

# Will NATO Go East?

*The Debate Over  
Enlarging the  
Atlantic Alliance*

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## CHAPTER TWO

# NATO Expansion and European Regional Security

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*David M. Law and S. Neil MacFarlane*

### Introduction

The threat for the deterrence and containment of which the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established evaporated with the end of the Cold War. The relegation of Russia to irrelevance as a factor impinging on the security of NATO member states characteristic of the first years after the end of the Cold War was premature.<sup>1</sup> However, it will be many years before Russia is in a position to pose the kind of continental threat that NATO was designed to forestall. Conventional (structural-realist) wisdom suggests that alliances constructed to deal with specific threats do not long survive the demise of the threat they were meant to address. There is, consequently, reason to doubt the capacity of the organization to survive as a collective-defence organization.<sup>2</sup> However, many in Europe and in North America continue to believe that NATO remains necessary as a means of reducing the possibility of conflict at some point in the future between the core members of the alliance in Western Europe. Although this prospect seems remote, the cooperative ties fostered by the organization and embodied in it may serve to keep it that way.

The dangers of assuming the imminent demise of NATO have been ably presented by David Haglund.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, it is easy to appreciate the desire of the organization to outline a new agenda and new functions to replace those that have disappeared. Having a credible mission that justifies continuing investment in the organization will enhance its prospects for survival.

Of the various options available to the organization, that of transforming itself into a provider of the public good of security to Europe as a whole, or at least to that portion of Europe outside the former Soviet Union, has been perceived to be particularly attractive. Although the threat of bipolar conflict has receded, the dangers associated with the political, military, and socio-economic

consequences of instability in the recently liberated eastern portions of the continent have become increasingly clear in the disintegration of Yugoslavia and in the tension between centrifugal and centripetal forces within the former Soviet region and within the states that comprise it.<sup>4</sup> NATO is, arguably, the only institution in Europe with the capacity (and — given the implementation plan for the Bosnia-Herzegovina peace concluded in Dayton in November 1995 — possibly the will) to provide stability in the newly unstable Europe. Among the principal arguments for expansion in NATO's enlargement study of September 1995 is the following:

Projecting stability eastward is now an important NATO function and strategic imperative, possibly the most important such imperative. This can best be accomplished by step-by-step enlargement (as has been the NATO tradition) to subsume and manage these potential instabilities rather than awaiting their inevitable arrival in the present NATO area.<sup>5</sup>

The post-Cold War evolution of the alliance<sup>6</sup> — from the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) created in 1991, through the Partnership for Peace (PFP) adopted in January 1994, to the decision of the North Atlantic Council in December 1994 to commission the NATO enlargement study — has been one of increasingly ambitious efforts to address this problem.

The chapters in this volume all take specific approaches to this question. Ours relates regional theory and comparative research on the effectiveness of regional organizations in coping with regional threats to peace and security to the question of NATO expansion. It first discusses the nature of the transatlantic region and its normative and organizational outgrowths. It then examines a number of the weaknesses of NATO as an organization in the context of general analysis of capacity and performance of regional institutions, and examines the option of expansion in terms of these weaknesses. Third, it turns to an analysis of the feasibility and merits of expansion. This leads to a number of concluding remarks on the implications of expansion for the organization.

### **Regionalism and Security**

At first glance, the application of the idea of region to the transatlantic area seems (literally) stretched. There is little agreement in the literature on the criteria relevant to the identification of regional identity, or to the weighting of these criteria. Four kinds of variable seem particularly common in analysis of the subject.<sup>6</sup> The first is propinquity, if not contiguity. The existence of a region has an important geographical component, though this is to some extent mitigated by the "shrinking" of distance associated with the revolutions in transportation and communications in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The second is intensity of interactions. The existence of a regional identity is generally considered to imply the existence of a discontinuity at the border of a region with regard to the number and importance of interactions among communities.<sup>7</sup> Third, since these interactions reflect interdependence — sensitivities and vulnerabilities between states — the existence of a region has something to do with the extent to which the decisions of states within an area are affected, positively or negatively, by those who share the contiguous space.<sup>8</sup> The sensitivity and vulnerability of a state to other states in its region are generally deemed to be greater than they are with regard to states outside. The histories of states within a region are, consequently, shared to a greater extent than those with states outside the boundaries. In the realm of security, this is explicit in Barry Buzan's concept of the "security complex," defined as a group of states "whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot reasonably be considered apart from one another."<sup>9</sup>

Finally, there is an important subjective dimension to the concept. A "region," like any other concept in social discourse, exists in a socially constructed reality. It exists in part because people believe it to exist. This belief may be, although it is not necessarily, linked to a perception of shared cultural heritage and values, to a perception of community.

Although it would be difficult to derive an uncontroversial weighting of these various criteria, it is safe to say that the farther along all of these vectors of analysis an area finds itself, the stronger its regional identity is likely to be. The North Atlantic area appears weak on a number of counts, not least that of geographical proximity. The states of the area are divided by an ocean 3000 miles wide.

In the area of economic interactions among states within the area, the two segments of the transatlantic community have distanced themselves over the past quarter century, and have institutionalized this distance in the creation of two regional economic associations — the European Economic Community, now the European Union (EU), and the Canadian-American Free Trade Agreement, now the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). An examination of the changing relative weights of intraregional versus transatlantic trade would suggest that the transoceanic economic link is weakening over time in favour of continental associations. Intra-North American and intra-Western European economic ties are growing more rapidly than are transatlantic ones. This appears to be true across the broader spectrum of diplomatic, cultural, and communications transactions as well.

Turning to interdependence, and focussing on security, the American and Western European areas face substantially different situations. Whatever one might make of Canadian neuroses concerning the United States, the two states, since 1817 and more completely since the 1870s, have demilitarized their relationship, while the degree of integration of their economies and societies is arguably unparalleled in international relations. The two countries face no

proximate actual or potential threats to their security. The history of relations among Western European states has been less felicitous, while their geopolitical position vis-à-vis potential external threats is less salutary. In these respects, one might consider the transatlantic area to comprise two regions in security terms, their merger being a product of systemic overlay during the Cold War.<sup>10</sup> As this overlay weakens, these distinct security identities tend to reassert themselves.

### The Transatlantic Community

One can take these arguments too far. The difficulty that the United States has experienced in remaining out of major European conflict in this century suggests that the two security complexes may be more closely tied than they appear to be at first glance. The evolution of the nuclear balance creates an American tie to the European region that has outlasted the end of the Cold War. These factors are perhaps reflected in the difficulty of articulating the isolationist argument of George Washington and John Quincy Adams in current circumstances in the Euro-American relationship.

The North American members of the transatlantic community are cultural outgrowths of European expansion and settlement. Their history of involvement in international affairs focussed largely on Europe for much of the 19th and 20th centuries. They are linked strongly, furthermore, by a mutual embrace of certain understandings concerning society and politics. Regarding norms, at the unit level, the common ground includes an embrace of democracy and respect for human rights. This does not imply uniformity of domestic systems.

The understanding of democracy in Western Europe is in important respects different from that of the United States. Nor does it imply that the meaning of the concept is constant. We used to think that Canada's comprehension of the concept was closer to that of Europe than to that of the United States. Now we are not so sure. Nonetheless, underlying this variation are certain core propositions, notably that governments should be freely and fairly chosen by their citizens. Likewise, in human rights, although there may be substantial (though perhaps decreasing) differences in weighting of the different (legal/political/economic) individual rights and of individual as opposed to group rights in the societies in question, there would appear to be substantial agreement on a basic set of legal (for example, *habeas corpus* and the right to fair trial), and political (viz. freedom of expression and assembly within fairly broad parameters) rights within the North Atlantic group of states.<sup>11</sup>

Some members have, of course, violated these norms at various times in their history. Portugal was admitted to the alliance as a military dictatorship and remained so until the mid-1970s. Both Greece and Turkey have experienced

extended periods of military rule and systematic violation of human rights. Yet these are exceptions. The generalizations hold for the core of the alliance throughout its history. Indeed, one could argue that membership in NATO has had some impact in facilitating the transitions of the outliers towards an embrace of the norms discussed above, while the institutional cooperation embodied in NATO has further embedded these shared norms throughout the community as a whole.

At the level of values relating to interstate interaction, the North Atlantic community reflects a shared sense that war is not an option of policy for the management of relations among alliance partners.<sup>12</sup> The interstate level is linked to the domestic one in the proposition that states embracing democratic values are less prone to war as an instrument of policy.<sup>13</sup> Again, this norm has not been universally honoured over the history of the alliance. Greece and Turkey were near war in 1974 over Cyprus and again in 1987 and 1996 over contested rights and rocks in the Aegean Sea. Their relations have displayed a level of animosity and tension uncharacteristic of the alliance as a whole for much of the post-World War II era.

The perception of common interest and shared norms did not arise spontaneously. It was in large part a result of the hegemonic assertion of the United States in both a classical and Gramscian sense in Western Europe in the post-war era. The American desire to contain the Soviet Union in political, economic, and military terms underlay its commitment to the construction of a democratic Germany and European recovery, and to the institutionalization of security cooperation in the North Atlantic Treaty. American promotion of political democracy and liberal capitalism had much to do with the strengthening in Western Europe of the values discussed above. American military preponderance in Western Europe explains in large part the transcendence of the region's historical contradictions in the realm of national security.

Shared cultural heritage and historical background — coupled with the embrace of common values regarding rights, and social, economic, and political organization — have had important perceptual consequences. The politics and societies of North America believe themselves to be intimately connected to and engaged in the affairs of Europe, particularly in the realm of security, a point reiterated yet again in President Clinton's address on the deployment in Bosnia-Herzegovina of 27 November 1995. Bosnia-Herzegovina is perceived to be important to the United States, because it is important to America's European allies, and the European allies' security interests are perceived to be intimately related to those of the United States itself.

Perception of common interest and shared values, and a consequent sense of community, form the basis for the cooperation in security affairs institutionalized in NATO. The relationship between the institution and the community that it reflects is, however, dialectical. The institution — through its cooperative military structures and the systematic quality of consultation among members —

has created habits of cooperation, strengthening this sense of community and the embrace of its underlying values. It is both a product of, and, in its own right, a producer of community identity.

All of these factors constitute important reasons to qualify the analysis of emerging continental identities provided above. They also provide some grounds for viewing the North Atlantic area as a whole as a region for purposes of political and security analysis. However, the evolution of the international relations of the area — notably, the weakening of strategic overlay and the disappearance of the common external threat, the erosion of American preponderance, and the gradual emergence of subregional political and security identities — does raise doubts about the survivability of this identity and the institution that embodies it. It is this concatenation of circumstances that informs the effort to define new roles for the organization.

### **NATO as a Regional Security Organization**

NATO historically has had two principal purposes. First and foremost, it was a collective-defence organization, designed to counter a specific threat emanating from outside the region. Second, it sought to stabilize the historically troubled relations of its members. The link across the Atlantic to the United States and Canada served both of these purposes. As the external threat has diminished in credibility, the principal organizational function has arguably become the maintenance of stable peaceful relations among its members. In this respect, the organization has come to focus more clearly on collective security.<sup>14</sup>

However, this is not the full story. The traditional focus of collective security has been on interstate relations among members. The evolving role of alliance forces and command structures in the former Yugoslavia and changes in NATO doctrine suggest that the alliance may be more willing than in the past to involve itself in out-of-area operations and in essentially substate conflicts in peacekeeping and peace-enforcement roles. This indicates acceptance of a broader organizational mandate to preserve and to enhance stability in the European region outside the former Soviet Union, on the assumption that interstate disputes and substate conflicts outside the NATO area could have serious implications for members of the alliance. NATO is frequently considered to be more suited than other European institutions (e.g., the OSCE and the WEU) for these tasks, given its financial and military resources, and also its accumulated experience of collaborative military activity. Expansion is perhaps the logical strategic conclusion to such an evolution in thinking, on the presumption that negative externalities can be more effectively addressed or defused by internalizing them.<sup>15</sup>

Since this evolution involves a gradual embrace of tasks associated with regional security organizations, it is appropriate, before evaluating the merits

and demerits of expansion, to situate NATO in the larger context of the comparative literature on regional organizations as purveyors of the public good of regional security. Such an enquiry is also suggested by the recent emphasis on regional organizations as possible subcontractors for the UN in dealing with threats to international peace and security. Recent work in this area has identified a number of widely shared strengths and weaknesses of regional organizations.<sup>16</sup> NATO compares favourably to many organizations in this category in terms of the resources (financial, military, and bureaucratic) available to it, in the development of habits of cooperation among its national members, in the absence of serious conflict among them (with the exception of Greece and Turkey), and in the underlying consensus on values characteristic of the organization.

In three areas at least, however, NATO shares the weaknesses of most other regional organizations. The first lies in the asymmetrical distribution of power within the organization. Although the existence of an hegemonic power may conduce in a general sense to cooperation, comparative research suggests that insecurities associated with such asymmetries complicate the development of cooperative approaches to regional instability. This may be particularly relevant in instances where the position of the hegemon is perceived to be declining. In such circumstances, those whose position is improving relative to that of the preponderant power may be less willing to defer.

Second is a lack of consensus on issues relating to regional security that results from conflicting agendas on the part of member states. Regional states are those most likely to have interests that are affected by local conflicts. Hence, they have stronger incentives than extraregional actors to involve themselves in regional problems. However, there is no guarantee that the perceived interests of the members of a regional organization will coincide on the issue in question. In fact, to the extent that regional actors line up on opposing sides of local conflicts, they may directly contradict each other. In this respect, regional organizations may have greater difficulty in responding to problems of regional security than do extraregional actors.

Third is the noninclusive character of organizations. Membership in regional organizations by regional states tends to be incomplete. Indeed, many regional organizations (e.g., the Arab League, the GCC, and the OAS) were founded or have evolved to address threats emanating from excluded regional actors. This makes them unreliable instruments in the process of conciliation of such actors. The fact that the offending outsider has no place at the table within the organization makes it difficult for the organization to play a central role in the management and resolution of the problem in question.

The distribution of power in the Atlantic alliance is uneven in at least two relevant respects. First is the great disparity in military power between the US and the rest. Recognition of the consequent disparity in contribution to NATO's overall military posture has been reflected in the command structure of the

alliance and in the claim of a right to lead on the part of the United States. This has occasioned significant tension within the alliance typified by the long-term strain in the Franco-American relationship within NATO, in France's attitude towards participation in alliance military structures (although that attitude may, as Pascal Boniface's chapter argues, be changing), and in the challenge posed by France in particular to the transatlantic identity.

The problem of power asymmetries has a second aspect in the uneven development of the European powers themselves. Although Germany has been careful to avoid clear manifestation of its growing relative weight within Western and Central Europe in its approach to cooperation in NATO, this trend risks reactivation of historical sensitivities in relations between Germany and its neighbours.<sup>17</sup> Such factors tended to be suppressed by the strategic overlay and common threat of the Cold War. With the disappearance of this constraining impact, it is an open question whether the 40-year suspension in Western European security relations has been sufficient to put these questions to rest. To judge from the uncoordinated NATO and EU response to the disintegration of Yugoslavia, there remain significant potential problems here.

In this instance, the German government pushed for the rapid recognition of the new states claiming international status after the collapse of the federal state in the face of substantial opposition from France, among others. Some have speculated that one reason for France's unhappiness with rapid recognition was its concern that German power and influence were likely to expand rapidly in Central and Southeastern Europe and that German policy on this issue was a reflection of such an aspiration. The result was a lack of Western European consensus on what was perhaps the most critical decision in post-Cold War Europe, and a successful German effort to force its allies' hands through unilateral action.

The Yugoslav example is illustrative of the second issue as well. The major European players in the decision to recognize had longstanding historical connections with particular actors on the different sides of the conflict. This disparity of perceived interest was reflected in the community's decision process. Matters were also complicated by the fact that the United States perceived itself to be less engaged in the issue and was, consequently, willing to allow the Europeans to take the lead. The result was bad policy and a three-year delay in mounting an effective NATO response while the contending players within the organization sorted out their disparate positions on the question.

One might conclude that the disappearance of overlay removes an important constraint not only on the implications of power asymmetries in the European and transatlantic theatres, but also on the expression of disagreements on concrete security issues. In both respects, the regional identity of which NATO is the institutional expression is likely to become more fragile as the Cold War recedes. This would suggest a degree of prudence in subjecting it to new strains. Expansion may well produce further disagreements among key members of

the alliance and, if it does proceed, would introduce an entirely new set of potential disagreements among members. This question will be taken up in the next section in the discussion of alliance management.

The final point here concerns exclusivity. NATO obviously has very partial coverage in Europe. Most of Europe's current and potential security problems occur outside the NATO area. Their protagonists are not fully represented at the table. Moreover, as the Russian position suggests, the exclusive character of NATO membership, when coupled with the institution's history as an organization of collective defence (or, as the Russians would put it, a Cold War alliance), draws into question the legitimacy of its claim to status as the central pillar of a cooperative structure of regional security in Europe. This complicates the effort to prevent, manage, and resolve regional instabilities. In this respect at least, NATO is less well placed to assume such a role than is, for example, the OSCE. This brings us to a more complete discussion of the expansion project, since, if it addresses nothing else, it should at least address this deficiency in NATO.

### **Enlargement and NATO's Role as a Regional Security Organization**

In this section, we examine the issue of NATO expansion in the context of European regional security. As already noted, the concept has certain attractions, both in terms of NATO's perceived need for a new role beyond that of collective defence, and in terms of its potential contribution to the stability of Central and Eastern Europe. First of all, we examine the case for expansion. We then examine its weaknesses. Finally, we relate the discussion to the previous analysis of the regional identity of the North Atlantic area and its organizational manifestation in NATO.

There is little doubt that NATO membership would mitigate many of the security concerns of Central European candidates for admission. The countries of this region face, as do those they would join in the alliance, the panoply of "postmodern" security headaches, and more. There is the still largely theoretical fear of nuclear blackmail from a predator state or piratical group beyond, or quite possibly within, the European perimeter. There is the very real danger of being sucked into the maelstrom of ethnic violence. There is the never-ending threat of the ambitious neighbour. There is the abiding fear of oneself, the authoritarian temptation, the attraction of ethnic majoritarianism as the great simplifier, the dangerous disconnection between ambitious élites and disaffected populaces, each propelled by the arithmetic of material survival.

There is also an important subjective, or perceptual, dimension in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) drive for membership. The quest for alliance membership is as much about recognition, acceptance, and sanction of policies undertaken as it is about anything else. Whole communities strive to be

acknowledged as belonging to the western civilization from which they were forcefully cut off for so long. Élités seek outside approval of their efforts at reform — and what better proof of their success than to be invited to become a member of a club that brings together many of the world's most developed democracies?

NATO has no really serious competition as an organization that may satisfy these concerns. Despite the very real pains it has been experiencing in growing into its new post-Cold War roles, it stands head and shoulders above other institutions as a security provider in contemporary Europe. These considerations have been very much at work in NATO decisions to create the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, to establish the Partnership for Peace, and to proceed with the enlargement project.

In particular, alliance outreach activities have been motivated by the belief that the 16 can demonstrate an extremely successful record in multilateral security cooperation, and by the expectation that this experience can be emulated elsewhere. The allies operate under the assumption that multilateral security cooperation is in itself stabilizing, in that it has a pacifying effect on the relations among participating countries and can provide reassurance to third parties. They further assume that countries that cooperate closely with the alliance can come to enjoy the same kind of benefits as NATO member countries have historically enjoyed, including the:

- development of a tradition of fruitful and fair politico-military cooperation between countries of different strategic weight (e.g., on the model of the US and Luxembourg which have the same voting rights at NATO);
- establishment of cooperative relationships between former enemies (e.g., France and Germany);
- containment of regional rivalries (e.g., Greece and Turkey);
- encouragement of regional integration (e.g., the EU); and
- nurturing of a security environment conducive to the development of rule of law, prospering economies, and democratic institutions.<sup>18</sup>

Beyond this, the argumentation put forward by members of the enlargement camp has an almost deterministic quality to it. While NATO continues to refuse to allow itself to be drawn into a public discussion of names and times, the leading candidates for enlargement have not changed since the early 1990s. Moreover, the overall approach to enlargement described in the September 1995 study has evolved remarkably little from the planning that was originally done in the NATO international secretariat in the middle of 1993.<sup>19</sup> The key elements largely were, and remain, the following:

- institutional expansion is essential if the security needs of at least some CEE states are to be met;
- enlargement will enhance security in Europe as a whole and it will not create any new dividing lines;

- enlargement will not proceed in one but in several steps; as it does, sufficient reassurance can and will be provided to those slated for membership later, or not at all, to safeguard against instability;
- enlargement will not undercut the attractiveness of NATO's existing programs of cooperation with CEE states, namely the NACC and PFP;
- the OSCE should be "further strengthened" as a means *inter alia* of providing reassurance to nonmembers;
- NATO enlargement can and should unfold in a way that is complementary — approximately, if not precisely — to that of the EU and the WEU;
- while the membership of no European state will be excluded a priori, Russia and Ukraine (and presumably all other former Soviet republics, with the exception of the Baltic states) are unlikely ever to become members; NATO can, however, compensate for the exclusion of the two pivotal post-Soviet states by developing special relationships with them;
- the promise of membership will effectively counteract the threat of new instances of intra- and interstate ethnic conflict prior to accession; thereafter peer pressure and the growing sensitization to alliance security culture will suffice;
- enlargement will be an affordable process, both for current and new members;
- finally, enlargement will be a manageable process that can unfold without any debilitating strains upon the alliance's core defence functions, strategic posture including nuclear profile, or its ability to take decisions quickly and efficiently — in a German word, its *Konsensfähigkeit*.

Institutional widening is further seen as a way of putting to rest fears that the transatlantic relationship lost its relevance with the end of the Cold War and can, at the same time, serve as a way of engaging new generations in Europe and North America in a collective effort to build common security and shared democratic ideals. From this perspective, extending alliance membership to CEE countries is the logical next step in NATO's evolution, whereas not to do so is to accept that the transatlantic security partnership has outlived its usefulness. In short, to widen the ranks of the alliance is to fulfill the organization's historical destiny.

### **The Case against Enlargement**

Notwithstanding the powerful arguments and interests marshalled in favour of NATO's institutional widening, it is possible to make the case that enlargement would be detrimental to the security interests of all the major players, particularly the current and prospective members of NATO, thus producing a result diametrically opposed to that intended by the champions of enlargement. The following sections examine the downsides of the expansion project from the

vantage points of sociology, alliance management, and strategy. We start with sociology.

Institutional widening is sociologically unsound for a number of reasons. First and foremost, notwithstanding the alliance's determination to avoid drawing new dividing lines in Europe, enlargement would ineluctably do just that. As the September 1995 study intimates, NATO does not intend to embrace all OSCE states or to incorporate all aspiring members at one time. It would thus create new lines of demarcation in the undivided Europe that NATO members were supposed to have sanctified with the Charter of Paris. The alliance would thereby suggest that certain states were more deserving of privileged security status — through NATO membership — than others, or that certain communities were justifiably being included while others were not. In short, enlargement would not resolve the problem of exclusion mentioned earlier, but might well exacerbate it.

A "mini" or phased enlargement might prove less of a difficulty if criteria for deciding "who is in and who out" could be developed that enjoyed a certain credibility in both NATO and non-NATO countries. As it is, NATO has by its own admission no fixed criteria, nor any intention to devise them. From an internal alliance perspective, this is more than understandable. Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, which the enlargement study identifies as the operative clause for the enlargement process, stipulates only that a new member must be a European state, be in a position to further the principles of the Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic Treaty area, and be invited to join by virtue of a consensus decision. For those left on the outside looking in, inclusion of their neighbours on this basis would be difficult for élites, and even more so for populations, to accept. A rationale for any enlargement decisions will be expected and will have to be provided by governments, parliaments, and publics in NATO and non-NATO countries alike. Article 10 alone will simply not suffice as that rationale.

This is especially true in view of the last parliamentary and presidential elections in Hungary and Poland. Their results make clear that there is no qualitative distinction between electoral patterns there and in the rest of the CEE region. The same is true of the socio-economic situation in the area in general. Differences there are, and often quite dramatic ones, but they are not sufficiently profound to build a case for some countries being more "deserving" than others of alliance membership.

In an orderly world, the prospect of a staged expansion of the alliance to all aspirants might well suffice to limit the negative aspects of a mini-enlargement. But in the Europe of the 1990s, uncertainty reigns. Thus, promises of inclusion in a second or third phase would be taken at less than face value. For the publics in countries not making the first cut, if not for their leaderships, this would be interpreted as a vote of nonconfidence both in their countries' overall

direction and in their "defensibility." As such, this interpretation would be judged as tantamount to their abandonment by the west.

Much has been made of the feelings of rejection and hostility that enlargement would engender in Russia. But feelings of estrangement would by no means be limited to it alone. For example, noninclusion would prove particularly difficult for the Baltic states, but not solely because of the way this would be interpreted in certain Russian circles. For NATO to bring Poland on board but not Lithuania would likely be received as an affront among the latter's population. It would confront its Polish minority with a further psychological barrier to normal cross-border interaction with the larger Polish community. NATO in this event would not have diminished but inflated the significance of borders, and in the process strengthened those political forces that stress the esoterics of identity and shy from the exigencies of reform. Domestic forces that felt closer to the old order in the Baltics than to the new would be emboldened.

Nonadmittance of other CEE states participating in NACC and PFP would produce similar phenomena there. For example, if, as seems likely, Hungary were included in an initial enlargement, this would create greater feelings of isolation among the two million or so Hungarians in Rumania, exacerbate ethnic tensions there, and complicate the traditionally tenuous relationship between Budapest and Bucharest. At the same time, Rumania's relative feelings of geographical and political solitude would be reinforced, and its already weaker reform movement jeopardized.

There is no shortage of nationality issues that could be adversely affected. An enlargement process that brought in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary but left out Albania, Bulgaria, and Slovakia would not be helpful in fostering cooperative approaches to ethnic concerns. It would do little good, but some harm, to Albanian-Greek, Bulgarian-Turkish, Slovak-Czech, and Slovak-Hungarian relations. There are then several arguments against enlargement beyond its specific impact on Russia. But clearly the implications of alienation in the latter case are potentially far more serious than they would be in any other country and deserve special consideration.

In sum, although expansion as envisaged goes some distance toward addressing the problem of exclusion identified in earlier sections, it would not resolve it. To the extent that enlargement were likely to include those states that have moved farthest in the areas of economic and political reform — namely those CEE states least affected by the fissiparous tendencies of the region — it would sidestep the problems of instability and incipient conflict that it is apparently intended to forestall, leaving the most prominent sources of regional instability outside the alliance framework. Indeed, by drawing new lines of inclusion and exclusion, it could generate different sources of regional instability. For all of these reasons, even without consideration of Russia, the expansion project faces serious problems.

Yet Russia is the most serious potential problem in this area. The alliance has stated that Russia should have no veto over its decisionmaking. This is fully justified if only because NATO has none in Moscow or anywhere else in the CIS. At the same time, no potential new member of the alliance can have a serious interest in a deterioration of NATO/Russian relations. This is recognized in the enlargement study, and in general NATO has bent over backwards to reassure Moscow and to keep it abreast of developments on the enlargement front. "No surprises" is the catchword. NATO has stated that enlargement is not directed against Russia. It has suggested that NATO's defence posture in any new member state would be nonthreatening. It has worked to develop a special relationship with Russia beyond its participation in NACC and PFP, which would include a framework for cooperative political and security relations. Moreover, it has partly been to assuage Russian concerns that NATO has been prepared to hold high the veto power of the UN Security Council and to commit itself to further strengthening of the OSCE. Both are bodies in which Russia is on an equal footing with the United States. Still, this approach fails to take into account the sociological realities of Russia.

The country's political élites are currently preoccupied with survival, more often than not at one another's expense. There is enough brute power at the centre to organize military actions such as that in Chechnya, but the decisionmakers and their entourages have thus far been too divided to be able to mobilize behind any "grand idea." On the issue of cooperation with the west, there are essentially two, very loosely constituted, camps. One camp has no long-term future in a successfully transforming Russia; its antiwestern reflexes run deep. But it has been prepared to cooperate with the west insofar as this has kept resources flowing in their country's, and their personal, direction. A second camp sees a future for itself in a reformed Russia. Its cooperation with the west is not tactical but strategic, although there is sympathy within this group for policies designed to win favours in western capitals by Russia playing "hard to get" in dealing with such issues as the former Yugoslavia and disarmament.

These Russian westophiles *cum* modernizers fear that NATO enlargement could indeed, as President Yeltsin has warned, spark a Cold Peace, discrediting those who have been demonstrably in favour of cooperation with the west and isolating them from life-giving sources of political and material support. This camp does not believe in a military threat from the west, not now or in the event of enlargement. But it is concerned lest enlargement be utilized to mobilize a majority behind policies that might keep the new "old guard" in power, at least for a time. In an environment where short-term survivalism dominates, this is a cause of no little concern. The westophiles *cum* modernizers are particularly apprehensive about the propaganda value at street level of an "anti-Russia enlargement" in a country that has been invaded no fewer than

four times in as many centuries from a westerly direction, and whose collective mindset is thus receptive to warnings that history could repeat itself yet again.

What does our second camp do in the face of such considerations? It has essentially two choices, neither of them of much comfort. One is to subordinate its concerns about enlargement to its fundamentally prowestern orientation and to fight a battle it is condemned to lose in view of the prevailing political winds in Russia. The other is to join forces with those groups within the élite that are politically (and perhaps even genetically) predisposed to being antiwestern, on the assumption or the hope that this would provide the best opportunities for survival and damage limitation.

NATO enlargement, if it does come, could easily compromise those forces in Russia that have advocated close relations with the west and in the process precipitate a dangerous shift in the domestic balance of power. The exclusion of Russia from dominant security structures in Europe is already a problem. Enlargement carries a substantial risk of deepening Russia's alienation, despite the alliance's efforts to contain it.

A related difficulty concerns Russia's relationship with other CIS states and, in particular, the impact of NATO enlargement on the ongoing debate within the élites of Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union concerning bilateral and multilateral relations, and the shape of regional security arrangements. Western policy in regions such as the Caucasus and Central Asia is sorely restricted not only by a lack of will and resources but by regional circumstances. Most of these countries have experienced very little reform and a great deal of instability. Their leaderships' options are few and they have increasingly tended to favour a perpetuation of close ties with and dependence on Moscow. Here the issue is not membership in NATO sooner or even later; rather, it is the means by which western countries can keep open lines of communication and influence, even if it may only be under a future generation of leaders that these lines can be utilized in any meaningful way. But to make a demarcation suggesting that the Caucasians and Central Asians do not belong to the Euro-Atlantic zone is to encourage them to feel that they must choose between Russia and isolation, and to encourage neoimperialist forces in Russia to believe that they can pursue with impunity their traditionally hegemonic objectives in these areas.

The most critical relationship in the former Soviet Union is that of Russia and Ukraine, for which the prospect of enlargement raises a number of questions. What would be the impact of a NATO enlargement that excluded Ukraine? Would it strengthen or weaken the forces in favour of strategic accommodation with Moscow? Would it be likely, in either case, to propel Ukraine towards reconsideration of its nonnuclear stance? Would NATO enlargement go down in history as the development that triggered a reinforcement of the CIS? This is indeed what Yeltsin seemed to be suggesting in a speech in September 1995.

The point is less whether such an effort could ultimately be successful than whether it would be attempted, and the consequences for international stability even, as seems likely, were it destined to fail.

### Enlargement and Alliance Management

There are a number of difficulties associated with enlargement that belong to the domain of institutional manageability. One problem concerns NATO's ability to manage the more complex decisionmaking environment that would result from even a mini-enlargement. The NATO environment already consists of a complex array of full members, NACC participants, countries that do not participate in NACC but are involved in consultations on peacekeeping, and countries that participate to varying extents in PFP activities. Enlargement would create additional categories of actual and potential membership. An already complex managerial hierarchy would become even more cumbersome.

A second problem concerns the interaction between alliance activities and those of NACC and PFP. The top candidates for early membership in NATO are among the most enthusiastic participants in NATO's cooperation programs. There is a possibility that their elevation to alliance membership would jeopardize the survival of NACC or PFP, or both.

Third, enlargement would place additional burdens on the alliance's ability to reach quick and credible decisions, putting at risk its *Konsensfähigkeit*. Interests within an alliance stretching from Alaska to Anatolia are by definition diverse. As already noted, they have become much more subject to regional pressures since the end of the Cold War. These can be expected to be even more apparent in any decisionmaking about enlargement.

Fourth, enlargement will be messy. Spain, the last new member of NATO, required four years from its original decision on accession to the holding of a referendum to confirm the decision and the terms of its membership, after which another four years were required to elaborate and approve the six coordination agreements to govern the Spanish/NATO military relationship. It is possible that the process would be similar in respect of certain new member countries.

Fifth, if NATO were to enlarge to include all aspirants to membership, its roster would come very close to resembling that of the OSCE. This would further blur the boundaries between European security institutions.

Sixth, there is a real danger that institutional expansion would tend to deflect NATO energies from "real-life" contingencies, in particular the ongoing conflict in the former Yugoslavia. In fact, it may have been the very difficulties encountered in dealing with this situation that originally helped fuel the enlargement option in the alliance context. (Likewise, a successful role for NATO in implementing the Dayton Agreement could serve to calm enlargement passions.)

To summarize, there is little reason to believe that enlargement would address in any helpful way the problems of diversity within the existing North Atlantic identity. On the contrary, there are numerous reasons to believe that it might weaken that identity further.

### **Strategic Implications of Enlargement**

Several strategic implications flow from the sociological and organizational considerations reviewed above. An enlarged NATO would tend to accentuate contradictions between states that have been historical rivals and which, in the era of ethnic politics, would find themselves on opposite sides of the new strategic fence an expanding NATO would ineluctably erect. At the same time, the number of states that were hostile or potentially hostile to NATO would be augmented. The organization would have made the transition from having one all-dominating enemy to having no enemies to having several enemies, entertaining varying degrees and kinds of opposition to NATO. In some cases, NATO would serve only as a welcome scapegoat for a reform effort gone wrong or as a pretext for slowing the pace of reform. In other instances, real tensions could (re)appear.

In parallel, enlargement would tend to encourage efforts to consolidate CIS cooperation in the domains of defence and foreign policy. Enlargement would furthermore push into the public domain issues associated with NATO's and Russia's strategic posture that the two sides have effectively managed to keep sublimated during the post-Cold War era. NATO has attempted to deemphasize its nuclear role and continues to do so in the enlargement context, as its study on the project makes clear. But again, if the experience of NATO's last new member, Spain, is anything to go by, enlargement will not only be messy and time-consuming, it will rivet public attention upon a series of sensitive strategic issues, in particular the role of the integrated military structure and nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War world.

In sum, enlargement would likely translate into a security minus, not a security plus, for old and new members alike, as well as for nonmembers. At a minimum, enlargement would probably lead to a renewal of some of the geopolitical and ideological "atmospherics" that, it was thought, had disappeared with the end of the Cold War in Europe; spark increases in defence expenditure; and, at a time when the Euro-Atlantic states without exception are experiencing relative resource penury, deflect attention from the domestic restructuring tasks that require their attention. Beyond that, there is always the risk that the processes enlargement might set in train could evolve in a manner impossible to control, with long-term negative consequences difficult to predict.

## Conclusion

In the second section of this chapter, we explored the nature of NATO's geographical, historical, and perceptual identity as a regional organization. In this regard, we found its greatest strength in the post-Cold War strategic context to be the community of shared values and expectations that it embodies. In the third section, we situated NATO in the general context of regional organizations as purveyors of regional security, and found that it shared many of the common weaknesses of such organizations. Asymmetries in the distribution of power, coupled with inconsistencies in perceived interest among members, complicated cooperative action in coping with regional threats to peace and security. In addition, as with many other organizations, NATO's effectiveness in dealing with regional security issues outside its own area was constrained by the exclusive character of its membership.

This led us into an extensive analysis of the expansion project. In our judgement, it fails adequately to address the issue of inclusiveness since it will again leave out the most conflict-prone areas of the European region. Moreover, it recreates the problem of exclusion in new forms, and it risks alienating more deeply those left out. Given that the integration of Russia in particular into Europe's security "architecture" is perhaps the most pressing problem facing the old continent's security planners in the aftermath of the Cold War, an expansion that risks such alienation is imprudent, particularly when, as in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Russian cooperation is essential to successful management of out-of-area security issues in Europe. There are few compelling counterarguments suggesting that expansion might improve the security of Europe. As Senator Sam Nunn once put it, "NATO's announced position is that the question of enlargement is not whether, but when and how. Somehow I have missed any logical explanation of why."<sup>20</sup>

For all of these reasons, the expansion of NATO, particularly if it proceeded in an accelerated fashion, would be a costly mistake. Indeed, the likely negative effects of enlargement are so compelling that it is difficult to imagine that it was sober strategic calculus that originally set the enlargement process in motion. Be that as it may, the disadvantages are such that it seems reasonable to assume that there is every likelihood that when — or rather if — push comes to shove, the 16 votes required to forge a NATO consensus will simply not be forthcoming.

This would raise serious problems for the alliance — problems that could prove almost as serious as those that would be engendered by the "successful" pursuit of the enlargement project. The first is that Russia would be seen to have won the enlargement war. If Yelstin remains president of the Russian Federation or is succeeded by a "democratic, centrist" alternative, this is a battle that the west can safely afford to have lost. If, however, the next president belongs

to a communist or nationalist fraction, nonenlargement could well encourage the then prevailing antiwestern reflexes.

The second problem is that nonenlargement in the face of hostile rumblings from Russia translates into a significant loss of credibility in Central and Eastern Europe, replete with all the imaginable, and largely understandable, populist rhetoric about a second Yalta that would follow.

There is no easy fix in these circumstances, but there are a number of possible initiatives that might help ease the situation. The first would be frustratingly *diplomatic*, but, in the right combination with other measures, no less useful for that. NATO should continue its consultations on enlargement but effectively postpone any decision in the matter until the *Greek Calends*. The purpose would be to keep the Russian foreign policy debate off balance at the same time as would-be members in Central and Eastern Europe were given time and space to adjust their rhetoric and retool their approaches.

Not deciding to enlarge is actually easy to imagine, in view of the complexity of the issue and the reservations that will be harboured in more than one alliance capital, and need not be the subject of an actual decision. The danger here is that indefinite postponement might impede the development of alternative structures of security cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe. The flanking measures that would be required to compensate for this effect by underscoring NATO's continuing commitment to CEE security would be rather more challenging for the decisionmaking process.

First and foremost, NATO might envisage a limited form of security guarantee for CEE countries. A blanket guarantee is not necessary; nor would it be advisable in view of the questionable purposes to which it could be put in certain bilateral struggles. Indeed, even though such a guarantee still exists between and among the NATO 16, it may no longer be strategically realistic even there. A conditional guarantee could commit NATO to the principles of sanctity of borders and the negotiated change of frontiers on an ad hoc and time-limited basis. It could be stabilizing, for example, in the event of a deterioration of Hungarian-Rumanian relations if it were known that NATO had the capacity and the will to interject itself between belligerents on either side attempting to move territorial/communal goalposts by force.

Intimately related to this point is the importance of ensuring that IFOR and related western initiatives in Bosnia succeed in suffocating the flames of conflict there and paving the path to a lasting peace. Nothing NATO says or does in the post-Cold War period will have any resonance if it fails in Bosnia. However, successful IFOR involvement in the former Yugoslavia can show that, ultimately, security does not depend on institutional status, but on whether and how members and nonmembers work together in causes of common concern.

Thirdly, NATO must continue, and reinforce as necessary, its efforts to build a new security community in greater Europe based on ad hoc cooperation around

the alliance's core. NACC and Partnership for Peace, suitably supported by the current membership, are adequate tools. These may not be the tidy, fixed relationships of the Cold War, but they can be sufficient responses in an era that must put a premium on flexibility in evolving new relationships between former foes and erstwhile allies.

### Notes

1. On this point, see S. Neil MacFarlane, "The Deperipheralization of Russia," in *The Centre-Periphery Debate in International Security*, ed. David G. Haglund (Clementsport, NS: Lester B. Pearson Canadian International Peacekeeping Training Centre, 1996), pp. 29-41.
2. See David G. Haglund, S. Neil MacFarlane, and Joel J. Sokolsky, "NATO and the Quest for Ongoing Viability," in *NATO's Eastern Dilemmas*, ed. Haglund, MacFarlane, and Sokolsky (Boulder: Westview, 1994), pp. 11-22.
3. David G. Haglund, "Must NATO Fail? Theories, Myths, and Policy Dilemmas," *International Journal* 50 (Autumn 1995): 651-74.
4. See, for Yugoslavia, Karsten Voigt, "NATO Enlargement: A Holistic Approach for the Future," *SAIS Review* (Summer-Fall 1995): 122; and for the former Soviet Union, Giorgio Napolitano, Karsten Voigt, and Tamas Wachslar, co-rapporteurs, "The Enlargement of the Alliance," Draft Special Report of the Working Group on NATO Enlargement (Brussels: North Atlantic Assembly, October 1995), p. 1.
5. Napolitano, Voigt, and Wachslar, "Enlargement of the Alliance," p. 3.
6. For a similar analysis, see Bruce Russett, "International Relations and the International System," in *Regional Politics and World Order*, ed. Richard Falk and Saul Mendlovitz (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1973), p. 187.
7. However, as was pointed out long ago by V. C. Finch, this discontinuity is generally muted and regional borders consequently are difficult to define. See his "Geographical Science and Social Philosophy," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 29,1 (1939): 14.
8. This is clearly related to the concept of "mutuality" articulated by Barry Buzan in *People, States, and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), p. 194.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
10. On the concept of "overlay," see *ibid.*, p. 198.
11. For an impressive discussion of the community of values in the North Atlantic area, and its implications for interstate relations, see Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation among Democracies: The European Influence on American Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 24-41, 195-209.
12. In this respect, it resembles Karl Deutsch's concept of the "pluralistic security community." See Deutsch et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 5.

13. See Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80 (December 1986): 1151-69.
14. That is to say, a structure of security whereby the group of members commits itself to a collective response to an act of aggression by any of its members against any other member. For a useful discussion of the meaning of collective security, see John Ruggie, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution," *International Organization* 46 (Summer 1992): 569.
15. This logic is similar to that imputed by Edward Luttwak to the Roman Empire. His conclusion with regard to the overstretching consequences of such expansion does not foster enthusiasm. See his *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire from the First Century A.D. to the Third* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), *passim*.
16. See S. Neil MacFarlane and Thomas G. Weiss, "Regional Organizations and Regional Security," *Security Studies* 2 (Autumn 1992): 6-37.
17. Many German political figures take the view that embedding Germany in cooperative European and transatlantic structures is necessary to reassure neighbouring European states in the context of the growth of German power.
18. David Law, "Widen or Whither: The Challenge of NATO Enlargement," paper presented to interparliamentary conference at the Polish Sejm, Warsaw, May 1995.
19. This assessment is based on the personal observations of co-author David Law, who headed the policy planning unit of the NATO International Staff between 1992 and 1994, and was directly involved in this process.
20. Sam Nunn, "The Future of NATO in an Uncertain World," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 15 July 1995, pp. 583-86.