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NATO AS THE PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT OF SECURITY IN EUROPE

by
Lukasz P. Bulka ©

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I dedicate this work to my parents and my brother.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In the course of my studies in Political Science, I have come to realize the significance this particular body of knowledge has for me. The reasons are more obvious than I would have ever thought, because they are directly related to my personal history; specifically to the fact that by the age of twenty one I had the opportunity to live in three different countries. Only by mere coincidence do all three of these countries figure into the heated debate over NATO.

The United States, which is my current place of residence, is without a doubt the most powerful member of the North Atlantic Alliance. Living in France, where I studied for several years, helped me in understanding the Western European perspective. The Eastern European perspective, in this case, can be signified by my native country Poland.

Having experienced this cultural triptych, I have come to understand the dynamics of the debates concerning NATO, especially with regard to the issue of the inclusion of the Eastern European states. As a result, the essay that follows is an attempt to explore the facts on NATO, through the prism of my personal understanding and experience while using the academic resources at hand. I could have not submitted this work if I had not received help and encouragement from my advisor, Professor Howard H. Lentner. I would like to acknowledge his guidance and expertise. Thank you.

Lukasz P. Bulka

INTRODUCTION

In April 1949 Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States signed the North Atlantic Treaty which brought into being an association of sovereign states "united in their determination to preserve their security through mutual guaranties and stable relations with other countries" (**NATO Handbook** 17). The NATO Handbook, an official publication of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, states that the essential purpose of NATO "is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter" (**NATO Handbook** 17). Another objective of the Alliance created under the North Atlantic Treaty is the "establishment of a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe" (**NATO Handbook** 17). To achieve its goal, the Organization has considered common values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law as the basis of existence. In addition to the goals listed above, "NATO also embodies the Transatlantic link by which the security of North America is permanently tied to the security of Europe" (emphasis added) (**NATO Handbook** 17).

For almost five decades, NATO has been deterring a possible Soviet threat. The Alliance represented a countercoalition to the Alliance of the Soviet Union and its satellites. Moreover, NATO activities led to the development of peaceful relations among several European states, especially the former adversaries: France and Germany. NATO was also successful in preventing a nuclear war and stopping the arms race, thanks to the cooperation with Soviet Union during the last years of its existence.

The end of the Cold War and the present need to make new political arrangements in Europe requires NATO to review its objectives and to ensure itself again the role of the principal architect of security of new Europe. This paper argues that NATO's role is to provide a framework for the creation of new united Europe based on the assumption that

the security of individual members of the Alliance results in overall stability of the continent. Throughout this work I will examine various European institutions and their relationship with NATO in order to establish a clear hierarchy of the security related organizations. My goal is to prove that the transformation of the security structure in Europe requires NATO to remain the main security guarantor on the continent. This paper also argues that Russia remains the greatest threat to European stability, which justifies the expansion of the Alliance. Furthermore, I will explain why this new security structure must include the transatlantic link and how this tie can be maintained.

CHAPTER 1

Definition of Goals: Security versus Stability

The notions of security and stability are often confused and are therefore misleading. By definition, security is an assurance of safety and certainty. This quality or condition can be endangered by a threat or by direct military action. On the other hand, stability means constancy, steadiness or firmness (**The Webster Library of Universal Knowledge** 759, 814-815). While NATO faces the emergence of new political arrangement in the wake of the Cold War, it also faces questions of its own survival. Is it fit to exist in the new, pan-European design? This paper will try to show that it is. Even with a positive answer, additional questions arise. What should it become first: the guarantor of security for its member states, or the provider of conditions vital to maintain the stability of the continent. The latter may be the ultimate outcome of the first, but they are not the same.

Since its beginning, NATO's main goal was to guarantee the security of the allied states. This proved to be an excellent policy to ensure stability in Western Europe, for two reasons. First, bound by a military agreement and Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, individual states abandoned aggressive policies toward one another and did not challenge the status quo of the region. (1) Secondly, the entire zone has had no record of an outside military attack, as no external power could afford to involve itself in a conflict on such a scale as would be invoked by the application of Alliance's forces. Today, the principles must not change. NATO's survival and further success lie in its Cold War legacy and strength. With the revolutions and democratization, politicians, officials, and citizens in Central and Eastern Europe began expressing the desire for their countries to join NATO. Largely in response to this, NATO created the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. The inaugural meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council took place on 20 December 1991 with the participation of the Foreign Ministers or representatives of NATO countries and of six Central and Eastern European countries as well as the three Baltic states. The role of the NACC is to facilitate cooperation on security and related issues between the participating countries at all levels and to oversee the process of developing closer institutional ties as well as informal links between them. The extension of the NATO security warranty to new members and their commitment for common defense will result in the expansion of regional stability. This presumption does not advocate granting NATO membership to any country, but calls for individual treatment of each state knocking on the alliance door without making it wait for acceptance until all its

neighbors send their permission. The process of enlargement is not an easy one, but NATO has gone through other phases just as difficult. Throughout the period of the Cold War, NATO has been a strong and influential decision maker. Paradoxically, since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Alliance has become more and more indecisive and ineffective. It has surrendered its potency to dragging and unending discussions, which only show that NATO has been losing its main feature: the ability to act coherently when faced with a serious security challenge.

The challenge today is to design a secure and stable Europe, where the well being of all states is ensured by transparent and unquestioned provisions. This means that NATO will accept into its membership those states which prove to be successful in the implementation of democratic values, a free market economy, and the resolution of any ethnic or minority issues. The new democratic states of Central Europe have already joined the Partnership for Peace, in which their defense systems are undergoing the process of adaptability to NATO military structures. When their societies, governments and armies fit the requirements of NATO, the Alliance should grant them membership, ensuring that no spheres of influence by one regional power emerge and thus challenge the new era of peace and prosperity in Europe.

Europe today, no longer ruled by the rivalry of two superpowers, is on the verge of building its security structure. A structure which could combine the realist principles of power and security with the neo-liberal urge to develop international relations within a framework of cooperation and diverse international institutions. (2) Economic and political ties, unifying and binding Europe to goals like the facilitation of trade, the creation, of a unified currency, and the elimination of state borders, call for a pan-European security regime. This paper is going to discuss the question of why NATO should evolve from a transatlantic alliance to a Euro-Atlantic regime, one which would include the original NATO partners as well as the Central-European states. The following paragraphs deal with the question why NATO should become the supreme organization responsible for collective defense in Europe.

Among several international organizations established to deal with security issues in Europe, the North Atlantic Alliance has the actual empirical record of successfully conducting military actions and fulfilling its objectives. The initial goal of NATO to deter the Soviet threat was accomplished over the course of the Cold War and then became passé with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The intervention in Kuwait, undertaken by members of NATO and other states, also ended with a victory of the allied countries. Most recently, NATO formed IFOR to terminate the war in the former Yugoslavia. The alliance proved its political credibility and practical efficiency, while Europe failed to bring about peace in Bosnia. These three examples are only initial arguments which the following section provides to advocate the continuity of NATO's leading position in the European security architecture.

NATO - the executive military organization in Europe

A discussion of the fundamentals of the future security structure starts with the strong statement that NATO provides Europe with its essential means of defense. NATO has a well developed, trained, and legitimate infrastructure. Thus, it seems appropriate to discuss all policies related to security issues within the current institutional arrangement in which NATO remains the leading actor. This paper advocates that NATO's success in the Cold War conflict provides incentives for the continuity of its existence. It also suggests that NATO become the executive military agency for the new, united Europe. From this perspective one can develop several modes of analysis for aspects related to the future security architecture in Europe. These are the relationship between newly created and old security-related institutions, and NATO; plans to create the European pillar of NATO, the future chain of command, and military capabilities. Today, in addition to NATO, other security organizations have emerged to claim their role in establishing defense policies and to participate in the building of the new European security structure. The two most important of them are the Western European Union (WEU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The only transnational organization which has expressed serious plans to establish its own military is the Western European Union. In a report on organizing security in Europe, the Assembly of WEU stated that it had reserved itself the right to have the sole control of the structure and activities of its defense system, at the same time recognizing all obligations pertaining to NATO (**Assembly of Western European Union Extraordinary Session: Declaration** (3) n. pag.). The defense component of the Western European Union is an issue raised in the Maastricht Treaty. The document's provisions secured the mutually supportive character of the two organizations by urging the European partner to ensure compatibility of its military policies with those of NATO. The role of the two is also to facilitate "a smooth integration" of the former Soviet bloc states into Western security structures (Van Mierlo 7).

While NATO's role is defined here as the guarantor of security for the Alliance member states, the role of a WEU military structure would be to protect the security of the continent as well as European interests beyond the continent. It is evident that Europeans seek a means to develop their own military capabilities, which would make them less dependent on the United States, especially in regard to issues of security in Europe. The idea of a European military pillar may be interpreted in two ways. The first is that Europe wants to have greater freedom to decide on the operational issues of its own territory. This aspect can be further explained by the European will to conduct military operations of its own without being limited to the use of NATO resources and therefore to be ruled by NATO's commanders (Zelikow 10). The second interpretation is that with the enlargement of NATO and the addition of new members to the European Union, NATO will need support from Europe to be able to face potential challenges to the security of all its members. The European pillar would then be used if needed, in conjunction with NATO's forces, to counter threats.

The defense system of the Western European Union must also be discussed with regard to the future of the WEU and the EU. While "WEU countries agreed in 1991 that the WEU should be a means of reinforcing Europe's contribution to NATO," the European

Union is not equipped to have military responsibilities (**Assembly of Western European Union Extraordinary Session: Declaration** n. pag.). The Maastricht Treaty, however, calls for including security and defense among the union's activities. Creating a European military pillar in NATO raises the issue of an eventual merger of the WEU and the EU. The question at this point is whether the defense policies of the WEU will be subordinated to the executive role of the EU.

If the former is absorbed by the latter, the European Union would automatically be provided with authority to have its own defense policy. It is therefore imperative to ensure that the merger is accompanied by the integration of the WEU defense policy to the political system of the European Union. Such an agenda has been advocated by the United Kingdom, which refuses to accept any potential subordination of the WEU defense to the European Council. Sir John Gulden, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom on the North Atlantic and the Western European Council said that subordinating the WEU to political direction by the EU "would be [putting] institutional tidiness and the illusion of progress before Europe's real security needs" (Goulden 22). The Political Committee of the Western European Union stated in its report that "one of the most important effects of including security and defense in the European Union's activities should be to prompt the Union to be more rigorous than it has been in the past about admitting new members" (DePuig n. pag.). Various requirements for membership in these few international organizations make it the major obstacle for the European powers to reach consensus on the hierarchy of the security policy makers in Europe. The main reason why NATO is considered here as the ultimate security organization in Europe derives from the assumption that when two organizations deal with the same issues a consensus reached by the governments of the WEU countries may not be supported with the same enthusiasm by all members of NATO. In the case of the European Union it would be just as complicated to work out a coherent strategy because, for example, Norway, Turkey, and Iceland are not members of the EU but belong to NATO.

While the Western European states seek consolidation and debate the future activities of the European Union, NATO should remain the centerpiece of the security framework in Europe. The emerging defense structure of the WEU, and the projected involvement of the European Union in the security affairs must be limited to the role of contributing partners in the larger Euro-Atlantic security regime advocated in this paper. Various points of analysis and arguments suggest that NATO, in its transformation should avoid becoming a discussion forum or to duplicate the responsibilities of other international institutions. In the case of Europe, an organization that is expected to deal with more global challenges to European stability and security is the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. A strengthening and reform of the CSCE has been initiated by the change of name of this body from a vague "conference" to a more authoritative and formal "organization". To many observers, the OSCE seems to be a body which could become the main forum where European security issues would be discussed. Richard Holbrooke, for example, thinks that the role of the OSCE within the new security framework should concentrate on more global security aspects, but on a smaller scale than the United Nations. In the OSCE, Holbrooke sees a place for negotiations where

members of NATO and other countries have individual veto rights (Holbrooke 47-48). Russia also holds a seat in this organization, as do the former Soviet bloc countries and non-members of NATO or the EU.

The principles of the OSCE have to be clearly defined. As Karl Kaiser, pointed out in his essay "Reforming NATO," Russia already tried to strengthen the CSCE, which could give the Kremlin more direct institutional influence on European security issues. The West rejected the Russian plan (136).

Philip Zelikow reminds us about the plan to transform the former CSCE into an organization which would "absorb military alliances and turn into an effective pan-European security institution" (11). Western European states have never approved of this idea. It is important to stress the fact that the OSCE lacks the authority and infrastructure to provide the military support to enforce eventual operations.

The purpose of the OSCE and NATO must be clearly distinguished. Both are key components of the new European security architecture. The role of the former is to become a forum for global discussions on security issues. The main operational strategy of the OSCE is "to improve security by building new forms of cooperation based on consensus" (Holbrooke 48). NATO, with its new component, the Partnership for Peace contingent, is expected to be equipped with the exclusive authority to use military action. The Partnership for Peace provides a framework for military exercises and activities of the NATO members and their Partners. The U.S. and Russia, the two powers which are the most controversial elements of the European security design, are also members of the OSCE. Their veto privilege, as well as their international status, can make the existence of the OSCE an efficient and legitimate diplomatic organization which would have a rather advisory, parliamentary character. The presence of 53 nations representing various cultures and interests makes the OSCE an excellent vehicle to stimulate cooperation and provide policy-type solutions to disputes.

The OSCE is the most transatlantic of all the three organizations examined in this paper. It covers the wide area eastward from Vancouver to Vladivostok and therefore may serve as an excellent channel for multilateral exchanges of opinions. What the OSCE lacks is substantial influence. To compare the OSCE with NATO, the Alliance's zone is smaller but NATO possesses military potential to implement its security decisions. The characteristics of the two should remain unchanged as the roles of the two organizations are being defined within the emerging security structure in Europe. In its report on organizing security in Europe, members of the Western European Union Political Committee suggest that the OSCE become the second pillar of the European security architecture. The first includes NATO, the European Union, Western European Union and the Council of Europe. The objective of the second is described as to opiate "a comprehensive system of preventive diplomacy ..." (de Puig n. pag.). Deriving from this analysis of the various relationships between international organizations, recently created forums, and councils, a true European security can be established only if the potentially overlapping goals and the objectives of several institutional units serve as branches of

one coherent and capable organization. Those features can be found in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In addition to arguments against an institutional rivalry and the overlapping of functions and objectives of various security organizations in Europe, I would like to stress the importance of the transatlantic link which can only be maintained through the continuous existence of NATO. The involvement of the United States in Europe will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Recalling that security underlines stability, it is important to note that security and defense cannot be effective without a strong military structure which today is still dominated by American capabilities. Ensuring the dominant position of NATO is equal to the reaffirmation of the indivisibility of the transatlantic link.

CHAPTER 2

A Transatlantic or a European Security Organization?

In anticipating the "grand finale" of Europe's unification, a new framework for the U.S.-EU relationship is yet to be designed. If the premise of a stable consolidated Europe based upon security is to facilitate cooperation and eliminate economic and nationalistic conflicts, the United States and the European Union are faced with providing an efficient bilateral relationship. "The goals should be to take the U.S.-EU relations as seriously as those between the United States and any EU member" (Serfaty 56). This relationship should be achieved through international institutional means, rather than on an individual basis. America suggested to Europe a more unified political arrangement nearly fifty years ago; now the U.S. has to learn how to cope with the outcome of this post WWII initiative. Similarly, a unified Europe should develop a set of consistent policies toward the United States. The European Union, although still in the process of being built, will eventually serve as an association of states bound to develop and to follow its own laws. Their provisions will ensure the achievement of goals and the fulfillment of obligations. While one common market, currency, and legal system will call for cooperation among the member countries, an independent institution, NATO, already exists to ensure the security that underlines stability in the region. This stability is necessary to reach the ultimate objective, which is to create a coherent political system encompassing all players on the continent.

The unification of Europe is not set against the United States. The U.S. is not a European state, and thus it is not a member of the European Union. Both sides are aware, however, that if the transatlantic tie within NATO is not maintained, the U.S. does not fit automatically in any of the existing, exclusively European institutions. The North Atlantic Alliance accommodates both Europe and the United States. NATO with the United States included as the provider and a partner in the security organization, eliminates the security dilemma that would otherwise emerge. Robert Jervis defines security dilemma as "many of the means by which a state tries to increase its security decrease the security of others" (Jervis 312).

During the Cold War, the presence of the United States did not allow Germany to increase its security and therefore fear or uncertainty were no longer a characteristic of bilateral relations between France and Germany and between the United Kingdom and Germany. The status of a superpower held by the U.S. throughout the Cold War has been shared by the American party with its European partner in the NATO context. NATO kept "the Soviets out, the Germans down, and the Americans in." This eliminated any possibility of Western Europe feeling threatened by the overwhelming power of the United States. The common enemy was exclusively Soviet Union while the German threat ceased to exist, thanks to the American request to Europe for not alienating Germany defeated by the Allies in 1945. Today, the American withdrawal from Europe, or an eventual disbandment of NATO would leave the European states and the U.S. with several doubts as to whether a potential conflict, for example from outside Europe, would lead to a confrontation. The military component of the Western European Union, without being subordinated to a larger, transatlantic security framework, would also have to be considered a serious change of the status quo in Europe. The Western European arm forces can become a counterpart both to the Russian military and to the American forces of NATO.

The stability in Western Europe was built on the assumption that the U.S. would be involved. Simon Serfaty calls the United States a European power, "a power whose interests in Europe are such to make it difficult, even impossible to leave their protection to others" (Serfaty 56). The United States has not only contributed to the building of a firm transatlantic alliance, but it also has become an important partner in trade. "With armed forces of its own, of course, but also with a large population that manages, within the Single Market, an economy based on about \$240 billion worth of direct investments and responsible for over \$1000 billion worth of two-way economic exchanges across the Atlantic every year," the U.S. holds an influential position on the European political stage (Serfaty 56).

Economic and demographic factors

Economics and the fact that the U.S. and Europe are partners are the first two of four reasons for the U.S. presence in Europe that this section will lay out. First of all, the statistics showing big numbers related to the investment ratio and trade have to be read with as much enthusiasm as skepticism. There has been a record of disputes over economic issues between the U.S. and members of the European Union. Among these were the dispute over General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the most recent opposition to the strengthening of the American sanctions on Cuba, through the Helms-Burton Act. Yet, "American leaders are permitting a small number of trade disputes with Europe to obscure [American] common interests," Alan Tonelson and Robin Gaster wrote in August 1995 (Gaster and Tonelson 30). These controversies still arise on a bilateral basis within transatlantic boundaries, but the grievances can evolve into conflicts on a global scale. This leads to another reason why the U.S. should remain in Europe: European-American rivalry. Partnership in NATO establishes boundaries to rivalries. Article 8 of the North Atlantic Treaty states clearly that none of the parties can

enter into any international engagement in conflict with the provisions of the treaty itself (**NATO Handbook** 233)

The long historical partnership between the U.S. and Europe has not yet been repeated between the U.S. and Asia. Economic change has been noted in the increasing significance of Asian markets (Gordon 37). "U.S. trade with Asia has exceeded trade with the European Community ever since the late 1970's," Gordon explains in his article, "Recasting the Atlantic Alliance" (38). The rapid growth rates of Asian economies creates new opportunities for American investors. At the same time they are attractive to Europeans. It would be an error not to expect an eventual rivalry between the transatlantic partners over Asian markets. The presence of America in Europe as the key player in the security issues of the continent provides for an easier process of policy making regarding the cooperation of both parties with Asia. Today Asia is still a growing region. Cultural differences and different political systems (as in the case of China) make the American-Asian "economic romance" (Gaster and Tonelson, 30) yet to be proven a long-lasting one. Europe, too, has not yet developed a firm and secure relationship with Asian countries, so both the U.S. and Europe can still benefit from their well established economic partnership (Tonelson, and Gaster 30).

Furthermore, it is impossible to ignore the fact that the political systems of the United States and Western Europe are based on the same set of values; therefore, their dialogue is easier and more certain than a dialogue with Asians. Tonelson and Gaster even argue that America needs Europe as an ally in relation to Asia. "American prosperity has never been more dependent on the world economy, but America can no longer dictate the nature of that economy" (30). The two authors also point to the process of globalization of business. According to their argument, new rules will be set up in this economic global village. "America may not like many of the rules that emerge," warn Tonelson and Gaster. "Thus if it wants good rules, the United States will need allies. And since European capitalism and European economic interests are closer to America's than any other region's, Europe is America's best bet for an ally" (30). While scholars and analysts of the political transformation in Europe and in the North America concentrate on the potential competition in Asia, insufficient attention has been assigned to the fact that Central Europe has become attractive to American as well as Western European investments. The emerging free markets in Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, and other Eastern European countries will soon eventually become members of the European Community and thus will be included in the continental protectionism.

Demographic changes in the United States and the mentality changes in Europe constitute another argument for American presence in Europe. The first factor poses a threat of a dangerous decrease of interest of the American leadership elite with the European partner. As noted by Philip Gordon, both in Europe and America important governmental offices will be held by representatives of a new generation. This is also valid for the business world. People who will take over are no longer veterans of the Second World War. Gordon listed the former leaders of Europe and the U.S. to show they were all survivors of the W.W.II, and therefore their characters had been affected by the tragic experience of the 1940's. George Bush, Margaret Thatcher, Francois Mitterand, and

Helmut Kohl were all brought up in the spirit of the fight against the Third Reich. The new elite of politicians, which includes Bill Clinton and John Major, originates from the postwar generation. What Gordon suggests is that they have a different perspective on world affairs, one that does not put on their shoulders the burden of the veteran sentiment. The new generations will create their own policies based on the circumstances caused by international cooperation and the globalization of economy. Gordon also implies that the new leaders on both sides of the Atlantic will gradually withdraw from the realists' approach which characterized international relations during the Cold War period. "Generational, demographic and economic changes are all working to push the U.S. away from its traditional European orientation" (Gordon 36).

Another demographic change which will soon influence the way American policy is created is caused by changing immigration patterns in the U.S. In the past, major immigration waves came from Europe. Today, more and more immigrants come to America from Asia and Latin America. The new make up of American society will result in a new generation of voters. In two decades, one can expect that U.S. foreign policy will be affected by the increasing number of Asian and Hispanic voters who will not have the same personal attachment to Europe that the last three generations have shown. It is projected that the number of immigrants from Europe will be decreasing while the number of newcomers from Asia and Latin America will rise. This will affect the statistics of the origin of American citizens. In 1980, 80% of Americans identified themselves with European ancestors. In the first year of the 21st century this number is expected to go down to 72% and will continue to decrease to approximately 56% in 2050. The data on American citizens and their origins shows that in 1980 only 2% of persons with U.S. citizenship were of an Asian origin. In six years this percentage is projected to increase to 4% with further growth to 9% in 2050. An even faster rise has been noted for Hispanic origins. In 1980 Hispanics constituted 6% of U.S. citizens. In 56 years the U.S. Census predicts that this number will reach 22%. Those statistics consider only U.S. citizens but one cannot ignore the percentage of legal immigrants which is just as important). (4)

As the new generation in the U.S. grows distant from the European partner and Europe becomes united and establishes exclusively European institutions, the yet solid base of partnership may begin to crumble. A continuation of cooperation on security issues has the potential to assure that these historical ties between America and Europe will remain strong.

Military capabilities

The last, but equally important argument for the U.S. presence in Europe is the question of military capabilities. Harold Brown, in his essay "Transatlantic Security," writes that "in retaining the security ties between Europe and North America, NATO is the only mechanism that is militarily meaningful in terms of combat capability, and correspondingly the most important to the traditional sorts of security" (84). The author lists several aspects of the military dependence of Western Europe on the American defense system. He brings out the conflict in the former Yugoslavia to argue that NATO

is currently the only military organization equipped to provide effective peace enforcement (84). The preventive role and the role of mediator within the framework of a new European architecture has been assigned to the OSCE, nevertheless, this institution does not possess its own operational capability to solve problems like the one in the former Yugoslavia. Western Europe has only begun to implement plans to build its own military arm. In the future, WEU may act on behalf of the EU or even as the European pillar of NATO, but conflicts may arise before such a military formation is fully established. Today NATO is the only military organization with operational capabilities and an experienced staff to be engaged in such enterprises. One can ask why Western Europe waited so long before it finally decided to intervene in the Balkan war. "One lesson of that failure is that prevention and peacekeeping depend on the parties in the conflict but, if peace enforcement (a euphemism for combat) is required, an effective military organization, backed by a political consensus and given a mandate to operate in a militarily effective way, is the only way to carry out the peace enforcement mission" (Brown 85). NATO has an integrated command structure and military assets but they are not exclusively European. The contribution of the United States to the capability of the Alliance is enormous and makes Europe depend on the means belonging to the United States. Among those are longrange heavy transport aircraft, air-refueling capabilities, and satellite intelligence systems (Gordon 51)

The arguments presented above stand for the cause of American presence in Europe. We have just seen several reasons explaining that it is not its interest to depart from the successful framework of transatlantic cooperation, which not only led to the end of the Cold War, but also provided good incentives for a further relationship. The question to ask is whether the United States would benefit or lose from an eventual disappearance of the Atlantic Alliance. Philip Gordon, in his essay, studies various possibilities for recasting the Atlantic Alliance. Demographic, generational, economic, and other changes that he sees as threats to NATO's *raison d'être* lead him to a dual conclusion, On the one hand, Gordon sees the possibility for the North Atlantic Alliance to be disbanded. This would be a result of the earlier mentioned geopolitical, economic, and demographic factors. On the other hand, despite his initial, rather pessimistic view, Gordon himself sees light at the end of the tunnel. "If Americans want to preserve the credibility of a proven Alliance and count on European support in times of need, they should demonstrate their continued commitment to the Alliance, even when that commitment has a cost. Europeans, in turn, should do all they can to ensure that the Americans remain involved -while preparing for the inevitable occasions When U.S. commitment will not be as strong as Europe would like" (51)

One of the goals of this essay is to articulate that NATO should be maintained as the foundation for security on both sides of the Atlantic, therefore, while it is important to have in mind the dangers laid out by Gordon, it is also important to note that they have already been identified and their effects on the future of the alliance can be eliminated.

CHAPTER 3

Challenges to International Security In Europe

Political scientists identify several threats to the security in Europe. Some of them were only fully identified after the end of the Cold War. These challenges to the Security of individual states and to the entire continent include Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, migration, and nationalism, as well as environmental dangers.

Graham E. Fuller, in his essay called "Islamic Fundamentalism," recognizes the potential dangers of religious fanaticism which can cause international friction mainly in the Northern Tier states which include Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (Fuller 386). Although it does not constitute a direct threat to the member states of NATO (except for Turkey), Islam, after the collapse of the Marxism-Leninism, became the only international ideological challenge to the Western liberal regime. Islamic fundamentalism is the source of terrorist actions against the United States and has potential to become a disturbing element in France. Fuller also mentions friction which can be caused by "a rocky period" in U.S.-Turkey relations. "Key issues of friction could spring from serious disagreements within NATO, especially relating to the Greek-Turkish balance, [and] human rights (especially relating to the Kurds in Turkey)..." (Fuller 390).

Migration, too, seems to be a global issue rather than one concerning Europe, but nevertheless it cannot be ignored as Germany continues to struggle with illegal immigration from Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Turkey, and some Asian countries. The Gaullist government in France took on a stronger note while dealing with the immigrants from Algeria and other North African countries. The United Kingdom will soon have to deal with Hong Kong residents who refuse to live under the Chinese regime. Even the Central European states, especially Poland, have begun to experience the flows of refugees from Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and former Soviet Union republics. The scale of today's immigration problems in Europe requires the close attention of NATO, whose role is to guarantee the security of its members. It is rather in the context of consultation and diplomatic initiatives with which the Alliance deals with these problems. Nevertheless, "in accordance with Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, [NATO] serves as a transatlantic forum for Allied consultations on any issues affecting the vital interests of its members, including developments which might pose risks to their security" (**NATO Handbook** 19).

Nationalism is perhaps the only one among the problems mentioned above which can be currently identified as a threat to European stability. The Balkans, for instance, have always been an unstable region where nationalism led to two serious conflicts during the 20th century. The First World War was triggered in Sarajevo, while the most recent war in former Yugoslavia required direct involvement of NATO forces in the form of a larger coalition of IFOR. Nationalistic tensions rise also from time to time in Romania, where a significant Hungarian minority remains a source of friction. The United Kingdom constantly struggles with the terrorist actions of the IRA and other, often unidentified, but armed Irish formations.

Russia - the greatest threat

Evgueni Volk, the Director of the Moscow Office of the Heritage Foundation (5), said before the Political Committee of the North Atlantic Assembly that "the domestic situation in Russia and the NATO expansion problem are closely interrelated and influence each other in a number of important directions. It is extremely difficult to predict the ultimate outcome of such an interaction, but it seems obvious that the process will be long, complicated, and even painful" (Volk n. pag.). Having this in mind, the supporters of NATO expansion must not be completely convinced by the popular argument which rejects a likely threat from Russia.

Among several security threats that Europe faces today, the uncertainty about Russia is the greatest one. The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the collapse of the Soviet Union have contributed enormously to an easier dialogue between Western European democracies and those states which used to be Soviet satellites. Russia realizes that its sphere of influence has shrunk, but it still considers itself a major power and wants to be treated as an equal partner in the debate on the future of Europe. Russia clearly explains that it perceives NATO expansion to contain the potential for drawing "a new iron curtain" (Levien 23).

Russia has been resisting any eastward enlargement of NATO even more strongly after the recent changes in the composition of the Russian government. When NATO officials advocate enlargement of the Alliance and Western politicians support it by setting new dates for the Visegrad countries to become NATO members, Russia wants to know why it is so urgent to expand NATO. (6) The main Western argument, that the process of expansion is meant "to strengthen European security," is not sufficiently convincing to the Russian foreign policy makers. NATO was established to deter the Soviet threat and to protect its member states from eventual Soviet aggression. The Cold War is over and there is no Warsaw Pact. Therefore, the need to strengthen the alliance is not self explanatory to Russia. Responding to these concerns, NATO officials explain that NATO has changed its nature. According to their claims, NATO has a new role (Claes 4). The reformed NATO will become more of a political forum for dialogue and cooperation. But notions like peace enforcement and crisis management seem vague to Russia. Its leaders want to know exactly what NATO wants to become. They seek clear answers to their question about the reason for Poland's becoming a member of the Alliance so soon. They want to know why Polish security is at stake and in what way its inclusion in NATO will contribute to strengthening the European security (Levien 23). Russia opposes NATO expansion because of its own security concerns. It will continue to do that until it receives a clear answer to the simple question: what is NATO today and what will it be tomorrow?

Two generations of Russian politicians have been brought up in the spirit of aggression toward and ideological disgust with the existence of NATO. When asked what he knows about NATO, an average Russian citizen would probably answer that NATO is an "aggressive military bloc" ("Russian Foreign Policy and NATO Expansion" n. pag.). The false image of NATO which the Russian public carries is not helpful in the process of rearranging the European security system. Moreover, the lack of knowledge and

understanding of international mechanisms provide a tool in the hands of Russian nationalists and xenophobes who very easily redirect public discontent with domestic affairs into anti-western sentiment.

While the foreign policy makers in Russia have every right to be provided with a definition of NATO and its new purpose in Europe, the extreme radicals like Vladimir Zhirinovski only benefit from the lack of political will or resources on the part of NATO to define its new nature. Russia, as well as the former Soviet republics, and former members of the Warsaw Pact, want to find out how they fit in the new security structure. This is especially important for Russia, which will never become a member of NATO due to its size and geography. A crucial reason, however, is that it is unlikely that NATO members would get involved in a Russian conflict, say with China.

Nevertheless, if Russia fails to remain a global superpower, there is a new role for Russia: a regional power. Before this new legacy is developed, Russia has to know how far NATO wants to expand and why. It would be crucial for NATO to explain the fundamental distinction used in this paper between security and stability. If NATO extended to the Eastern border of Poland and even Ukraine were included, Moscow should not consider this a threat to its security as long as NATO remains a strictly military alliance whose goal is to guarantee security for its member states. By definition, a defensive institution like NATO intervenes only if the security of a member state is threatened. Therefore, Russia should not fear NATO expansion in this case. Nevertheless, if the Alliance takes up a much broader mission of building political stability Russian opposition to the enlargement is fully justified. Russia is expected to destroy its land-based missiles, implement the "Joint Statement on the Transparency and Irreversibility of the Process of Reducing Nuclear Weapons," and to agree with the inclusion of its former satellites to NATO. At the same time, the Western European Union is constructing its own military arm. Moreover, NATO, which used to be limited to the guarantor of the security of its members, has already undertaken military actions outside of its zone. Even though Russia participates in the Partnership for Peace, the actual enlargement of the Western security architecture puts Russia in a less favorable position. If the role of NATO was strictly defined as the guarantor of the security of the member states, meaning there would be no security threat to Russia unless Russia itself acted aggressively, Moscow could be more assured the its position will not be challenged. The Kremlin cannot afford to be confronted with a strong political body of which it is not a member. Although a weakened country, it still has resources to deter threats and, it is still surrounded by the former Soviet Republics, which constitute a sphere of influence. This position is not a capricious feature of Soviet like politics but well known phenomenon, a policy used by the United States in the Monroe Doctrine or by France in its historical involvement in North Africa (Lieven 22). Russian opposition to NATO forces directly on the other side of its border is equal to questioning the legitimacy of Russia's influence on its neighbors.

Russian officials as well as western policy experts claim Russia is not a threat to European security. It is unconvincing that Russia should become one in the foreseeable future, says Lieven (22). "For a long time to come, Russia will lack the strength to play

an important role in world affairs" (Jakobson 61). Some observers stress the crisis situation in Russia. "The political, social, and economic disintegration of Russia has affected the military to the extent that is no longer a cohesive instrument that could reliably cope with warfare ...," says Christopher Bluth (212). These statements underline Russia's journey to an immediate impotence. One should, however, have in mind that the uncertainty about Russian future is not caused by the fact that the Kremlin possesses nuclear weapons, but that Russia also has a long history of imperialism. Just like Germany, defeated in 1918, had later emerged as a strong and potent monster, similarly the Russian people, disappointed by a long and hopeless quest for democracy, which for them has not meant better living conditions, could turn toward a nationalist or radical ideology like Communism embraced during the 1917 Bolshevik takeover.

From a historical perspective, the Russian people, while discontented with the hardship of life and unsatisfactory standards of living, are very vulnerable to populist ideologies. The socialist movements during the early 20th century led in Russia to the emergence of a totalitarian regime which helped this country become a hegemony. "Two thirds of the Russian population live below the minimum subsistence level. According to all major social and economic indicators Russia can hardly be regarded as a prosperous country. This engenders a bitterness that is often the fuel of extremist political parties ("Russian Foreign Policy and NATO Expansion" n. pag.). Russian people become more and more disappointed, which stirs up anti-western sentiments. These can be easily exploited by communists and extreme nationalists. Initial enthusiasm is no longer an engine of reforms. Everyday life and the difficulties which an average citizen of Russia encounters do not contribute to further strengthening the democratic mechanism. Not even accustomed to internationally accepted values of democracy, civil society, the rule of law, and the market economy, Russian people understand them from the point of view of generations used to government control and the role central government and its omnipresent institutions played in every day life.

Although free elections were welcomed as a democratic tool, their result prove the Russian electorate is more vulnerable to populist rhetoric and less willing to work on specific issues from a long-term perspective. Elected officials, despite that fact they are representatives of their constituents, tend to plunge into the gigantic bureaucracy of the government and play politics more than they represent the interests of their voters. A Russian observer stated that "the Russian political scene demonstrates the weakness of Russia's democratic institutions" ("Russian Foreign Policy and NATO Expansion" n. pag.). He claimed that the several hundred political parties that exist in Russia today have trouble achieving a majority in parliament. Political coalitions often break up. Center-right democrats and left-wing communists challenge each other. While democrats have been blamed by the radicals for the failure of reforms, the radicals have not been able to present a smooth transition to continue.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union no one reviewed the *curricula vitae* of the individuals in the government. The same party "aparatchiks" hold important posts and continue to make policies which remain to support the "communist nomenklatura". The founding fathers of the democratic Russia are in many cases the same people who helped

maintain the Soviet status quo in the past. For instance, Yevgeni Primakov, the Foreign Minister of Russia, is a former KGB head of foreign intelligence. Furthermore, the outcome of the 1995 parliamentary elections in Russia was the victory of the communists. They have now 158 seats in the State Duma, which is the largest number held by any one political group.

While ideology and power were at stake for almost 50 years in Russian politics, today it is money and control of the market that are the most important. A business elite, in many cases made up of the former communists and party officials, has gained influence over the people in government. This situation actually leaves the West with the opportunity to have an impact on Russia's transition. Western officials, along with the members of the corporate world, have a chance to build new channels of communication and, via the emerging business elite in Russia, to influence the government in Moscow, promoting further building of free market economy.

For years, Zbigniew Brzezinski has been advocating the view that "the Russian inclination to define itself as part of the West is uncertain" (Brzezinski 30). The fundamental political struggle within Russia revolves around the question of whether "Russia will be a national and increasingly European state or a distinctively Eurasian and once again imperial state" (36). Brzezinski agrees with the view that the future of democracy in Russia is uncertain. He therefore suggests to NATO that the Alliance and Russia develop a joint strategy in which the expansion of NATO and the construction of "a new transcontinental security architecture embracing Russia would be combined" (36).

At this point, a clear definition of NATO would be confronted with a definition of Russia's aspirations. Whether Russia is ready to state its long-term security goals today would be difficult to assess, but nevertheless it seems that both NATO and Russia, as the main players-on the transatlantic security arena, cannot go any further unless they understand each other's interests and have transparent views of each other's actions. As Russia is aware of the fact that it will never be admitted to NATO, it has not expressed such an inquiry. However, a state of this significance cannot be left alone because isolation could lead to anti-European, and anti-western policies.

The Russian threat has a very peculiar characteristic. It could emanate from either a strong, imperialistic Russia or a weak and chaotic one. In the first case, the popular sentiment of "the Great Russia" may generate anti-Western policies. The other scenario presents Russia as a disintegrated country whose geography and size makes it very vulnerable to the danger of anarchy or return to a totalitarian regime. It is not the fact that the collapse of the Soviet Union has resulted in a loss of military personnel in the Russian army or that Russia will lack political strength to impose its policies on the West. The greatest threat originates from the uncertainty related to the command structure of the Russian forces. Christoph Bluth, in his article "The View from the East," identifies this danger while presenting an extreme scenario of an unauthorized use of nuclear weapons.

Bluth describes particular circumstances in which such an attack might occur. I decide to quote the entire passage from his work:

- Local political forces could attack a missile base or storage site and overwhelm the special forces guarding the nuclear weapons. (Nuclear weapons are guarded by special troops of the 12th Main Directorate of the Russian General Staff.) The highest risks would be posed by tactical nuclear weapons. This has already occurred once in Azerbaijan. During the disturbances in Baku in January 1990, armed Azeri rebels penetrated a base on which tactical weapons were kept. They gained physical access to a nuclear warhead, but did not tamper with it or attempt to steal it before they were ejected by Soviet troops. Not all tactical nuclear weapons carry physical safeguards such as permissive action links (PALs) (electronic devices that require a code to be entered before the weapon can be armed), which in any event only delay, but (at least in their Soviet version) do not ultimately prevent unauthorized use.

- The special elite troops guarding the weapons might decide to get hold of the weapons for their own purposes. The greatest danger lies in the uncertainty of political loyalty and the desperate living conditions of many ... servicemen. So far there is no indication that any of these special troops have been disloyal. It is generally agreed by strategic experts that tactical nuclear weapons pose a particular problem, both because they are less secure and because they are so many that it is probably impossible to account for all of them. ...Some of the areas in which tactical nuclear weapons are deployed are currently experiencing severe unrest or may do so in the near future" (Bluth 216).

CHAPTER 4

NATO and Russia - No Veto Privilege

The inclusion of the Visegrad countries in NATO is almost certain. During the most recent presidential campaign in the United States, both Clinton and Dole mentioned earlier than theretofore expected dates for those countries to be admitted. It is not a reliable indicator, but at least expresses the American willingness to make the commitment and to extend the security guarantee to the strongest democracies in Central Europe. Although Russia has been reluctant and sometimes even firmly opposed to NATO enlargement, the European consensus on the issue of the Visegrad states seems to be unchangeable. "Russia has taken a firm stand against NATO taking in former satellites and member states of the USSR which have become independent. Without acknowledging a veto right for Moscow, the Allies have no wish to weaken President Yeltsin on his domestic front" (de Rose 9). This statement by Francois de Rose, French Ambassador and Vice President of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London is an excellent example of the misleading strategy of the West toward Russia. The support of Yeltsin expressed so clearly in this sentence proves that the West is still using Cold War criteria in its policies toward Russia.

Despite the fact that former communists still hold the majority of posts in the Russian government, the Kremlin is no longer the site of an indisputable Russian dictator. As weak as democracy in Russia may be, the last two presidential elections and two general elections have shown that Russian citizens are willing to make decisions by voting. The

representatives they elect are not always the ones the West would like to see in power; nevertheless, Russian politics are no longer dominated by one party rule. Moreover, the presidential office no longer belongs to one leader but, has to be contested. The Western approach toward Russia should not be limited to the establishment of a good relationship with the current leader, but should take into consideration a larger political context. In October and November 1996, the whole policy toward Russia could have crumbled because of the Yeltsin illness and uncertainty of the future of his rule. At this point, both the U.S. and NATO officials should review their commitment to the Russian leader. While the power of the executive branch in Russia is unquestionable, so is the rotation of officials in government. To build a long-term policy toward Russia based on the assumption that the current leader will be in the office long enough for it to be implemented is not an option for the West. Certain precautions must be taken to ensure the dialogue between the West and Russia continues when a new leader emerges.

As far as the enlargement of NATO is concerned, the Alliance should state clearly that it is the sole judge to say who will and who will not be admitted. Russian views should not be ignored, but neither should they form a deciding influence on Western foreign policy. Russia, the successor of the defeated Soviet Union, is not a superpower which can dictate to Europe the direction it is to proceed. The policy of the West is not to exclude Russia from the continental arena, but to ensure the emerging democracies, as well as the overall stability in Europe, are not threatened by a potential crisis in Russia.

This is why Brzezinski calls for a treaty with Russia: to express Western support for democratic reforms in Moscow, but also to develop a new security system, beneficial to everyone. Brzezinski supports the enlargement of NATO and thinks it should be an independent decision of the Alliance. He also claims that the expansion of NATO should be well prepared and not driven by "whipping up anti-Russian hysteria that could eventually become a self-fulfilling prophecy" (24) While he is advocating a global treaty with Russia, Brzezinski wants the West to act strongly and to make Russia understand that "bluster and threats will be neither productive nor effective and may even accelerate the process of expansion" (25).

The peculiar case of Ukraine

Russia may be considered a regional power, because it is a major player within the OSCE. Both Russia and NATO realize that stability in Europe depends on a formalized arrangement between the two. Such an arrangement would give Russia a definite role in the new Europe but it would also define the Russian position in Central Europe and in particular regarding Ukraine.

One of the first major steps undertaken by the sovereign Ukrainian government was surrendering its nuclear arsenal to Russia. Although Kiev held firm negotiations with the United States to get paid for this transfer, it was the key signal to the West that Ukraine wants to disassociate itself from the Kremlin, and to embark on its own journey to Europe. Because sovereign Ukraine never really existed in Europe before (7), its emergence as one of the largest countries, with an excellent geopolitical potential,

requires NATO to consider Ukraine a significant element in the European security agenda. The restructuring of the security arrangements in Europe requires drawing a map of Europe before drawing long-term strategies. Ukrainian-Canadian historian Bohdan Krawchenko, who is opposing a too rapid expansion of NATO, claims that "the problem is that Western Europe doesn't know what Europe is, and hasn't even thought seriously about what Europe should look like in twenty years" (qtd. in Lieven 23). Without a doubt, the future of Europe cannot be discussed without taking into consideration the existence of Ukraine, whose size and geography give this country the potential to become a major player in European affairs. Today Ukraine is still in a period of transition, and its security depends mostly on the NATO agreement with Russia.

"Ukraine is too big, too important, and its existence too sensitive a matter to both Russia and the West. As NATO expands and seeks to establish a special security relationship with Russia, it will have to consider Ukraine's new relationship to NATO," Brzezinski advocates in his "Plan for Europe" (37). One cannot ignore that the great-power status prevails in economically weakened and politically chaotic Russia. As one cannot rule out the possibility of a radically nationalist government emerging in Russia, the question of Ukrainian security emerges as one of the most important challenges the architects of the new NATO face today. What they have to confront is the uncertainty as to whether Russia will seek a reintegration of the former Soviet Union structure. Thus, NATO is required to answer both Russia and Ukraine where the latter fits in the future Europe: under the Kremlin sphere of influence and therefore a part of the larger Moscow-dominated structure, an independent state with too sensitive and complex a geopolitical setting to become a member of the Alliance, or a Central-European state with potential to join NATO.

In the first scenario, NATO will allow Russia to achieve its strategic objective, which is to keep open "the option of the eventual reabsorption of Ukraine" (Brzezinski 38). Ukraine is still too young and vulnerable a democracy to negotiate its sovereignty with Russia. An attempt by Russia to regain Ukraine could lead to a serious conflict. Moreover, a potential annexation of Belarus by Russia cannot be completely ruled out, therefore causing a general instability in the region.

In the second scheme Brzezinski brings about an idea of a neutral Ukraine with a potential to become a member of NATO, at the same time officially assured by the Kremlin that it will not seek the reabsorption of the former Soviet republic. This leaves Ukraine extremely weak, with no guarantee that Western aid, especially American dollars invested in Ukraine, will fulfill their purpose, which is to help Ukraine become a European partner. Leaving Ukraine as an easy target for Russian nationalism and imperialism is not an alternative for those who want to see stability in Europe. Russia, being the main provider of natural gas and other resources vital to Ukrainian survival, constitutes a great threat to its independence and prosperity. If left outside the NATO structure, Ukraine has no guarantee for its future.

In this work I advocate the inclusion of Ukraine in NATO. It seems to secure stability in the region and assure security of the soon to be NATO members: Poland, the Czech

Republic and Hungary. Securing the Central-European character of Ukraine is, however, a risky plan, but one worth bargaining for with Russia in the long-term strategic context. The approach suggested here is not parallel with Brzezinski. Carter's former security advisor recommends a special annex in the NATO-Russian Federation treaty, "containing a joint, formal, and very explicit commitment by both parties to Ukraine's independence and security." According to Brzezinski's "Plan for Europe," the treaty would exclude the possibility of a future relationship between Ukraine and NATO, and simultaneously assure no close cooperation between Russia and Ukraine. This does not "provide assurance to Ukraine that its political status is respected," (Brzezinski 38) but rather ignores the need to find Ukraine a definite role in the future Europe.

The strictly military character of NATO advocated in this paper requires NATO to call for NATO to become the ultimate guarantor of security in the continent, one which can exercise its influence and strength in achieving its goals. Ukrainian armed forces should be integrated into the NATO military structure, which would send Russia a transparent message that Ukraine belongs to Europe and its security as a sovereign state is crucial to the success of European Union, of which Russia may eventually become a member.

The Baltic States, Belarus, Ukraine and NATO

A simple look at the map of the Baltic region gives the ultimate answer to the question of how far East NATO will expand in Eastern-Europe. There is no doubt that the small fragment of Russia located between Lithuania and Latvia is crucial for Moscow to retain its access to the Baltic sea. It is very unlikely that the three Baltic countries will be granted membership in NATO while they surround the Kaliningrad area.

Russia has already surrendered several of its former key naval ports, and air defense radar facilities, located on the territory which today belongs to the sovereign Baltic states. (8)
The land formerly called East Prussia was annexed to Russia by Joseph Stalin at



[Fig. 1. Russia and Its Neighbors, -Great Decision 1995. New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1995.]

the end of the Second World War. Ronald D. Asmus and Robert C. Nurick explained that "NATO enlargement to the Baltic states would, in effect, encircle a piece of Russian territory" (125). Russia would then need to have a corridor passing through a NATO member state to get to its military outpost near Kaliningrad. This is the principal reason why the Baltic states should not expect to join the Alliance. If this is not sufficient, there are several more reasons why the Baltic states are very unlikely to join the transatlantic Alliance. Pointed out by Asmus and Nurick these are: strategic interest, Russian sensitivities, minority issues and border disputes as well as defensibility.

The two authors do not consider the Baltic region to be vital to the security and stability in Europe (124). Paradoxically, the Baltic states are among the few seeking membership, which in fact face a security problem and at the same time cannot fully guarantee their own security. NATO members, bound by the Article 5 provisions would have to go to war to defend the Baltic states against the foreign aggression, provided the three states were in the Alliance. The reaction to this is usually negative or at best unclear, write Asmus and Nurick (124). The role of NATO as the guarantor of security for its member states, advocated in this paper, makes the Baltic states ineligible for membership because it is clear NATO would not commit itself to follow Article 5 in their case. The main security threat any of the Baltic states faces comes from Russia or Belarus. An armed attack by these two countries on a Baltic state would require members of NATO to send troops to defend sovereignty of the Balts. A confrontation with Russia is certainly not what NATO countries expect today. None of the Baltic countries possesses an adequate military forces to provide for its own defense against the Russian army. On the other hand, an attack by Belarus could also evolve into a conflict with Russia because the two countries maintain a very close relationship and their governments may seek a partial reintegration of the Soviet Union.

The people in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia do not identify themselves with Russians. They feel part of the Western world. The three countries were the first to gain

independence from the Soviet Union. The Baltic states, while becoming sovereign countries, had to build their own defense and to formulate new security policies. As they have established democratic institutions, the Balts began their inquiries about joining the European structures. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia became associate partners in the Western Economic Union (WEU), signed Europe agreements with the European Union, and continue to express their desire to become members of NATO.

The last, however, seems unlikely to become true as the Balts have not received sufficient support from the European powers. Neither Germany, France, nor the United Kingdom have shown any enthusiasm for full membership in the Alliance. Their application has been reviewed in the Central European context, with less consideration for the issue of security in North-Eastern Europe, of which the Baltic states are a part. The independence of the Baltic states has a great impact on the security in this region. Both Sweden and Finland would like to see the Balts in NATO because of their own geopolitical situation. They are not members of NATO. With Central-European states in the Alliance, Sweden and Finland remain outside the security framework, so will probably the Baltic countries. In an event of a Russian aggression, the Balts are extremely vulnerable which could make the Scandinavians feel that "their own security will be eroded as a result" (Asmus, and Nurick, 126). Finland and Sweden are pleased to see a safety zone between them and Russia, formed by a bloc of democratic Baltic states. Asmus and Nurick claim the two Scandinavian countries see the independence of the Balts as a security gain, and one which they will see "as their top priority to preserve" (126).

Despite the unlikelihood that NATO will extend its membership to the three Baltic states, the Alliance wants to see the Balts as successful democracies. Asmus and Nurick approach the Baltic subject with a strategy of "building blocks." "The sum of these building blocks should be greater than the sum of the individual parts," the two authors aver (129). One of the most important of these blocks is support for political and economic reform. It is only on the basis of the performance in such fields as establishing democratic institutions, developing a free market economy, and resolving disputes with ethnic minorities that the West extends its security guarantees to the aspiring countries. The best example for this is the success of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary which are likely to be rewarded with full membership in NATO. In the case of the Baltic states, the West will be especially sensitive on the issues of the Russian-speaking minorities. The Balts want to put the Soviet occupation and the imposing of Russian values on their cultures, behind them. This sentiment is certainly expressed in the policies toward Russian minorities in these countries. The former Soviet citizens of Russian origin have not been granted Estonian citizenship automatically. Individuals of this category have had to undergo the process of naturalization described by Asmus and Nurick as "long and difficult" (130). In 1994 the Latvian government passed legislation which made Russian speakers "subject to stringent quotas on naturalization" (130). The two countries, as successful as they may be in their democratic reforms, will not achieve Western support until the minority issues are resolved. Russia, with its strong nationalistic sentiment, sends clear signals that the interests of its people outside the federation remain a Russian priority. Logically, NATO cannot afford to agree to defend a

state where the rights of Russians are not defined. The Russian issue, more than any other, could trigger a conflict leading to a military confrontation.

Another block identifies a need to establish a "Baltic Defense Cooperation." Since the Balts reject the option of neutrality or nonalignment of their states, they need to consider their security issues on the regional basis first. For many observers, any attempt by the small Baltic states to deter the strong Russia seems senseless. Nevertheless, Asmus and Nurick say that the establishment of defense systems in these countries should not have as the exclusive object "the ability to defeat an attack by overwhelming force" (131). The two authors discuss other options, like integrating Baltic air space with that of the West, and making the Baltic armed forces ready to operate within the NATO framework.

The last building block recommended by Asmus and Nurick discussed here brings back the previously mentioned issue of the North -Eastern region. The two authors point to the benefits that a close cooperation with the Nordic states can bring to the Balts. Among those benefits are that Finland and Sweden could be "the main conduit for Western ideas and know-how, economic aid and investment, as well as security and military assistance" (132).

The Nordic states have been always reluctant to expand their roles on a more global political stage. The neutral status of Sweden provides a military balance in Scandinavia, and so does the character of Finnish diplomacy. Nevertheless, the Nordic states have expressed their interest in seeing the Balts succeed in their quest to build a secure and successful region. Denmark, for instance, supported the Baltic NATO inquiry; and Sweden, although extremely careful has been promoting security cooperation.

Asmus and Nurick claim that it is crucial to encourage the Scandinavians to expand their military cooperation with the Balts. The two authors do not give reasons for this argument. They say that "the Baltic issue is arguably the key national security priority for these (Scandinavian) countries," but they do not mention what leads them to such an assumption. The conclusion of the Baltic issue is nevertheless one that requires NATO to define its strategy toward this particular region. In the case of the three former Soviet republics in question, neither NATO nor these countries are ready to make the commitment. Since the Baltic area has no vital significance to the security of the member states, the Balts can expect to be left out of the Alliance. However, they will be granted the traditional assurance that the West will encourage and support democratic reforms in these countries.

If NATO were to change its task from the security guarantor to the provider of stability in the continent, the question whether the Baltic states should join NATO is more complex. What is important to comprehend is that within the security guarantor context advocated in this paper, extending NATO membership to the Baltic states would not be equal to promising them a military support in the event of foreign attack. This particular role of NATO I stress so strongly in case of a conflict within the Baltic area might not be fulfilled.

One may argue that the geopolitical setting of the Baltic republics does create a new important region in the continent. A Bait official could say that the stability of the three states perhaps is not so crucial to the national security interest of Sweden and Finland, as it is to the cooperation between Russia and Central-European countries. Any crisis between Russia and Lithuania would have impact on trade in the Eastern-European market. Poland maintains friendly relations with Lithuania, and thus has a corridor to transport goods to Russia. This is also valid for other European countries, and in general for the EU. Stability in Lithuania is at this point crucial for Europe because of the uncertainty of the future of Belarus. It is important to understand such a reasoning, but the stability of the continent cannot be achieved by extending NATO membership to all three Baltic states. A regional stability is an outcome of international commitment. In the case of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, it would be a verification of a degree of commitment of the soon to be members of NATO, the Visegrad countries. It is too soon to speculate on this matter, thus wrong for NATO to guarantee security to the Balts when it is not certain if they could rely upon it.

CONCLUSION

From the very beginning of this paper I have stressed the importance in considering NATO the principal architect of security in new Europe. The objective of the Alliance is to expand; however, NATO is only capable of admitting those states to which it can guarantee security. A prime objective of this policy is to create a stable region with a possibility of further growth through the inclusion of new countries. In order to provide security, NATO must evolve from a transatlantic alliance into a Euro-Atlantic alliance, composed of the U.S., Canada, and a larger number of European states. The focus of NATO should not change with the incorporation of new members, if it remains a strictly military organization, and not merely one of many transnational institutions which currently exist in Europe.

NATO can benefit from the activities of other organizations and the possibilities that they offer. The WEU will be the European component of NATO's armed forces, whereas the OSCE will serve as a forum for global discussions and political initiatives. Both institutions will have to be subordinate to the North Atlantic Alliance, in order for it to have complete control over the security of its members. Stability in Europe and operational efficiency of NATO can only be achieved by a continuous involvement of the United States in Europe.

I have identified and discussed several dangers the Euro-American faces, and which it should not overlook. American support is crucial in protecting the European states belonging to NATO from international crisis caused by religious fanaticism, nationalism, demographic changes and environmental disputes. Nevertheless, Russia still remains the greatest threat. NATO can lessen this threat by signing a global treaty with Russia. The examples of the Baltic states and the Ukraine presented in this paper how complex the

issue of enlargement is, and how the new challenges can be faced and the dangers of a NATO failure can be avoided.

Only when all these issues are recognized, discussed and resolved can NATO continue to be a Successful and efficient organization which will contribute to the well being of the next generations of Americans and Europeans.

FOOTNOTES

1. Article 5 says: "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all; and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense (...) will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area," see North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Office of Information and Press. **NATO Handbook**. Brussels, Belgium: NATO, 1995.

2. For writings on the realist school of international relations, see Kenneth N. Waltz **Theory Of International Politics**. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979. Also, Robert Keohane. **International Institutions and State Power**. Boulder, CO: West View Press, 1989.

3. I have obtained most of the official NATO and the WEU documents via electronic mail from NATO Data Service. The NATO Data Service does not provide pagination in its publications.

4. Philip Gordon quotes these statistics from U.S. Bureau of the Census, **Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1994**. Washington DC, 1994.

5. Founded in 1973, The Heritage Foundation is a research and educational institute whose mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.

6. The Visegrad countries are: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia

7. An independent Ukrainian National Republic was proclaimed in January 1918. In 1921, Ukraine's neighbors occupied and divided Ukrainian territory.

8. The most important of these ports and military bases are: Paldiski, Estonia; Skrunda, Latvia; Klaipeda, Lithuania; and Liepaj, Latvia.

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