiatives (26% in medium attention category). In the *Washington Post* the order of priorities was the opposite: 44% of high attention items were *threatening reforms* vs. 22% *neutral*. In the end, the two newspapers presented two very similar overall pictures of events. In both newspapers, stories on the events

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supporting reforms were on average four times less frequently higher attention items than *threatening* reports. Finally stories without the “*reforms dimension*” tended to be hidden on the back pages in both newspapers: 42% of low attention items in the *Ottawa Citizen* and 61% in the *Washington Post*.

To verify the sustainability of these findings, the “*reforms dimension*” was also cross-tabulated by *forecast* (Table 4 in Appendix II). As may be expected, stories on the events *supporting reforms* tended to have an optimistic forecast, *threatening reforms* - a pessimistic one, and *neutral* contained either a mixed forecast or no forecast whatsoever.

Table 16.
CRIMINAL DIMENSION OF EVENT BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. No reference	74	80	78
2. Mafia related	8	8	8
3. Mafia and government corruption related	4	5	4
4. Government corruption related	4	2	3
5. Other criminal	11	5	8

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

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Data on the “*criminal dimension*” were collected in this project to enlarge and extend the evaluation of the negativism and sensationalism of coverage. The high news value of crime has been postulated and confirmed on more than one occasion. However, in this case study it was examined with a specific focus on economic content. Whether the Russian economy is perceived by the Western media as important and newsworthy enough to counterbalance the “general interest ” angle in the coverage of economic issues is a question addressed in Hypothesis II. Data on the “*criminal dimension*” (Table 16) seem to be consistent with findings on other variables and in a broad sense suggest that the two North American newspapers did not concentrate primarily on the economic aspects of reporting ¹⁷. Every fourth story on the Russian economy published in the *Washington Post* and every fifth in the *Ottawa Citizen* had to do with some form of criminal activity. Both newspapers tended to emphasize the role of the *Mafia* (8% of total content), while *government corruption* was the least covered category of the “*criminal dimension*” (3% on average). This underemphasis of government corruption is perhaps explained by the fact that the present government of Russia, despite all the criticism, was the one strongly supported by the West in face of the Communist alternative. It can also be noted in this table that in terms of the “*criminal dimension*” the coverage in the American and the Canadian newspaper was again characterized by extreme similarity. The comparison is especially interesting because of the lack of differences in two

¹⁷The argument can also be made that frequently reported criminal aspects of the Russian economy may properly reflect the real situation in the country. Since the problem of establishing reality cannot be solved in content analysis study, this particular finding remains admittedly open for interpretation.

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newspapers widely different in their source of content. Reliance of one on the wire services, and of the other on its own staff did not seem to affect their priorities in the selection of news.

Cross-tabulation of the “*criminal dimension*” by attention scores (Table 5 in Appendix II) did not add any new curious highlights to the overall picture. Not surprisingly crime-related stories tended to occupy a slightly bigger slot in the *high attention* than in the *low attention* category.

Table 17.
SOCIAL DIMENSION OF EVENT BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. No references	62	59	60
2. Secondary topic	27	39	34
3. Major accent	10	2	5

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

The impact of economic developments on particular groups of the population or society as a whole is not strictly speaking an economic category. It does not involve substantial consideration of any specific or conceptual economic matters, but deals primarily, if not exclusively, with their consequences. A good example of this would be stories on the total misery of retired senior people and inability of the state to do anything about it, or on the huge difference in the income and living standards

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between Muscovites and populations in other regions. Social aspects of coverage are attractive to both the newspaper and its readers because they are simple, colorful, and have a clearly articulated “human interest”. Concerns of other people are easily understood by wider audiences. On these grounds, Hypothesis II suggests that the “*social dimension*” should be rather heavily exploited by the press in the coverage of the Russian economy. Indeed, the data in Table 17 show that the social angle was “played up” in approximately 40% of all stories published in the two newspapers. The *Ottawa Citizen* put slightly more emphasis on social aspects than did the American paper, making them a *major accent* of 10% of all related items. The *Washington Post* tended to present the “*social dimension*” as a background for its reports on Russian economic issues: in 39% of the stories it was featured as a *secondary topic*. Despite these minor differences, the general treatment and prioritization of social aspects were nearly identical.

Cross-tabulation of the “*social dimension*” by *type of event* (Table 6 in Appendix II) established a moderate correlation between the involvement of social issues and the negativity of covered event. In both newspapers, the more “socially charged” the story was, the more frequently it tended to report on negative events.

Table 18.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION OF EVENT BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. No references	92	97	65
2. Secondary topic	4	3	3
3. Major accent	4	1	2

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Data on the last - “*environmental dimension*” are shown in Table 18. Being such an important category in domestic news, environmental issues did not appear to be considered nearly as important in the coverage of news related to the Russian economy. Environmental concerns were directly mentioned in only 8% of the stories printed in the *Ottawa Citizen* and 3% in the *Washington Post*. Such a manifest disregard for this “dimension” in contrast to the high attention paid to other non-economic “dimensions” of coverage indicates that apart from sound global catastrophes (of which none occurred in Russia in the period studied), environmental aspects of foreign events are not perceived to be newsworthy. This is entirely congruent with general trends in North American international news coverage, when in order to get covered foreign events should affect or involve Western interests, be unexpected, and preferably negative. Neither of these requirements are met in the case of environmental developments of a non-disastrous nature, which explains the lack of coverage of these developments.

Table 19.
FORECAST BY NEWSPAPER

	The Ottawa Citizen (%)	The Washington Post (%)	Total (%)
1. No forecast	51	63	58
2. Pessimistic	13	9	11
3. Mixed	26	22	24
4. Optimistic	10	7	8

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Finally, this study examined all content related to the Russian economy for presence and character of *forecast*. Findings reflected in Table 19 suggest three major observations. First of all, the data provide one more piece of evidence that the coverage in the two newspapers was characterized by persistent similarity in the general presentation of news. Although percentages within each category were somewhat different, the distribution of coverage between categories was seemingly the same. Overall the stories on the Russian economy in both newspapers tended to have either *no* or *mixed forecast*: these two categories combined constituted 78% of all items in the *Ottawa Citizen* and 85% in the *Washington Post*. At the same time, both newspapers published more stories with a *pessimistic* forecast (11% on average) than an *optimistic* one (8%). The same pattern (more negative than positive content)

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was previously found on the variable *type of event*, and it confirms that these findings were not accidental.

Cross-tabulation of *forecast* by *main topic*, *principal actor*, *sector of economy*, and *level of coverage* (tables 7 to 7.3 in Appendix II) revealed two notable tendencies. First, in both newspapers the stories tended to include an *optimistic forecast* if the *main topic* involved foreign participation, and a foreign actor was featured; and a *pessimistic forecast* if the *main topic* was *exclusively domestic*, and the *principal actor* Russian. Secondly, the forecast tended to be more optimistic if the story dealt with particular *industries* at micro levels, and more pessimistic if it reported on *general economic issues* at a *national level*. To a certain extent, these findings can be taken as a certain indirect descriptive support for the self-interest and generalization hypotheses.

On the whole, the findings show that the utilization of an extensive, multi-variable approach to the analysis of foreign coverage is effective and useful. The manifold nature of the collected data was necessary to document the consistency of revealed patterns. This established consistency allowed for reliable assessment of the coverage and rather positive conclusions about the hypothesized problems.

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Twenty years ago Colin Legum noticed that the extraordinary revolution in communications which allowed an increase in long distance wire transmission from 20,000 words per day to approximately 56,000 words per minute did not lead to a “corresponding increase in foreign coverage in Western newspapers” (Legum, 1978). In fact, the opposite occurred: newspapers reduced the amount of foreign news they published. To borrow Legum’s comparison, this study was undertaken to examine whether the collapse of Communism in Russia and its turn to what is commonly known as a “capitalist system” had an affect on the way the events of the country were covered by the news media of the West. The study was concerned with coverage of economic affairs, which constitute a separate, important category of news reporting, and more specifically with Western coverage of Russian economic affairs, an essential part of the transition to the free market, liberal model.

To explain the phenomenon of the decrease in foreign news despite technological breakthroughs in long distance wire transmission, Legum, like many others, points to the existence of well-known economic factors and news values that determine the size of the “newshole” and influence decisions of the foreign news gatekeepers. The present research analyzed relevant content in two leading Canadian and American newspapers based in the capital cities to describe their portrayal of the Russian economy and to see whether the same economic factors and news values were still in play as universal, powerful determinants of international coverage. Based on general theories of news values and related research discussed in Chapter

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II, three hypotheses have been put forward and should now be addressed and summarized in light of the findings discussed in the chapter above. Since there has been no positive agreement among communication scholars and no strong indication in previous works that the power of recognized news values may change circumstantially, all three hypotheses put forward in the present study assumed that what was true for international news coverage in general would also be true in the case of the coverage of the post-Communist Russian economy.

Politicization and Domesticism

Probably the most extensive study of foreign news coverage in the history of communication research was coordinated by the International Association for Mass Communication Research under the auspices of UNESCO and led participants to conclude that, in any part of the world, “news is politics, and newsmakers are government officials” (cited in Stevenson and Shaw, 1984). The IAMCR/UNESCO project was very impressive in volume and width of representation but did not have any particular geographic or thematic focus, and its conclusions were necessarily broad and generalized. In contrast, the present study was very narrow in its focus but the results are strikingly consistent with previously documented general trends. Collected data explicitly demonstrated that on the pages of the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Washington Post* Russian economic news was politics, and newsmakers were government officials. The activities of businesses - particularly Russian businesses -

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were not economic news, and, for that matter, not news at all. Unlike coverage of domestic economic affairs, the Russian economy was largely covered in a political rather than an economic context.

What does this finding indicate about the nature of the contemporary Western approach to the coverage of Russia, or about international coverage in general? To a certain extent it might be argued that the overpoliticization of economic news is evidence that the Western media are not entirely free of the baggage of the past and, depending on political developments, they still cautiously portray Russia as a potential friend or foe. As Wang observes, the media present Russian events, including economic events, as a “rivalry between hard core Communists and reformers, and between state controlled and free market economies” (Wang, 1995). Categorical evaluation of this argument would require an elaborate discourse analysis which was beyond the scope of this project, and might be an interesting area for future research. What the findings do indicate, quite transparently and positively, is that political issues have universal news value. Furthermore, the specific thematic and regional focus of coverage did not seem to affect their universality.

It can also be argued that the higher intensity of political issues in Russian economic coverage reflects the more important role of political institutions in the economy, which stems from the tradition of state intervention and control. It is hard to disprove this argument since there is no reliable instrument to establish reality. It seems likely, however, that the legislative and regulatory activities of the state do not entirely constitute the contemporary Russian economy, and that overpoliticization in

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this case is either a result of the old mindset of the press or, most likely, merely a reflection of general media trends and news values.

Interrelated categories of “proximity”, “meaningfulness” and “relevance”, unanimously held in communication theory¹⁸ as almost unquestionable determinants of foreign news selection, have suggested that the coverage of the Russian economy would be in a broad sense reflective of Western self-interest. Although the data obtained in this study to evaluate the relative news value of these factors were not as manifest as in the case of politicization, overall, the expectations were confirmed. Findings on a number of variables throughout the study demonstrated that apart from the direct involvement of Western interests in half of the stories concerning Russian economic issues, newspapers tended to cover events from the point of view of their possible relevance and importance to the West. This was reflected in the comparatively high attention devoted to the coverage of bilateral affairs, issues related to foreign investment and trade, the disturbing activities of the Communist party, and the frequent appeal to the course of Russian reforms. None of the findings in this study were fundamental and decisive enough to provide a basis for speculations about the dominance of the Western perspective in press reports, but on the whole the data do suggest that the coverage was overwhelmingly reflective of this perspective. Relevance and meaningfulness seemed to be nearly universal news values, regardless of the relations between the countries, and once again, of the particular focus of the coverage.

¹⁸ These criteria of foreign news selection were discussed in the *Gatekeeper Research* and *International Coverage* sections of the chapter *Theoretical Framework*.

“Human Interest” Angle

The dichotomy developed in the analysis of economic coverage in Chapter II suggested the existence of two possible approaches to the reporting of international economic news. Moreover, it revealed a rather sharp division into two very different, if not mutually exclusive, trends in the coverage of such news, conventionally called “economic” and “international”. The first one implies observant, specialized and educated reporting of particular business developments and consideration of specific market indicators that, for instance, characterize the coverage in the North American media of economic issues in such countries as the United Kingdom or Japan. The other one treats economic news from foreign countries as individual cases of general interest, occasionally granting broad coverage to economic events which have some attractive “human interest” twist. It has been argued that whether one or the other approach is employed by the media depends on the country’s position in the Western hierarchy of nations ¹⁹. Or, to turn it the other way around, the pattern of economic coverage may indicate the country’s ranking in that hierarchy. Applied to the subject of this case study, this theoretical layout serves to address one major conceptual question: what is the place of today’s Russia in the Western world view? Is it perceived as a peer, or still as a stranger? In terms of the coverage of economic

¹⁹ Various aspects of this composite argument were discussed in Chapter II. In particular, it refers to assumptions expressed in the works of Galtung and Ruge (1965), Hester (1973), and Rosenblum (1993)

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issues, the change in media attitudes would be reflected in an increase in the number of stories dealing with specific economic problems as opposed to the prevalence of general interest content. Analyzing an economy in transition, one would expect a high level of detailed coverage. The findings of this study suggest that this was not the case.

Numerous critical studies discussed in Chapter II have identified generalization, superficiality, and negativism as major characteristics of international news in the North American press and television. It was hypothesized in this analysis that the coverage of the Russian economy would follow this general line and specific economic angles would not be emphasized in newspaper reports. Several categories of data dealt with the evaluation of these aspects of coverage, overall providing considerable support for this hypothesis. As a rule, stories on the Russian economy were not placed in the business section of the newspaper and were rarely written by economic experts. They primarily covered general economic issues featuring politicians and governments, and only occasionally focused on businesses, Russian or foreign. Furthermore, economic issues tended to be covered at indefinite or macro levels and developments in particular industries or regions were rarely analyzed. In addition, reports overwhelmingly included and frequently emphasized social, political and other non-economic aspects of events. All these data combined leave no doubt that the general "international" approach outweighed the specific "economic" approach. The content analysis makes it clear that the standards used for coverage of

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the Russian economy are different from those employed for domestic economic reporting.

Regarding the accusation that the media focus primarily on the negative aspects of international news, the findings of this study provided no strong and obvious evidence to unquestionably justify such an allegation. The complaint of negativism which was widely advocated by the Third World countries in the debate over the New World Information Order was not, arguably, a clearly distinctive characteristic of the coverage of the Russian economy by the two Western newspapers. The negative stories on economic disorder, instability and decline did not seem to dominate the coverage, although concerns about crime, dishonest management or inconsistency in carrying out reforms were reported more frequently than achievements and success stories. Overall the data show that the coverage of the Russian economy tended to be neutral and somewhat more negative, which is generally consistent with the hypothesis but barely raises a separate alarming issue for discussion.

It is hard to tell from a single study whether the observed pattern of coverage of the Russian economy has changed or is changing. Further research is needed to document developments over time. The findings of the present analysis demonstrate that, although the coverage of Russia by the Western press is extensive and constant, the country, like many others, is not on the list of “elite” nations, and continues to be perceived and covered from a considerable distance.

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Uniformity of Coverage

The final major objective of this study was to compare the coverage between the newspapers of the two countries. Would Canadian and American newspaper readers gain a different image of the state (or motion) of the Russian economy? Previous researchers concerned with comparison of foreign news in the Canadian and American media (see section *International Coverage* in Chapter II) have pointed to minor structural rather than substantial differences, often explaining the uniformity of content by the secondary nature of Canadian international news. Indeed, the only significant divergences revealed by the content analysis of the coverage of economic affairs in Russia were related to the general manner of presentation of the news. As anticipated, the *Ottawa Citizen* tended to inform rather than educate its audience, publishing primarily short, straight-news items. The coverage in the *Citizen* was highly dependent on borrowed news and was somewhat broader than in the *Post*. The American newspaper, in turn, originated most of its related content, a significant part of which was composed of longer investigative and analytical stories pursuing fewer topics, but in more depth. None of the documented divergences were strikingly unusual or unexpected. On the contrary, what was remarkable was a persistent similarity of pattern between newspapers across all the categories of analysis dealing with essential thematic and subject matters.

The findings reported in the last chapter show unmistakably that, in terms of the selection and general treatment of Russian economic events, the coverage in

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American and Canadian newspapers was extremely homogeneous. With a few minor exceptions, the types and proportions of news were almost identical. Neither huge differences in sources of content nor particularities of bilateral relations (Canadian-Russian relations in the period studied were seemingly non-controversial, nevertheless the coverage in the *Ottawa Citizen* was slightly more negative than in the *Post*) affected the uniformity. It seems reasonable to suggest that other, most likely intrinsic, factors are bringing uniformity to foreign news coverage. Canadian and American print media share the pattern of ownership and the standardized production cycle, which inevitably leads to similar outcomes. Similarities in journalism training and professional practices may play as important a role in producing more homogeneous coverage. Finally, the universal nature of the news values should be emphasized once again. Detailed analysis of factors affecting the uniformity of foreign news goes far beyond the scope of this work and is the subject of a separate study based on a more elaborate theoretical model. What follows from the findings of the present content analysis is that the readers of the major capital newspapers in Canada and The United States are exposed to the very same image of the contemporary Russian economy, and this image is rather general and vague.

It is likely that this study has raised many questions and left still others unanswered. Due to the specific nature of the subject matter and to the limitations in sample size and temporal scale, the conclusions of this study cannot necessarily be widely applied to other issues in the field of communication studies. However, this is not to say that this project is entirely limited by its constraints; it may provide

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direction to other studies. Extended analyses on regional and national newspapers could be done. It might also be interesting and useful to compare coverage of the same issues by newspapers of different countries, such as the U.S. or Canada and Britain. Furthermore, repeated observations over time using the same methodology might permit the assessment of existing changes in patterns of coverage. Finally the study's focus could be widened to include non-economic aspects of reporting. Thus, as specific as this study may be, it does open avenues for future investigation and further research that may enrich the field of international communication research.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

MEDIA SURVEY CODING SHEET

Headline Identification

Variable	Description	Column
1	<u>Date (dd.mm.yy)</u>	
2	<u>Name of Newspaper</u> 1 - Ottawa Citizen, 2 - Washington Post	
3	<u>Reporting Source</u> 1 - staff reporter, 2 - staff editorialist, 3 - staff columnist, 4 - bureau, 5 - third party expert, 6 - wire service / agency, 7 - other	
4	<u>Type of item</u> 1 - news, 2 - news backgrounder, 3 - editorial, 4 - column/commentary, 5 - other	
5	<u>Number of words</u> 1 - 1-250, 2 - 250-500, 3 - 500-1000, 4 - 1000-2000, 5 - 2000+	
6	<u>Locale from Which Story Was Reported</u> 1 - Russia, 2 - Canada, 3 - US, 4 - other	
7	<u>Placement</u> 1 - opening section, 2 - business section, 3 - other	
8	<u>Main Topic Featured in the Item</u> 1 - exclusively domestic, 2 - domestic affecting western business interest, 3 - multilateral international, 4 - bilateral international, 5 - other	
9	<u>Type of Event Covered</u> 1 - negative, 2 - neutral, 3 - positive	
10	<u>Principal Actor Featured in the Story</u> 1 - politician(s), 2 - supranational body, 3 - Russian purely private business, 4 - Russian business with strong government affiliation, 5 - Russian government body, 6 - foreign business, 7 - foreign government body, 8 - joint venture, 9 - Russian businessman, 10 - foreign businessman, 11 - other/indefinite	

11	<u>Sector of Economy Covered</u> 1 - general economic issue, 2 - stock market, 3 - oil and gas, 4 - coal industry, 5 - nuclear industry, 6 - natural resources extraction, 7 - banking, 8 - telecommunications, 9 - retail trade, 10 - agriculture, 11 - heavy industry, 12 - other services, 13 - entertainment, 14 - other	
12	<u>Level at Which Economic Issue is Covered</u> 1 - indefinite, 2 - individual enterprise(s), 3 - industrial, 4 - municipal, 5 - regional, 6 - national, 7 - international, 8 - other	
13	<u>Functional Aspect of Economic Issue Covered</u> 1 - investment, 2 - privatization, 3 - management, 4 - currency issue, 5 - technology, 6 - taxation, 7 - accounting, 8 - trade, 9 - other/indefinite	
14	<u>Region of Russia Covered in the Item</u> 1 - all Russia, 2 - Moscow, 3 - St.-Petersburg, 4 - European Russia, 5 - Siberia, 6 - Far East, 7 - Northern Russia	
15	<u>"Political Dimension" of Event Covered</u> 1 - no reference, 2 - government level, 3 - parliament level, 4 - political party level (primarily communist), 5 - political party level (primarily non-communist), 6 - combination of both, 7 - other political	
16	<u>"Reforms Dimension" of Event Covered</u> 1 - no references, 2 - supporting reforms, 3 - threatening reforms, 4 - neutral	
17	<u>"Social Dimension" of Event Covered</u> 1 - no references, 2 - secondary topic, 3 - major accent	
18	<u>"Criminal Dimension" of Event Covered</u> 1 - no references, 2 - mafia related, 3 - mafia and government corruption related, 4 - government corruption related, 5 - other	
19	<u>"Environmental Dimension" of Event Covered</u> 1 - no references, 2 - secondary topic, 3 - major accent	
20	<u>Forecast (if any)</u> 1 - no forecast, 2 - pessimistic, 3 - mixed, 4 - optimistic	
21	<u>Attention Score *</u> 1 - low, 2 - medium, 3 - high	

* Items were coded according to the following formula: 2 points - the item is on the front page of the opening section, 1 - the text is accompanied by picture or cartoon, 1 - the item is on the front, third or editorial page of any section.

An item therefore could be scored from 0-4 points.

0 - low, 1-2 - medium, 3-4 - high

APPENDIX II

DATA FREQUENCIES

Table 1
LOCALE OF STORY BY REPORTING SOURCE
 (The Washington Post)

	Staff reporter	Staff editorialist	Staff columnist	Bureau	Third party expert	Wire services	Other
1. Russia	0	0	0	95	27	36	33
2. Canada	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
3. US	95	100	0	0	67	55	67
4. Other	5	0	0	4	7	9	0

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 1.1
LOCALE OF STORY BY REPORTING SOURCE
 (The Ottawa Citizen)

	Staff reporter	Staff editorialist	Staff columnist	Bureau	Third party expert	Wire services	Other
1. Russia	17	0	0	95	0	75	0
2. Canada	83	100	100	0	0	10	0
3. US	0	0	0	5	0	4	0
4. Other	0	0	0	0	100	11	0

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 2**PRINCIPAL ACTOR OF STORY BY ATTENTION SCORE BY NEWSPAPER**

	low		medium		high*
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Post (%)
1. Politician(s)	18	28	34	33	48
2. Supranational body	9	9	0	2	4
3. Russian purely private business	4	5	6	5	4
4. Russian business with strong government affiliations	11	5	11	7	13
5. Russian government body	12	14	4	4	0
6. Foreign business	9	12	4	6	0
7. Foreign government body	7	12	11	7	0
8. Joint venture	5	0	0	0	0
9. Russian businessman	2	2	0	2	0
10. Foreign businessman	4	0	2	0	4
11. Other / indefinite	19	14	28	34	26

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

* Only one high attention story dealing with the issues of The Russian economy was published in the Ottawa Citizen during the 12 months studied. It was omitted while calculating the distribution of attention scores as statistically insignificant.

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 3.
SECTOR OF ECONOMY BY PLACEMENT BY NEWSPAPER

	Opening section		Business section		Other	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)
1. General economic issue	40	61	13	25	29	61
2. Stock market	2	1	0	15	0	0
3. Oil and Gas	2	4	0	10	4	0
4. Coal industry	4	3	0	0	4	0
5. Nuclear industry	4	4	13	0	4	0
6. Natural resources	0	0	25	0	0	0
7. Banking	0	4	25	0	0	6
8. Telecommunications	0	0	13	10	0	0
9. Retail Trade	4	2	0	10	0	0
10. Agriculture	2	1	13	10	7	0
11. Heavy industry	0	2	0	10	7	6
12. Light industry	0	0	0	0	0	0
13. Other services	9	2	0	5	0	0
14. Entertainment	4	3	0	5	14	0
15. Other	28	16	0	0	32	28

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 4
REFORMS DIMENSION BY FORECAST BY NEWSPAPER

	No forecast		Pessimistic		Mixed		Optimistic	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)
1. No reference	42	53	15	8	25	19	40	50
2. Supporting reforms	8	4	0	0	0	16	50	50
3. Threatening reforms	23	14	54	69	39	22	10	0
4. Neutral	28	29	31	23	36	44	0	0

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding
(Source: author's calculations)

Table 3.1
SECTOR OF ECONOMY BY NUMBER OF WORDS BY NEWSPAPER

	1-250		250-500		500-1000		1000-2000		2000+*	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)
1. General economic issue	38	50	29	43	30	54	62	63	54	54
2. Stock market	0	13	3	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
3. Oil and Gas	0	13	7	7	0	5	0	0	0	8
4. Coal industry	6	0	7	0	2	5	0	0	0	0
5. Nuclear industry	0	0	0	0	11	5	0	2	0	0
6. Natural resources	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
7. Banking	6	0	3	7	0	2	0	4	8	8
8. Telecommunications	0	0	0	14	0	0	8	0	0	0
9. Retail Trade	6	13	0	7	5	0	0	4	0	0
10. Agriculture	0	13	3	0	2	0	15	4	0	0
11. Heavy industry	0	0	0	0	5	7	0	2	0	0
12. Light industry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13. Other services	0	0	7	7	7	0	8	4	0	0
14. Entertainment	6	0	7	7	9	5	0	0	0	0
15. Other	37	0	32	7	27	12	8	19	30	30

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

* There were no related items longer than 2000 words in the Ottawa Citizen

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 5
PRINCIPAL ACTOR OF STORY BY ATTENTION SCORE BY NEWSPAPER

	low		medium		high*
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Post (%)
1. No reference	79	84	68	80	74
2. Mafia related	11	9	4	8	4
3. Mafia and government corruption related	2	5	6	5	9
4. Government corruption related	4	0	4	2	4
5. Russian government body	5	2	17	6	9

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

* Only one high attention story dealing with the issues of The Russian economy was published in the Ottawa Citizen during the 12 months studied. It was omitted while calculating the distribution of attention scores as statistically insignificant.

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 6
SOCIAL DIMENSION BY TYPE OF EVENT BY NEWSPAPER

	Negative		Neutral		Positive	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (5)	Post (%)
1. No reference	44	60	71	59	78	50
2. Secondary topic	33	30	25	40	11	50
3. Major accent	21	10	3	1	11	0

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 7
MAIN TOPIC BY FORECAST BY NEWSPAPER

	No forecast		Pessimistic		Mixed		Optimistic	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)
1. Exclusively domestic	49	60	77	54	46	38	30	30
2. Domestic affecting Western business interests	11	5	15	23	11	9	10	10
3. Multilateral international	17	7	0	15	7	25	0	20
4. Bilateral international	17	25	8	0	29	19	50	40
5. Other	6	2	0	8	7	9	10	0

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding
(Source: author's calculations)

Table 7.1
PRINCIPAL ACTOR BY FORECAST BY NEWSPAPER

	No forecast		Pessimistic		Mixed		Optimistic	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)
1. Politician	26	38	23	39	25	31	20	0
2. Supranational body	8	3	0	0	4	9	0	10
3. Russian purely private business	6	4	8	8	0	0	10	20
4. Russian business with strong government affiliations	13	7	0	0	11	13	10	0
5. Russian government	11	7	8	0	7	3	0	10
6. Foreign business	2	7	0	0	18	3	10	20
7. Foreign government	8	5	0	15	4	6	40	20
8. Joint venture	2	0	8	0	4	0	0	0
9. Russian businessman	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 Foreign businessman	2	1	0	0	7	0	0	0
11. Other	20	24	54	39	21	34	10	20

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 7.2

SECTOR OF ECONOMY BY FORECAST BY NEWSPAPER

	No forecast		Pessimistic		Mixed		Optimistic	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)
1. General economic issue	26	53	46	69	32	72	20	20
2. Stock market	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	10
3. Oil and gas	4	5	0	0	0	3	0	0
4. Coal industry	6	2	0	0	4	3	0	0
5. Nuclear industry	2	1	8	0	11	3	0	20
6. Natural resources extraction	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0
7. Banking	2	5	0	0	0	0	10	0
8. Telecommunications	0	2	0	0	0	0	10	0
9. Retail trade	2	4	8	0	0	0	10	0
10. Agriculture	2	2	8	0	4	0	10	10
11. Heavy industry	4	3	0	8	0	0	0	10
12. Light industry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13. Other services	0	1	8	8	18	0	0	10
14. Entertainment	8	3	0	0	7	0	10	10
15. Other	33	15	23	15	18	19	30	10

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

Table 7.3
LEVEL OF COVERAGE BY FORECAST BY NEWSPAPER

	No forecast		Pessimistic		Mixed		Optimistic	
	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)	Citizen (%)	Post (%)
1. Indefinite	28	33	8	15	11	31	0	30
2. Individual enterprise	6	13	15	15	21	0	20	10
3. Industrial	11	5	8	0	7	16	10	30
4. Municipal	2	1	8	0	11	0	0	10
5. Regional	2	2	0	8	7	0	0	0
6. National	34	25	62	62	32	40	30	0
7. International	15	17	0	0	7	13	30	20
8. Other	2	3	0	0	4	0	10	0

NOTE: Columns may not total 100% because of rounding

(Source: author's calculations)

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