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AVOIDING THE RUSH:
REASONS TO GO SLOW ON NATO EXPANSION

by

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This paper proposes that NATO expansion into East Central Europe is ill advised at this pivotal period in Russian history and should be delayed until two events occur. First, the issue should be debated in the American public arena. Second, the Russian democratic government must stabilize. Recognizing the centrality of the international nuclear threshold and associated arms control agreements, this paper argues the West should present no impediments of any sort to struggling Russian democrats and their fledgling pro-western reforms. As relevant background, it first provides a cursory review of NATO history and an analysis of the chain of events leading to today's expansion issue. It also reviews pertinent portions of the 1997 National Security Strategy and highlights three domestic and international concerns, outside of Russia's interests, that likewise argue for delaying NATO expansion. This paper offers the European Union as a more appropriate vehicle for long term political and economic stability in East Central Europe. It concludes that admitting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO is likely to foster mutual insecurity while feeding defensive nationalism and opposition to arms control ? exactly the opposite of the enhanced European security framework that both NATO and Russia seek. Should NATO expansion hasten Russia's estrangement and a commensurate redivision of Europe, five decades of incredible geopolitical success would be crowned with abject failure. NATO would deserve a better eulogy. Before the United States Senate agrees to NATO expansion by ratification of an amendment to the Washington Treaty, the issue must be adequately debated in the public arena.

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Preface

As the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is trying to reestablish its post-Cold War identity, almost every news publication or on-line service seems to run a daily article that addresses the fate of NATO. Should it expand or shouldn't it? Should it shed its Article V, Cold War security umbrella and transition to a European political forum? NATO expansion is moving forward rapidly, as its recent invitations to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic illustrate. The U.S. Senate will vote on expansion soon, perhaps as early as February of this year. Even so, many argue NATO expansion is a huge mistake, initiated by election year politics and now wrongly portrayed as a train that cannot be stopped. With Russia's Cold War defeat obvious to all, what is the threat NATO is defending against? Moreover, what does the U.S. have to gain by adding three more members to the NATO fold? I argue in this paper that NATO should expand slowly, if at all. If it does, it should do so only after thorough geopolitical analysis and discussion among the American people. I challenge the reader to think about expansion and its true ramifications for the United States.

I would like to thank Lieutenant Colonel Kathy Sweet for piquing my interest in this subject, as well as her materials, recommendations, and constructive criticism. Her insights, gained from two years in Russia, were critical to my analysis. I likewise thank Dr. Grant Hammond for his perspicacity, which always led me well beyond the obvious.

Abstract

This paper proposes that NATO expansion into East Central Europe is ill advised at this pivotal period in Russian history and should be delayed until two events occur. First, the issue should be debated in the American public arena. Second, the Russian democratic government must stabilize.

Recognizing the centrality of the international nuclear threshold and associated arms control agreements, this paper argues the West should present no impediments of any sort to struggling Russian democrats and their fledgling pro-western reforms. As relevant background, it first provides a cursory review of NATO history and an analysis of the chain of events leading to today's expansion issue. It also reviews pertinent portions of the 1997 National Security Strategy and highlights three domestic and international concerns, outside of Russia's interests, that likewise argue for delaying NATO expansion.

This paper offers the European Union as a more appropriate vehicle for long term political and economic stability in East Central Europe. It concludes that admitting Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO is likely to foster mutual insecurity while feeding defensive nationalism and opposition to arms control – exactly the opposite of the enhanced European security framework that both NATO and Russia seek.

Should NATO expansion hasten Russia's estrangement and a commensurate re-division of Europe, five decades of incredible geopolitical success would be crowned with abject failure. NATO would deserve a better eulogy. Before the United States Senate agrees to NATO expansion by ratification of an amendment to the Washington Treaty, the issue must be adequately debated in the public arena.

Chapter 1

Background

There is an appointed time for everything, and there is a time for every event under heaven -- a time to embrace, and a time to shun embracing.

--Ecclesiastes 3:3,5 (NASV)

"The Cold War is over. The United States won, and we all agree to this. So why have you decided to re-open the competition?"¹

Russia opposes NATO enlargement. Should we care?

To counter comments like those above by Aleksander Lebed, possibly Russia's next President, the Clinton administration emphasizes that the proposed expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is not intended to threaten Russia. The Russians, however, perceive the United States talking the talk but not walking the commensurate walk. Our words say, "you're not the enemy;" our actions shout that they are. Russians are clearly confused about NATO's goals. Many argue NATO and the United States are as well. During Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin's recent visit to the White House, his startling response to the Administration's position well articulated Russia's frustration: "Perhaps we are not speaking the same language."²

Overview

The conditions that made NATO a successful Cold War alliance have now disappeared, leading President Clinton and others to argue that NATO should expand eastward to serve as the focal point for post-Cold War European security. But a revised charter, whether on paper or only in practice, is inappropriate, for many reasons.

The demise of Communism in Europe, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, and the collapse of the Soviet Union have ushered in a new era and a new set of challenges and opportunities. Today Europe is whole and free, from the Atlantic to the Urals and beyond. There is no longer a threat looming on the horizon and, with the Soviet/Russian troop withdrawals and the arms reduction treaties of the Reagan and Bush eras, European and American cities have never been more secure. Given the vast changes in the geopolitical landscape, NATO is right to reevaluate its place in today's world. Unfortunately, but as one would expect from a bureaucracy, NATO has defaulted to a self-preservation position. Having successfully fulfilled its charter, NATO could be celebrating victory and going home. Instead, it seeks new justification to exist.

Without a clear, unequivocal mission, Russia, NATO, and even the nations aspiring to join NATO are united in their confusion. What is next? If expansion, why? And why now? Too many important questions regarding NATO expansion remain unanswered. NATO has embarked on a "strategy" that is an open-ended process -- with no strategic justification. At the same time, the United States Senate is being asked to endorse a NATO expansion plan for which there is little consensus on mission, future members beyond the first three, or an equitable cost-sharing mechanism.

This paper will explore three major "reasons Russian" and three domestic and international reasons why NATO should not be enlarged, at least not until thorough public and congressional debate has taken place on this side of the Atlantic. First, relevant NATO history is reviewed to establish the proper historical context. Next, the path leading to today's expansion issue, as well as Russia's influence on that path, are outlined. The bulk of the paper, Chapter 3, is an examination of the three arguments (the two related ones combined) against NATO expansion that are unique to Russia's perspective.

There are numerous issues, in addition to those concerning Russia, that frame expansion as a "mistake of historic proportions,"³ to quote George Kennan, the father of containment and former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union. These include: funding to support the costs of expansion; extending America's nuclear umbrella to areas not vital to our interests; threatening to embroil the U.S. in conflicts in a politically unstable region; and risking the cohesiveness and military effectiveness of the alliance. There are others, most as compelling as those Russian. These are reviewed in chapter 4.

Chapter 5 examines the impact of the 1997 National Security Strategy on NATO expansion. Chapter 6 offers three specific recommendations, but recommendations are made throughout the balance of the paper as well.

There are of course several arguments in support of enlargement. Those most frequently voiced are: NATO's assumed stabilizing influence among old and new "brethren," especially a united Germany vis-à-vis the balance of the European members; that this influence will actually benefit Russia by lending stability to the traditionally volatile regions near its borders; the filling of a perceived Russo-German power vacuum;

and the moral American obligation to protect the nascent democracies of East Central Europe. Again, there are others, but these are heard most often.

Notes

¹ "Transition From NATO Enlargement to Russia's Zone of Geopolitical Interests May Lead to Radical Changes in the World Balance of Forces," 6 October 1997, *RIA Novosti*, on-line, America Online, 16 November 1997.

² Prime Minister Victor Chernomyrdin, Joint News Conference, The White House, 8 February 1997

³ Editorial, *New York Times International*, 5 February 1997

Chapter 2

NATO Expansion: Today's State of Play

NATO Primer

The 1949 North Atlantic Treaty, often referred to as the Treaty of Washington, established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The twelve original member states were the United States, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. Greece and Turkey joined in 1952, Germany in 1955, and Spain in 1982.

The objectives of the partnership are primarily political, underpinned by shared defense commitments and military cooperation. The members also consult one another on economic, scientific, environmental, and related issues. Throughout the years of the Cold War, however, NATO focused above all on the development and maintenance of collective defense, followed closely by its focus on the fundamental political issues dividing Europe. Today, its emphasis is on promoting stability throughout Europe, largely through the means of collective crisis management and peacekeeping.

Yet distilled to its core, NATO is an alliance founded on political and military cooperation. As stated in the preamble to the North Atlantic Treaty, Alliance members

are committed to "safeguarding the freedom, common heritage, and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law."¹

Article IV of the Treaty provides for consultations among its members whenever any of them believe that their territorial integrity, political independence, or security is threatened. How? NATO member states are specifically committed to the defense of one another by Article V. This stipulates that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe (or North America) shall be considered an attack against all.

The Path to Enlargement

The Alliance plans to again take in new members in 1999, NATO's golden anniversary year, in accordance with the pending decisions of the current member governments. How did we arrive at this juncture?

In 1991, the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union were dissolved and the latter was replaced by the Commonwealth of Independent States. In 1994, NATO initiated the Partnership for Peace Program as a precursor to consideration of an enlarged NATO. However, membership was open to all interested, not just those with a view toward NATO membership. Most former Warsaw pact members joined, including Russia. At the Brussels summit that year, NATO "transformation" discussions continued.

In 1995, NATO published its "Study on NATO Enlargement." This document presented NATO's formal position that expansion equates to goodness, although the nations to whom invitations were to be extended, and when, were left unnamed. The Study outlined the goals and process as well as the requirements for admission of new member states.

In October of 1996, in the midst of his re-election battle, President Clinton delivered a strong statement in support of accelerating NATO enlargement while campaigning in Detroit, an area rich in voters of East European descent. In December, NATO held a ministerial summit and announced that prospective new members would be named the following July in Madrid.

Last May, as discussed below, the Founding Act between NATO and Russia was signed. In June, the U.S. announced it would support admission of only Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. At the July Madrid Summit, and in accordance with Clinton administration desires, NATO invited the three former Communist countries to begin formal accession talks with the Alliance.

By early December 1997, the three prospective new member countries had completed their internal accession preparations. Each of the three also negotiated accession agreements with NATO. In response, on December 17, all sixteen NATO members signed protocols of accession for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

Now, the existing sixteen members must complete their internal national ratification procedures. For a new country to receive an invitation to join NATO, all sixteen must support its accession. The ratification process ends when each country's legislature votes its approval. For the United States, this action falls under the Senate's purview, and may occur as early as February 1998.

Assuming complete ratification, President Clinton has invited the entire alliance to Washington for a Golden Anniversary Summit in the spring of 1999. The amendment formalities will be completed at that time.

Russia's Role on the Path: the Founding Act

In September 1996, then Secretary of State Warren Christopher endorsed the concept of an accord to foster cooperation between an enlarged NATO and Russia. NATO approved the idea soon thereafter, and NATO-Russian talks on the proposed document began the following January. At the March 1997 Helsinki summit, with Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin attending, President Yeltsin reiterated Russia's opposition to enlargement. However, he dropped earlier demands for a legally binding treaty, agreeing instead to an "understanding" to be signed by the heads of state of the NATO countries and Russia.

This understanding became the "Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation," signed last spring by both presidents and the leaders of the other member states. The document establishes a "NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council" to "provide a mechanism for consultations, coordination, and to the maximum extent possible, where appropriate, for joint decisions and joint action with respect to security issues of common concern."² The Founding Act does not invite international consultations on internal matters, nor does it "provide NATO or Russia, in any way, with a right of veto over the actions of the other."³

This accord is intended to reassure Russia that it has nothing to fear from NATO's plan to absorb Central and Eastern European nations that were once allied with Moscow via the Warsaw Pact. With Russia now on proper notice, and a channel created to voice its concerns, the way is supposedly cleared to invite former Communist countries to join the alliance.

However, Yeltsin, the DUMA, and other Russian leaders are not fooled. No serious analyst is. Although the current Russian administration has not taken this issue to the mat, the next one may. And this is the point: what can or should the West do or not do to preclude a second Cold War? For starters, refrain from transforming a former enemy's allies into a military alliance that extends to the former enemy's borders.

Notes

¹ North Atlantic Treaty, Washington, D.C., 4 April 1949, Preamble

² North Atlantic Treaty Organization, The Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27 May 1997, 3

³ *ibid.*

Chapter 3

Avoiding the Rush: "Reasons Russian"

There are three primary reasons why NATO should not enlarge.

First, expansion threatens Russia and may elicit an aggressive stance, perhaps instigating another military buildup, and undermines its fragile internal pro-Western reform movement. This is the largest issue, with obvious international geopolitical ramifications.

Second, expansion could alter the balance of power in Europe against Russia, causing it to reject arms control agreements, such as abrogating the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty or failing to ratify the second Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START II) Treaty. Or, again, even rebuild its armed forces.

Third, if Russia could not rebuild its conventional forces, it might resort to strategic nuclear forces placed on higher states of alert or renewed deployment of tactical nuclear weapons.

Because the latter two reasons are so interrelated, they are examined together.

Threatening Pro-Western Reform

Russia no longer presents a military or political threat to Europe. It is a nascent democracy with a struggling market economy and a hollow conventional military force.

Even under the most alarming political realignment in Moscow, it would take Russia years to reconstitute its military machine. Positioning today's NATO as an alliance against a potential Russian threat is a façade that can only strengthen anti-democratic forces in Russia.

The Cold War ended with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the breakup of the Soviet Union. Moscow agreed to quit Eastern Europe and to allow German unification -- a development, given the history of Russo-German relations this century, which Moscow regarded with trepidation. Moreover, Russia acceded to the continued existence of an alliance that had been hostile to it and even agreed to the inclusion of the newly unified Germany in that alliance. In return, Moscow received assurances from the U.S. and its allies that they would not take advantage of this situation to tip the geopolitical balance in a way that would potentially threaten Russia's security.

From Moscow's perspective, the U.S., by pushing to bring its powerful military alliance to Russia's borders, has reneged on this bargain. Indeed, opposition to NATO's expansion is probably the one issue that unites virtually the entire Russian political spectrum, from the pro-Western "democrats" to the moderate centrists to the ultra-nationalists.

The Yabloko party is a centrist, pro-democracy minority party in Russia. One of its leaders is Grigorii Yavlinskii, a forward-thinking moderate not encumbered by "invasion neurosis, as the generals are."¹ Still, he makes a sophisticated case against enlargement, citing the low tripwire still in place that could quickly refocus Russian public opinion on a coalescing "threat" from the West, away from the domestic distress:

Yavlinskii argued (sic) that bringing NATO closer to Russia's borders would tilt the balance in Russia's domestic

politics away from the democrats and friends of the West. Although foreign policy has not been a decisive issue to date in internal political debates in Russia, (he emphasized) this could change very quickly, particularly given the capacity of Russia's mass media to manipulate public opinion on such a topic. He noted that military reform in Russia is currently stymied because generals who were trained to fight a war with the West dominate the Defense Ministry. NATO expansion would give them another excuse to cling to power for a few more years.²

Thus, even Russia's moderates are at a loss to understand why NATO is growing. Those further to the Russian right regard enlargement as a blatant provocation, another sign of Washington's "global hegemonic ambitions."³

Since the break-up of the USSR in 1991 and the discrediting of its ruling ideology of Marxism-Leninism, Russians have been searching for a set of unifying national values and principles. Their grasping for a common national security identity has led to intense and divisive debate within the country. NATO expansion may well serve as the unifying issue the body politic currently lacks. With their military establishment in a woeful and decrepit state, should the West really risk feeding the flames of nationalism? As Yavlinskii implied, why help the nationalists get elected?

The DUMA has entered the fray as well. On October 16, the DUMA committee chiefs wrote a joint open letter to President Clinton, titled "NATO Expansion Will Shatter Trust." They quote the Los Angeles Times that "NATO is turning into a unique defense organization which has nobody to defend."⁴

The committee chiefs stress there are no convincing grounds for the alliance's unfriendly plans toward Russia to establish what is, in effect, a *cordon sanitaire* around the country. They also criticize Clinton's logic that NATO intends to "erase the demarcation line drawn in Europe by Stalin after World War II,"⁵ stating the U.S. is

trying to draw a new and truly artificial line. Playing a nationalistic tone, for which they are justified, the leaders accuse Clinton of taking advantage of Russia's temporary weakness. They invoke Versailles, correctly implying long memories often trump shortsightedness.

They go further: "The decision of the NATO Council's Madrid session quite clearly shows that the Cold War against Russia never ended. The plans to advance the North Atlantic Alliance eastward are laying the foundation for unfriendly and even confrontational relations between Russia and NATO states in the future."⁶

The message is clear. Whether the West agrees or not, the emotions and fervor against NATO expansion are there, albeit somewhat latent today. Tomorrow, or during the next election, or anytime in between, they could resurface with a vengeance.

Susan Eisenhower, in testimony before the Senate Budget Committee in October, identifies some historical and psychological arguments against enlargement. She believes these are equally compelling, especially from the Russian perspective.⁷

She argues that at the end of World War II, a number one priority for the U.S. was the economic reconstruction of Europe. Equally important was the goal of keeping Germany, after its second defeat in 30 years, from renationalizing its foreign policy. If those objectives were, in retrospect, wise, why should we not then make them our goals today, merely transferring the objects of our help to Eastern and Central Europe, and Russia as well? The West should offer Russia no excuse to nationalize its security affairs.

From the Russian standpoint, emotional grievances abound. Russians see themselves -- accurately -- as a people that lost more of their own in the struggle against

fascism than any other country on earth. Subsequently, they courageously expelled the communists from power, then immediately and voluntarily disbanded the Soviet Union. For all of that, Russia now finds itself facing a NATO which includes its enemy in both world wars, its Cold War adversary, and soon some if not most of its former allies. This is painful. To top it off, as a former superpower, they see the spirit and the terms on which the Cold War ended now being abandoned.

Ronald J. Kurth, Dean of the Air War College, stresses Western patience should be the order of the day.⁸ Russia can draw on no historical precedent for either a democratic government or a market economy. He too believes the U.S. should not force NATO expansion on a vulnerable, potentially desperate Russia undergoing intense transitional pain. Rather, we should avoid introducing any issue that would hamper democratic tendencies.

Stripped to its essence, the true "reason Russian" motivation for NATO expansion is to counter a perceived Russian threat to the region. True, Russia's efforts in Chechnya (as disastrous as they were) and episodic ascendancy of nationalist politicians are viewed by some as evidence of resurgent tendencies...tendencies against which an expanded NATO should already begin to prepare to combat. On the other hand, enlargement may only increase the likelihood of nationalists' ascendance by aggravating Russia's historic fear of foreign invasion. As reviewed earlier, even pro-Western democrats have made it clear they see NATO expansion feeding Russian fears of Western hostility by its domination of former Soviet territories.

While Russia may harbor aggressive impulses, its dismal military performance in Chechnya demonstrates that it does not represent an actual threat to Eastern Europe: if it

cannot "invade" itself, it cannot invade others. There are no indications that Russia will become a more credible threat in the immediate or even near future.

Hence, the question remains: why threaten pro-Western reform in Russia? Reform's demise, even a pessimistic scenario leading thereto, is not that far-fetched. Such a scenario would involve the discrediting of reformers and the eventual rise to power of leaders hostile to the West. True, enlargement alone would not likely cause such a change in leadership, at least between elections. But in the critical months of campaign debate, enlargement could serve as the focus of nationalist leaders' indictment against reformers.

An anti-reform coalition of Communists, nationalists, defense industrialists, and disgruntled military and security officers might see domestic political benefits in trying to isolate, or worse, re-arm Russia conventionally. Of course, that track would be harmful and probably unsustainable in the long term. Still, if anti-reformers were to harness the anxiety of an excited public, re-built military forces, or even the threat of them, could sharply increase political, economic, and military pressure against the former Soviet republics, especially the Baltic States.

A former U.S. arms control ambassador, Jonathan Dean, sees such a story unfolding:

All the ingredients for disaster are there -- a former great power humbled by political defeat on the global stage, the loss of huge territories, and a continuing economic disaster involving the pauperization of tens of millions of people and growing crime. She could lash out in embarrassed desperation at any time. Meanwhile, the U.S. is making a bad situation worse by insisting on the expansion of NATO, a project that has mobilized nationalist emotions in Russia while undermining efforts to develop a productive link between Russia and the West.⁹

Even more alarming, NATO's own "Study on NATO Enlargement" callously dismisses valid Russian concerns. It is not until paragraph six of the Study that it even mentions Russia's interests: "Russia has raised concerns with respect to the enlargement process of the Alliance."¹⁰ This hardly places the largest single argument surrounding enlargement, that of Russia's perspective, at the forefront of the issue. Instead of a serious discussion of the long term ramifications of enlargement, it merely writes off the issue with an announcement that "the enlargement process, including the associated military arrangements, will threaten no one and continue to develop a broad European security architecture based upon true cooperation throughout the whole of Europe, enhancing security and stability for all."¹¹ Words like enlargement will "threaten no one" are betrayed by NATO's nuclear umbrella butting up against its former Cold War enemy. They provide no solace or support to a moderate Russian government trying to reassure hard liners that the expansion of the U.S. sponsored alliance is not an issue.

Such flippant disregard for Russia's interests indicates NATO's self-preservation efforts are paramount, far outweighing *bona fide* geopolitical concerns. No matter what else is said, NATO first and foremost is a product of the Cold War, intended to oppose the Soviet Union. Inertia, if you will, transfers this goal -- unwisely and incorrectly -- to Russia.

Truth lies here somewhere. Recognizing Russia as a mere shadow of its predecessor, NATO has sought other avenues of justification, not the least of which is maintaining NATO's existence for the sake of maintaining NATO's existence. Still, giving enlargement proponents the benefit of the doubt, somewhere out there is an enemy. Surely there is one – a military alliance demands an enemy. NATO and the

Clinton administration should either admit NATO's self-preservation interest, or declare Russia the enemy, or both. To do otherwise is intellectual dishonesty. Note, though, that regardless which of the three truthful alternatives is chosen, Russia's perspective remains unimportant.

In conclusion, the expansion of NATO eastward now would be interpreted as simple exploitation of Russian weakness at the very time that the internal forces of democratic reform are trying to pull the nation into a more harmonious relationship with the West. Such crass opportunism would undoubtedly be viewed in Russia as a hostile act and could drive the course of events in the opposite direction -- a return to totalitarianism and the Cold War, Part Two.

Increasing the Nuclear Threat and Putting Arms Control Agreements at Risk

The current rush to expand NATO does more than alienate Russia. It brings two resulting and related consequences: an increased nuclear threat via a lower nuclear tripwire, and the risk of rendering much U.S. - Russia (Soviet Union) arms control progress moot.

Dr. Jeffrey Record, visiting professor at Air War College, believes NATO expansion undermines the unprecedented peace and stability Europe has enjoyed since 1989.¹² Russia, though no longer capable of conventional force threats beyond its borders, remains critical to both European and global security structures. Russia is a vast repository of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and of the expertise to build them. Additionally, Moscow's support is critical to the effectiveness of the Non-Proliferation

Treaty and Chemical Weapons Treaty, both designed to slow the spread of WMD and their delivery platform technologies.

Voluntary Russian compliance also forms the backbone of the higher-visibility Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) and Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) arms control regimes. Together, these provide the foundation for Europe's uniquely successful security since the end of the Cold War. These two treaties have essentially eliminated the threat of major surprise attack by rendering the once great communist conventional advantage, and subsequent decline, visible to all. The treaties' strict inspection regimes have afforded unprecedented transparency and therefore high confidence that "the other side" is in compliance.

The START II Treaty, hopefully followed by a START III, remains unratified by a Russian DUMA estranged by NATO expansion. If ever approved, it will eliminate all U.S. and Russian multiple-warhead intercontinental ballistic missiles. It will also cap total strategic nuclear warhead inventories at 3,500 for each side.

The 1990 CFE treaty regulates the military forces of 30 European states through ceilings on military equipment including tanks, artillery, aircraft, and helicopters. CFE also establishes special subceilings and information exchange and on-site inspection protocols. Already, over 50,000 pieces of military hardware have been destroyed under CFE auspices.

Moscow's compliance with certain CFE provisions has been slow in coming, primarily due to the cost of dismantling nuclear components and, of course, the Soviet Union's demise. Convinced (on this particular issue, at least) of Russia's pure intentions,

in October the U.S. agreed to extend Russia's dismantle timetable by five years.¹³ Her compliance with other CFE inspection protocols has been complete.

Understandably, many Russians regard enlargement as a violation of the spirit of the CFE Treaty because of its implicit assumption that the line of historic East-West division in Europe then extant in 1990 would remain intact. Former Soviet and current Russian leaders claim the implicit *quid pro quo* which obtained Russia's consent to Germany's reunification within NATO was that the Alliance would not pursue further expansion eastward. Russia did not pursue formal wording to that effect in 1990 because at that time the Warsaw Pact still existed -- no party foresaw a shifting line of division.

Over seven years later, can Russia accept a next-door Ukraine, or for that matter a Poland, whose security is primarily guaranteed not by traditional conventional defenses, but by the credible threat of nuclear escalation? If today it could, could it in 2001 under a nationalist president looking to shift public attention to international matters?

Perhaps. But former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev believes NATO expansion threatens START II ratification today. He calls enlargement "a fundamental violation of Western guarantees after Russia dissolved the Warsaw Pact and agreed to German reunification."¹⁴ The threat to CFE is just as high. A 1996 study by the RAND Corporation states "a breakdown of the CFE regime would destroy the unique legacy that holds the post-Cold War European security regime in place...(and) mutual confidence between Russia and the West in the wake of any abandonment would be extremely difficult to repair."¹⁵

Record states,

Moscow may not be strong enough to stop NATO expansion, but it retains the ability to cripple Europe's

present security regime without firing a shot. Michael Mandelbaum has rightly cautioned that the 'greatest danger of NATO expansion...is its possible effect on Russian policy over the long term. It has the potential to turn the country against the entire post-Cold War settlement in Europe, a settlement that is extraordinarily favorable to the West...NATO expansion...runs the risk of creating a consensus within Russia that not only these particular treaties (sic) but the entire post-Cold War settlement is arbitrary, unfair, and anti-Russian.'¹⁶

Thus, observes Lieutenant Colonel Kathy Sweet, Professor, Air War College, the U.S. runs the risk of a strategy in support of NATO expansion resulting "in the exact opposite of what winning the Cold War was supposed to accomplish."¹⁷ In the post-Cold War era, however, our goal should be to encourage Russia to reduce nuclear weapons, to dispose of nuclear materials, and to increase security around its nuclear weapons sites. What we should not do is drive Russia to emphasize dependence on nuclear weapons as its only affordable response to NATO expansion. This is precisely what the DUMA is reflecting through its ongoing refusal to ratify START II.

This view is ominously seconded through talk of retaining and possibly expanding tactical and theater nuclear capabilities as a response to enlargement. Threats such as these surface and persist through both veiled and clear warnings from Russian leaders that Moscow can and will seek unspecified security arrangements without reference to Western interests: a "two can play this game" response. For instance, Russian authorities have vowed to manufacture as many nuclear weapons as it takes to overcome any anti-missile defense system.¹⁸

Unfortunately, nuclear forces appear to be the only "unspecified security arrangement" possible. The Russian General Staff and many DUMA representatives see

no alternatives available to them other than the still well-funded Strategic Rocket Forces. At both the strategic and even tactical levels, Russia's nuclear force is the only card they can play, and "they are unlikely to give this last trump card away."¹⁹

Perhaps the DUMA's firm position on START II is only an attempt to retain the last trappings of superpower status. On the other hand, it may be the result of a realistic assessment of their true situation. General Lev Roklin, head of the Defense Committee, openly commented, "The Army is being destroyed in a catastrophic, snowball fashion. There is only enough money to feed the servicemen and pay their salaries, so that the military does not explode."²⁰ With their conventional forces in such disarray, the U.S. can reasonably (and should prudently) assume Russia will seek alternative means to defend itself and project military power.

The situation has passed the rhetoric-only stage. Perhaps most unnerving, Russia has abandoned its no-first-use policy. Over four years ago, in November 1993, the Russian Federation approved the "Basic Provisions of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation," drafted by the General Staff. Although it primarily addresses defensive operations, the document addresses transition to the offensive and specifically renounces the Soviet policy of no first use.

The West must not dismiss this doctrinal sea change lightly: "Is Russian abandonment of START and CFE a price worth paying for NATO enlargement? Is it better to have Poland as a NATO ally than to gain Russian ratification of START II? Is Czech territory more strategically valuable than the CFE regime? Are the services of the Hungarian army more important than a militarily cooperative Moscow?"²¹

Notes

¹ Peter Rutland, "Yavlinskii on NATO Expansion: Yalta, or Versailles?," Open Media Research Institute 1, no. 520 (13 January 1997): 2

² *ibid.*, 3

³ Marco A. Mangelsdorf, "Why Russia May Become Stubborn," Los Angeles Times, 2 November 1997.

⁴ "DUMA Committee Heads Write Clinton on NATO," 22 October 1997, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, on-line, America Online, 25 October 1997

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Senate, NATO Expansion: Hearings before the Budget Committee, 105th Cong., 29 October 1997

⁸ Ronald J. Kurth, Dean, US Air Force Air War College, comments to "Crime & Economic Punishment in Russia" class, Air War College, Maxwell AFB, AL, 19 September 1997

⁹ Jonathan Dean, "No NATO Expansion Now," The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 52, no. 3 (May-June 1996): 18

¹⁰ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Study on NATO Enlargement, New York, September 1995, 2

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² Jeffrey Record and Julia Woodbury, NATO Expansion: The Perils of Strategic Slumming in Europe, The Atlanta Papers Policy Paper 2 (Atlanta, GA: Georgia Institute of Technology, 1997), 41. [Much of pages 17 and 18 is derived from Record's piece.]

¹³ Editorial, Newsday, 4 October 1997

¹⁴ Mikhail S. Gorbachev, "NATO's Plan Threatens START II," New York Times, 10 February 1996

¹⁵ Record, 43

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ Lt Col Kathy Sweet, "NATO Expansion: An American's View From Moscow" (Faculty paper, Air War College, 1997), 9

¹⁸ *ibid.*, 7

¹⁹ *ibid.*, 10

²⁰ General Lev Roklin, news conference by the DUMA Defense Committee, Moscow, 17 February 1997

²¹ Record, 43

Chapter 4

Avoiding the Rush: Domestic and International Reasons

What Security Void?

One of the critical arguments of those favoring NATO expansion is the existence of the so-called security vacuum in the region between Germany and Russia -- a vacuum that, NATO expansionists say, needs to be filled by NATO if it is not to be filled again by Russia.¹

Mandlebaum argues that this vacuum, if it ever existed, has disappeared and been filled by reshaped European military forces which are more suitable for defensive operations and much less so for offensive. These evolved forces, dispersed fairly equally among the states, have spawned a European security order stable enough to provide lasting peace. Mandlebaum views the new order as the result of three major changes that occurred in the last decade.²

First, of course, is the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Second is the transformation of the political systems in the countries that were formerly in the buffer zone between West Germany and the Soviet Union.

The third and most important shift is the increasingly balanced military postures of the area powers. Whence this stability? As discussed in chapter 3, at the heart of today's unprecedented European security order lies a series of arms-limitation treaties signed between 1987 and 1993, including the pan-European CFE Treaty and the two

START agreements between the U.S. and Russia. These treaties, proving more successful than hoped for, have dramatically reduced the threat of major military confrontation in Europe.

They do so by providing a measure of transparency which allows every country to know what forces all the others have, and how those forces are being deployed and operated. This security order makes Europe less vulnerable to a major war than ever before in modern history.

Unfortunately, the plan to expand NATO fails to take account of this real international situation following the end of the Cold War, and proceeds in accord with a logic that made sense only during the Cold War. The division of Europe ended before there was any thought of taking new members into NATO, and no one is threatening to re-divide Europe today.

It is therefore a long reach to claim that it is necessary to take new members into NATO to avoid a future division of, or fill a security void in, Europe. Following that logic, if NATO is to be the principal instrument for unifying the continent, then the best means to that end is to include all European countries, including Russia. Who then would be left to defend against? NATO is, lest we forget, a military alliance.

President Clinton has not grasped the strategic paradigm shift: the threat is nil, and no power is stalking Eastern Europe to re-divide it or fill a void. NATO expansion is thus rendered a solution in search of a problem.

Expanding America's Defense Liabilities -- Beware the Weak Sister!

Dr. Grant Hammond, National Security Strategy Chair at Air War College, believes NATO and the U.S. should shun new alliances with "weak sister" states. He argues greater powers are inevitably pulled down by lessers, essentially becoming surety for the lesser by assuming her associated internal instabilities and international liabilities. The greater must make good on the lesser's promises and problems, or face the same consequences as the lesser. Hammond offers three supporting arguments.³

The first stems from recent German history. Germany's alliance with Austria-Hungary during World War I, then again with Italy in World War II, both resulted in the diversion of significant resources from Germany's eastern and western fronts to shore up her weaker allies. Had Germany not twice faced the drain of valuable resources to its south, the defeated may have been the victor.

Closer to home, the U.S. propped up its far weaker Vietnam ally in the midst of an unrecognized civil war, spending \$120 billion, sacrificing 58,000 men, and forfeiting international prestige. This case requires no speculation; the lesser pulled the greater down to defeat.

Second, allying with a weak sister violates a cardinal rule of strategy: conserve enemies. Simply put, allies add to an alliance's enemies. A weak sister's enemies and problems become the greater's. Moreover, the new enemies are not necessarily external, as we discovered, again, in Vietnam. Because the weak sister's government may change over time, perhaps assuming a political character that may or may not reflect the greater's priorities and interests, the greater's risks increase and its credibility is tested.

Further, the weaker state is historically more likely to suffer internal disputes and be involved in disputes between allies. The chance of this happening in any given alliance increases as its membership grows. Even in defensive alliances such as NATO, members must decide how they will get involved (not *if*: they already are by virtue of alliance membership), and on what side. The greater states are forced to take sides, inherently weakening the entire alliance. If hostilities then break out among members, the conflict is immediately regional or even global in nature.

Third, there are long term economic considerations beyond the up-front expansion costs. An alliance can be a blank check: someone else fills in the date due and the amount to pay, but it is the greater power's credit rating that is at risk. This last economic concern is often the most obvious and usually trumps the military and political arguments just described.

The implications for current NATO members are clear. Does the U.S. really want to formally pledge its military, political and economic capital for three former Warsaw Pact nations? Should conflict arise, among members or within any one of them, the U.S. is involved. If NATO expands, the U.S. will not assume greater risk if conflict breaks out. Instead, we will have already assumed it -- the moment the first new member joined.

Is it fair to categorize eastern European nations as "weak sisters?" It seems so...NATO essentially has. One of the conditions for membership is the absence of ethnic conflicts in candidate countries. However, one of the major reasons cited for NATO expansion is the very desire to prevent an open internal conflict -- indicative of a weaker state -- like the ongoing one in the former Yugoslavia. If that is a goal of expansion, what does that imply about the candidate states?

As trite as Santayana's warning may be, we should learn from our mistakes. "In the 1950's, Eisenhower's religiously anti-Communist and deterrence-obsessed secretary of state rushed about the world extending U.S. defense commitments to any and all non-communist political entities, including South Vietnam, with little thought given to the new allies' political viability or military defensibility or to the military consequences for the U.S. of failed deterrence."⁴

"Ante Up!" But How Much?

Who will underwrite NATO's expansion, and how much that expansion will cost, remain crucial questions. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) published a study in 1996 that put the cost of absorbing the Visegrad Four (the signatories to the 15 Feb 91 cooperation agreement in Visegrad, Hungary -- Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) at \$60 - \$125 billion.⁵

A 1996 RAND Corporation study predicts the cost of enlargement to be \$42 billion through 2009.⁶

Last February, before invitations were issued to three of the Visegrad Four, the Department of State (DOS) estimated enlargement would cost the U.S. and the 15 other alliance members \$22 billion over 12 years, with new members paying \$13 billion through 2009. The cost to American taxpayers would be about 15%, or \$2 billion.⁷

That same month the Department of Defense (DOD) said total expansion costs from 1997 to 2007 would range between \$27 and \$35 billion.⁸

Then in October, the Government Accounting Office (GAO) announced it could not support the administration's estimated price tag. In Senate testimony the GAO stated

the DOS and DOD "underlying assumptions were sound," including their assessment of future threats. However, the GAO added, "for several reasons we concluded that the administration estimates are quite speculative." It said many estimates were merely unsupported "best guesses" for the direct costs of enlarging the alliance, and that the overall costs for both the 16 existing members and the three invitees to upgrade and integrate their defenses remain speculative.⁹

Finally, on November 27, NATO's own estimate came in at only \$1.5 billion over ten years for all 19 states, far less than the U.S. executive and legislative estimates.¹⁰

Which estimate can be believed? NATO and the RAND Corporation, openly supportive of expansion, would be expected to minimize the costs. The same could be said for DOS and DOD. However, the GAO and CBO are chartered to rise above the political fray in the pursuit of truth. Yet even their numbers fall toward the high end of the spectrum. Uncertainty abounds.

But what is clear is that funds to pay for America's cost share of enlargement will have to be taken from a defense budget that is now in its thirteenth consecutive year of real decline, including a 70% drop in the procurement of new weapons and equipment over the past decade. As the largest single portion of discretionary spending, the defense budget remains subject to unrelenting pressure. Funding NATO expansion "out of hide" would continue the same sad story of decline.

No rationale state would normally pursue this fiscal situation. Why abandon reasoned thought? Estimates of expansion range from X to $80X$. Why commit to a massive effort whose price tag is uncertain and benefits undefined? The only "known" is that enlargement will cost each American more tax dollars.

If the sole argument against NATO expansion were its cost, the American public would deserve a fair and detailed hearing long before any Senate ratification action. As only one argument among many, the need for national review is glaring.

Notes

¹ Mato, Zsolt-Istvan, "The Case Against NATO Enlargement" *Transition* 3, no. 5 (21 March 1997): 28-31

² *ibid.*, 29

³ Grant Hammond, USAF Air War College, interviewed by author, 12 Nov 1997

⁴ Jeffrey Record and Julia Woodbury, *NATO Enlargement: Two Views*, The Atlanta Papers Policy Paper 2 (Atlanta, Georgia: Center for International Strategy, Technology & Policy, Georgia Institute of Technology, 1997), 52

⁵ "Affordable: NATO Enlargement," *The Economist*, 3 August 1996, 42

⁶ "What will NATO Enlargement Cost?," *Survival*, Autumn 1996, 5-26

⁷ "GAO: NATO Expansion Price Tag Unknown," 23 October 1997, *United Press International*, on-line, America Online, 24 October 1997

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⁹ "GAO: NATO Expansion Price Tag Unknown," 23 October 1997, *United Press International*, on-line, America Online, 24 October 1997

¹⁰ Jeffrey Ulbrich, "NATO Expansion To Cost Allies \$1.5B," 27 November 1997, *The Associated Press*, on-line, America Online, 2 December 1997

Chapter 5

Willing Bedfellows: NATO Expansion and the 1997 National Security Strategy

A few references from the President's May 1997 "A National Security Strategy for a New Century" illustrate the Clinton Administration's contradictory positions on NATO expansion.

The Preface states NATO "was created to strengthen Europe's west. Now, it can do the same for Europe's east."¹ How did NATO strengthen the West? Through its members' promises of mutual defense -- Article V of the Treaty. How can NATO strengthen the East? By definition, not by the same military rationale, as Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic were until 1990 part of the threat the West was defending against. The East, once the enemy, would now be the "West." Who then in the East is left to defend against?

The answer is Russia, and the Clinton Administration via a revised National Security Strategy should be honest with the world and so state. The aim is simple and transparent: consolidate Cold War gains against an already defeated foe.

Definitely defeated? Yes. In early December of last year Marshal Igor Sergeyev, the Russian Defense Minister, confirmed that Russian defense cuts are proceeding, with overall numbers to be reduced to 1.2 million by January 1999, down from about 1.5 million today.² The once-vaunted Soviet army is today an imploding hollow shell,

sustaining 500 suicides a year, 1,000 recruits killed annually in brutal hazings, and thousands starving to death in distant outposts.³

1.2 million men in uniform do not an offensive threat make. Having failed in Chechnya, on their own soil, the Army would hasten to an even worse fate beyond their borders.

Still, the National Security Strategy calls NATO "the guarantor of European democracy" and "a force for European stability."⁴ Guarantor in case of what? A force to be used against whom? NATO is also termed "a visible deterrent."⁵ Who is being deterred? There is no nation-state on the face of the earth threatening Europe today.

If not the fear of Russia, as President Clinton claims, what then *is* the concrete rationale for expansion? If not for military reasons, then perhaps for political. But if political, why continue the military requirement of mutual self-defense? Moreover, why not use an international political organization, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)? Or, if for economic reasons, the question remains: why persist with the mutual self-defense pact? Why not an international economic organization, such as the European Union?

The Strategy continues, "NATO expansion will not be aimed at replacing one division of Europe with a new one; rather, its purpose is to enhance the security of all European states."⁶ As long as Article V remains in the Washington Treaty, this does not mean what it says. The Russians understand. If this were true, the Strategy would identify tangible benefits of expansion that offset the risks posed by an alienated Russia facing NATO on its doorstep. Instead, it brushes off the inevitability of a new division of

Europe among an enlarged NATO, those eastern states that do not make the cut, and Russia.

Additionally, the National Security Strategy ignores other enlargement issues, such as the dilution of NATO's power as it takes on weaker states, and the alliance's diminished political cohesion as its numbers and therefore its members' perspectives grow.

Who cannot see through this ruse, no less transparent despite its codification in our National Security Strategy? Today's Russian leaders certainly can, and it is to their credit that they have not objected louder than they have. Let us hope tomorrow's Russian leaders are equally forgiving.

Notes

¹ The White House, "A National Security Strategy For a New Century," May 1997, i

² Jeffrey Ulbrich, "Russia's Offer Doesn't Impress NATO," 4 December 1997, *The Associated Press*, on-line, America Online, 6 December 1997

³ Steven Merritt Miner, "America's Emerging Nemesis," Los Angeles Times, 21 December 1997, *Los Angeles Times On Line*, on-line, America Online, 28 December 1997

⁴ The White House, 29

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

Chapter 6

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is a trap for a man to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider his vows.

—Proverbs 20:25 (NIV)

We have seen that NATO expansion endangers the pro-Western democratic movement in Russia, has delayed and may erase many WMD treaty gains, and increases the possibility of a nuclear confrontation. There is no void it would fill and no mature state it would help. And, its costs are undefined.

Still, the pro-expansion momentum continues. But it is never too late to reassess an unwise plan. What steps should the U.S. take now? At least three: listen to Russia's pro-Western leaders, comprehend the severity of a closer nuclear threat, and study the potential benefits of the European Union as perhaps a much more efficient and effective vehicle to increased European security.

Heed the Voices of Those in the Fray

Russian democratic leaders generally feel that although NATO expansion poses no real threat to Russia, it may turn Russian public opinion away from pro-Western democrats like themselves. Their biggest fear, which the West should share, is the return

of hard-line nationalists to positions of political leadership. Although most democrats would probably accept enlargement if pressed, they urge a slow, deliberate process -- with Russia consulted and informed along the way, actively involved to preserve Russian interests as much as possible. The democrats' goal, at a minimum, is to project an image to their people of an engaged Russia. The NATO-Russian Permanent Joint Council is a worthy first step, but given the assumption of enlargement, does not go far enough.

The democrats' perspectives should be taken seriously, in view of the fact that those least opposed to increased Western influence hold them. An abrupt and continuing expansion of NATO could easily feed Russian fears of Western hostility by creating the impression of outright NATO domination of former Soviet allies and possibly territories. Should NATO expansion elicit a Russian response of right wing, nationalist politicians brought to power, NATO's Cold War mission would quickly return.

Going Nuclear Early

Related concerns loom even larger. As several from the former Soviet regime have articulated, NATO's expansion in conjunction with Russia's military and economic weaknesses may drive any new nationalist leaders to sole but trumpeted dependence on nuclear weapons as their only affordable -- and therefore most likely to be used -- response. This view is already reflected in several recent developments: DUMA resistance to ratification of the START II Treaty, talk of abrogating the CFE Treaty, talk of retaining and possibly expanding tactical and theater nuclear capabilities, and the abandonment of Russia's no-first-use policy. Certainly, NATO must tread carefully to

preclude Russian public demand for a return to the Soviet Union's Cold War stance -- a stance that would now be singly dependent on nuclear weapons.

"The U.S. has two choices: It can go for broke, to see how much it can force down Russia's gullet and delude itself into thinking there won't be consequences. Or, it can decide its priorities and move on them selectively, and with sensitivity, while keeping our eye on the prize. The prize is not a bigger NATO that can threaten Russia more, but a denuclearized Russia that can threaten us less."¹

Why Not the European Union?

If not NATO, then who? Or What?

The European Union (EU) may be best suited to meet the security needs of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. The Russians should have no legitimate objections against membership in the EU.

The editorial staffs of some of America's leading newspapers are beginning to advocate a more cautious and slower approach to NATO expansion. Instead of rushing to expand an alliance that is still searching for a revised purpose, *The New York Times* recommends that the EU, not NATO, should take the lead in incorporating Europe's new democracies into the continental community. The EU can assist their continuing transformation into market economies and offer incentives to keep them on the path of political democracy and individual freedom.² The *Boston Globe* has begun to voice similar arguments.³

Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott conceded over a year ago that EU membership is the best avenue to locking in the "essential political, economic, and social reforms" that the emerging East Central European democracies are now implementing.⁴

It is not difficult to make the case that economic cooperation through full access to markets across the whole of Europe offers a more enduring, peaceful, and profitable approach to European security, including Russia's.

The EU has proven to be the clear model for European integration. However, since the Visegrad Four's October 6, 1991, declaration of its desire to join the EU, the group has managed to wrest only agreements of association from today's members. Yet, if the EU would admit NATO's "first three" as full members, it would play an essential economic and political role in helping stabilize these three countries' economies. As history ever reinforces, stable economies discourage social unrest and military aggression.

Unfortunately, disagreement has arisen over agricultural and steel import and export concerns among the continental nations. Tension persists over banking, insurance, and real estate issues as well. If these obstacles could be overcome, expanded EU markets would enhance foreign investment and economic development in East Central Europe, as well as likely foster the emergence of more Western-oriented political leaders.

Philip Zelikow pursues the EU-over-NATO argument. He believes it is hard to find any evidence or logic chain in which NATO membership can be considered a major factor in determining whether former Warsaw Pact democracies survive and thrive. Their survival depends on their people, on the struggle for power among their emerging political leaders, and on whether the respective governments can meet the sometimes radical demands new democracies inevitably make. Zelikow asserts that the Poland, Hungary, and Czech Republic relationships with the EU are more important than any with NATO, since the EU is structured specifically to help member nations meet these

needs by promoting economic growth. He recognizes, however, that prospects for EU membership in the near future are remote.⁵

But why is the EU balking? Thomas Friedman, the *New York Times* columnist, submits an explanation that was first considered novel but is now regularly espoused by those advocating larger EU membership. He maintains the Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, and others clamoring to join NATO are the ones who really scare the EU. EU members know that Russia is no threat to them now. What threatens them are the new East Central European free-market democracies whose factories and farmers want to export their products to Western Europe at prices much less than those that prevail there today. EU members also fear East Central European workers who might flock to Western Europe for jobs, thereby driving wages down.

"Russian missiles and Russian tanks are a nebulous and distant danger to Western Europe," Friedman writes. "But Polish hams and Polish workers are a clear and present danger." He continues: "So NATO expansion is the bone EU members throw the East Europeans instead of letting them into the European common market, which is what the East Europeans really want and need. That's what would really bolster their democracies. For the West Europeans, NATO expansion is the ideal way to block the East Europeans from joining the EU -- without feeling guilty about it."⁶

To paraphrase Mandlebaum's observation, the U.S. is going to extend its nuclear umbrella to the Eastern Europeans so that the Western Europeans won't have to buy their tomatoes.⁷ Friedman summarizes: "What a reckless way to deal with the most successful military alliance in history."⁸

Indeed it is. The U.S. should seriously consider the European Union, not NATO, as the vehicle of choice to enhance and integrate European security without alienating Russia.

America's leaders and people have not yet thought through the advantages and disadvantages of NATO expansion. Until that happens, and per Solomon's wise advice, this is "a time to shun embracing."

Notes

¹ Editorial, The New York Times, 10 May 1995

² Editorial, The New York Times, 25 October 1996

³ Thomas M. Nichols and Steven T. Ross, "Don't Use NATO to Fence Russia In," The Boston Globe, 19 December 1997

⁴ Strobe Talbott, U.S. Department of State Dispatch, "The Transatlantic Partnership in the Post-Cold War Era (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary, 23 October 1995), 763

⁵ Philip Zelikow, "The Masque of Institutions," *Survival* 38, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 15

⁶ Editorial, The New York Times, 10 May 1995

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ Thomas L. Friedman, "Bye-Bye NATO," The New York Times, 14 April 1997

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