

the **fleet sheet's final word**

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Putin in Bucharest



Information about the Nato summit, which begins today in Bucharest, is so ambiguous that a favorite trick of Kremlinologists in the 1980s - scouring the pages of Izvestia to understand the Soviet system - might be a useful way to glean clues about what is about to transpire. From Izvestia we learn, for example, that everyone is fearing the arrival in Bucharest of Vladimir Putin; that the only alternative to holding normal talks with Russia on the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, missile defense, Kosovo and Iran is confrontation; that Ukrainians are so against Nato membership for their country that they met George Bush with "Cowboy Go Home" banners; and that a Putin-Bush roadmap to be agreed to on April 6 will contain a formulation on missile defense. It's only one source, and a Kremlin-controlled one at that, but Izvestia certainly gives the impression that Russia thinks it will be the one most influencing the outcome of the Bucharest summit.



Prague
April 1-3, 2008

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