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**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

**THESIS**

**POLISH ACCESSION TO NATO: INTERNATIONAL  
RELATIONS, NATIONAL INTERESTS AND  
PERSONALITIES OF ALLIANCE REFORM, 1979-1999**

by

Marcin Kurandy

June 2005

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Donald Abenheim  
Hans-Eberhard Peters

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**POLISH ACCESSION TO NATO: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, NATIONAL  
INTERESTS AND PERSONALITIES OF ALLIANCE REFORM, 1979-1999**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
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## **ABSTRACT**

After the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism in Poland, the main goal for the Polish nation was integration into the Western collective security organizations. Poland's democratically elected politicians initiated a process that aimed at NATO membership for Poland. The first steps included adjustment of Polish civil-military relations, diplomatic efforts to push for early inclusion, and the adoption of a democratic constitution. Polish determination, in conjunction with the U.S. steps influencing NATO decision-making to enlarge the Alliance, finally resulted in NATO inclusion of Poland in 1999. This thesis seeks to determine which forces, events and personalities contributed to Poland's NATO membership. Moreover this thesis will be a useful example for such future potential NATO members such as Ukraine and Croatia in their applications for NATO membership. The steps that Poland took to comply with NATO requirements, as well as the manner in which Polish diplomats pushed for enlargement, could be used as an example to follow. Additionally, descriptions of the United States' and other NATO members' policies and contributions to NATO enlargement will allow for understanding of the importance of the organization.



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
II.	POLISH DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY TOWARD NATO ACCESSION .....	5
	A. DEALING WITH HERITAGE OF SOCIALISM AND WARSAW PACT.....	5
	B. LECH WALESZA'S FOREIGN POLICY STRUGGLE TO JOIN NATO.....	14
	C. THE LAST STEPS TOWARD NATO ENLARGEMENT, 1995-1999 .....	19
III.	THE U.S. POLICY TOWARD NATO INCLUSION OF POLAND .....	27
	A. PRESIDENT CLINTON AND HIS ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARD NATO GROWTH.....	27
	B. THE U.S. REPUBLICAN PUSH TOWARD ENLARGEMENT.....	35
	C. DEALING WITH ENLARGEMENT OPPOSITION WITHIN THE U.S. ....	40
IV.	POLICIES OF NATO NATIONS IN ENLARGEMENT, 1991-1999 .....	45
	A. THE ALLIES' GENERAL POLICY AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATO ENLARGEMENT IN 1999.....	45
	B. GERMANY'S ENGAGEMENT IN ENLARGEMENT .....	53
V.	CONCLUSION .....	59
	LIST OF REFERENCES.....	61
	INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST .....	67

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I'm also very grateful for my family's support. Their frequent and supportive phone calls have meant very much to me.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to all those persons mentioned above.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

After the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism in Poland, the main goal for the Polish nation was integration into the Western collective security organizations. Poland's democratically elected politicians initiated a process that aimed at NATO membership for Poland. The first steps included adjustment of Polish civil-military relations, diplomatic efforts to push for early inclusion, and the adoption of a democratic constitution. Polish determination, in conjunction with the U.S. steps influencing NATO decision-making to enlarge the Alliance finally resulted in NATO inclusion of Poland in 1999. This thesis seeks to determine which forces, events and personalities contributed to Poland's NATO membership. Moreover this thesis will be a useful example for such future potential NATO members such as Ukraine and Croatia in their applications for NATO membership. The steps that Poland took to comply with NATO requirements, as well as the manner in which Polish diplomats pushed for enlargement, could be used as an example to follow. Additionally, descriptions of the United States' and other NATO members' policies and contributions to NATO enlargement will allow for understanding of the importance of the organization.

In the next chapters of the thesis, I will support my argument that the United States and Poland itself, and to some extent Germany, most directly influenced Poland's NATO membership.

Chapter II of the thesis will be devoted to the Polish political, institutional, and civil-military efforts taken to join NATO. The establishment of democratic civil-military relations, according to Western democratic customs, was crucial while applying for NATO membership. The actions that former President Lech Walesa and President Aleksander Kwasniewski took on the world political scene, with their pro-NATO policy, also constituted a huge step toward NATO inclusion of Poland. Therefore, all these aspects of Polish contribution to NATO growth in 1999 will constitute a part of my thesis, placing Poland in the position of the main actor who influenced NATO enlargement.

I will start the chapter by describing the first changes of Polish civil-military relationships and regulations, from the collapse of communism in Poland (1989) to the end of Lech Walesa's presidency (1995). This part of the chapter will cover the positive and negative aspects regarding this issue. I will present the progress as well as arguments between high-ranking politicians and top-level military generals as they worked out the appropriate regulations. A further part of this chapter will be devoted to the international political actions taken by Lech Walesa to push the issue of early NATO enlargement. The results of Walesa's meetings with Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin, and other politicians crucial for NATO growth, as well as his attitude toward the PfP and Russia, will constitute this part of the paper. The last part will be devoted to the domestic and international actions toward NATO admission taken during the presidency of Aleksander Kwasniewski. I will discuss the interaction of the civil-military relations and Kwasniewski's wholehearted pro-NATO policy.

Chapter III of my thesis will examine American actions taken to enlarge NATO from 1989 to 1999. This part of my thesis will cover President Clinton's decisive policy toward NATO reform, with the main goal of enlarging the Alliance, the U.S. Republican legislative actions giving enlargement top priority, and finally the efforts to counter the arguments of enlargement opponents. Describing the American contributions to NATO enlargement in 1999, I will argue that the United States was the driving force in influencing the whole process of NATO transformation.

I will start the chapter by describing the development of the NATO enlargement idea within the Clinton administration. I will discuss the issues of the Partnership for Peace (1994) and other assistance programs to the potential NATO members, the main ideas of the NATO Enlargement Study (1995), President Clinton's, and his administration's, approach and policy toward Russia, and the final achievement--the success of Madrid Summit in 1997. In the second part of the chapter, I will describe the Republicans' policy regarding NATO growth in the 1990s. I will briefly present their approach to the subject and the number of legislative actions pushing enlargement forward. The last part of the chapter will be devoted to the opposition's arguments against enlargement and the counterarguments to their claims. I will also describe actions that were taken to gather Senate support on the enlargement issue.

Chapter IV of my thesis will be devoted to the European NATO members' policies on, and their contributions to, NATO growth in 1999. The first part of the chapter will focus on the position of these countries with regard to the transformation of the Alliance. I will mention the first institutions established to initiate cooperation of the allies with the post-Soviet bloc, NATO members' concerns about enlargement, their perceptions of PfP and Russia, and the final decisions and statements about enlargement. Another part of the chapter is totally devoted to Germany's engagement in the NATO transformation process. I will discuss this country's evolving attitude toward NATO enlargement. I will also describe Germany's initial push for NATO growth in Central and Eastern Europe, the reasons for this policy, German policy to slow down the enlargement process because of Russia, and their final support of the expansion issue.

Chapter V will analyze the previous chapters and confirm my argument that the main actors who influenced the NATO growth of Poland in 1999 were the U.S., with some German support, and Poland itself.



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## **II. POLISH DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY TOWARD NATO ACCESSION**

This chapter of the thesis is devoted to the Polish steps that were taken to join NATO between 1991 and 1999. The establishment of civil-military relations modeled on those in other democratic countries was crucial while applying for NATO membership. Likewise, the actions taken by former Presidents Walesa and Kwasniewski on the world political scene, with their pro-NATO policies, also constituted a huge step toward NATO acceptance of Poland's bid. Therefore, these aspects of Polish contribution to NATO growth in 1999 will form a part of my thesis, placing Poland in the position of the main actor who influenced the NATO enlargement.

I will start the chapter by describing the first changes in the Polish civil-military relationship and regulations, from the collapse of communism in Poland to the end of Lech Walesa's presidency. This part of the chapter will cover the positive and negative aspects of these changes. I will present the progress, as well as the arguments, between high-ranking politicians and top-level military generals as they worked out the appropriate regulations. Another part of the chapter will focus on the international political actions taken by Lech Walesa in his push for early NATO enlargement. The results of his meetings with Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin and other politicians crucial to NATO growth, as well as Walesa's attitude toward the PfP and Russia, will constitute this part of the paper. The last part will delve into the domestic and international actions taken toward NATO admission under the presidency of Aleksander Kwasniewski. I will discuss the interaction of the civil-military relations and Kwasniewski's wholehearted pro-NATO policy.

### **A. DEALING WITH HERITAGE OF SOCIALISM AND WARSAW PACT**

The first and most important requirement for Poland as a potential NATO member was transparency in defense policies and democratic control over the armed forces. In order to establish healthy civil-military relations, Poland had to comply with certain criteria for democratic structures. The essential one was the existence of a constitution or basic law clearly defining:

- “the relationship between president, government, parliament, and the military;
- the checks and balances applying to this relationship, including the role of the judiciary;
- who commands the military;
- who promotes military personnel;
- who holds emergency powers in a crisis; and
- where the authority lies for the transition from peace to war.”<sup>1</sup>

Another standard necessary for Poland to meet was political oversight of the military through the defense ministry--which includes a civilian component subordinated to parliamentary control, especially concerning the defense budget. The last requirement with which Poland had to comply was the establishment of healthy civil-military relations and the capability to provide adequate military training and equipment.<sup>2</sup>

After the end of the Cold War and the overwhelming defeat of the Polish Communist Party during the June 1989 general parliamentary elections, there was much work to be done. Poland’s 1952 Constitution, with its obsolete regulations, did not meet the requirements and regulations of a democratic country. Almost none of the above criteria existed. At the time, the Polish military was subject to Communist Party control. In such a system, almost all military officers were members of the Communist Party, being simultaneously loyal to the armed forces and the Party. In addition, Party cells were embedded within the armed forces structure, effectively politicizing the personnel. The main body responsible for this structure in Poland was the People’s Army’s Main Political Administration (MPA). The main tasks of this institution consisted of political activities within the army, influencing civilians as well. These duties included “responsibility for party political work in the armed forces, strengthening troop morale and discipline, and cooperation with organs of state administration and social organizations in the realm of propaganda, cultural activities, and the upbringing of

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<sup>1</sup> Willem Van Eekelen, “The Security Dimensions of European Integration and the Central-East European States,” in *Civil-Military Relations in Post-Communist States, Central And Eastern Europe In Transition*, ed. Anton A. Bebler. (Westport, Connecticut, 1997), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Poland's youth."<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the MPA was steadily enhanced by the stream of young political officers who graduated from the MPA's Central School for Political Officers and political curricula of higher officer schools.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the military with its embedded communist political structure was closely tied to the ruling Communist Party. Another issue that differentiated the Polish situation from the above democratic criteria was the fact that the Polish armed forces were given autonomy regarding the development and implementation of defense policy. The armed forces were controlled by the minister of defense, who was also the highest-ranking military officer. The head of the People's Army's Main Political Administration was automatically a deputy defense minister. Moreover, senior military positions were occupied by military officers who, in most cases, were the protégées of the minister of defense. As a result, the communist system worked out a consensus that matters of national defense were left to the military.<sup>5</sup> Thus, new non-communist governments faced weak executive control of defense policy.<sup>6</sup>

Having such a structured background, the first reforms in the civil-military relationship took place after the round-table negotiations with the Solidarity leaders on the one side and Polish communist officials on the other. As the result of the talks, Poland's second chamber of Parliament, the Senate, was restored, liberalization of voting regulations was implemented, and the institution of president with broad powers for foreign and security policy was established. The very first step in civil-military reform after free elections was the removal of institutions and structures closely associated with communist power. In the Polish case, this meant the elimination of the Main Political Department (GZP). Additionally, the role of the Polish Defense Committee (KOK), which during the communist period was responsible for shaping the general guidelines of

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<sup>3</sup> Andrew A. Michta, *Red Eagle: The Army in Polish Politics, 1944-1988* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1990), p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew A. Michta, *The Soldier-Citizen: The Politics of the Polish Army After Communism* (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1997), p. 80.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmundus and Anthony Forster, "Introduction: the Challenge of Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Postcommunist Europe," in *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmundus, Anthony Forster (New York, 2002), pp. 3-4.

Poland's defense capabilities, was changed.<sup>7</sup> Since April 1989 "it would no longer be a super governmental agency, but a collegial state organ, subordinate to the Parliament, working in the area of defense and national security and establishing general principles of national defense, including defense doctrine."<sup>8</sup> In other words, the Defense Committee lost its powers in favor of the President of the Republic and Prime Minister. The Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs became deputies. The head of the President's Office, the Minister of Finance, Internal Affairs, Chief of the General Staff and minister heading the Office of the Council of Ministers also sat on the Defense Council. In other words, the President of Poland, not the Secretary of the Polish United Worker's Party, acted as the National Command Authority (NCA).<sup>9</sup>

The next wave of civil-military reforms took place after the June 1989 elections and the communists' humiliating defeat. A number of institutions were created to oversee the military. After the parliamentary supervision of the already mentioned KOK, which provided the oversight of the Defense Ministry, some other bodies were created.

A Sejm Commission for Defense emerged that supervised legislation regarding the military. "Each of the twenty Sejm commission members, including many non-communists, had the right to enter any military installation on demand."<sup>10</sup> In other words, almost every military installation became accessible to civilians having nothing in common with the military or Communist Party.

In the second half of 1989, a Ministry of National Defense (MON) Social Consultative Council was established. This body was composed of all the political forces represented in the Sejm. "The Council maintained advisory capacity and inspection authority, and supervised the social conditions within the military and the program of

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<sup>7</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Central European Civil-Military Relations and NATO Expansion* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1995), p. 41.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>9</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

civic education.”<sup>11</sup> Hence, not only was there the possibility for civilians to enter the installations, but they were also allowed to supervise and conduct some form of inspection.

The first Polish non-communist president, Lech Walesa, implemented another civil-military relations reform. This stage of the reform, with its aim to strengthen the Presidency’s power over the military, inevitably collided with the Parliament’s vision of the civil-military relations structure. To enhance his control over the military, Walesa’s Presidential Office financed a National Security Bureau (BBN), neglecting the Defense Ministry, with the aim of replacing the KOK secretariat. As a result, the BBN, preparing the analyses of internal and external situations, enhanced presidential authority in military, defense systems, research, legal and organizational matters. Furthermore, an advisory body under the BBN secretary was created. That institution included the Polish army Chief of the General Staff (CoS), the chief of the Office of State Protection, the commander of the Border Guard, and the undersecretaries from the Foreign Affairs and Finance Ministries. Walesa went further with his successful efforts to assume the power to appoint a civilian defense minister.<sup>12</sup>

Meantime, the inter-ministerial commission for reforms “agreed that the Polish CoS-general inspector of the armed forces would become the supreme commander of the armed forces in wartime.”<sup>13</sup> Some progress was achieved regarding the chain of command during a war. In such an event, the CoS would change the structure of General Staff by appointing three deputies: planning, training and logistics. The inter-ministerial commission also approved changes in the Defense Ministry by adding deputy ministers in the educational, planning, and armaments and military structure.<sup>14</sup> In other words, the CoS and Defense Ministry structure, with the aim of effectively serving military needs, was gradually developing.

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<sup>11</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Central European Civil-Military Relations and NATO Expansion* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1995), pp. 44-45.

<sup>12</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), pp. 12-13.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

During this progress in instituting democratic civil-military relations reform, President Walesa continued to push for a strengthening of his position. At the end of 1991, the president published a decree that outlined the structure and responsibilities of the National Security Council (NSC) as the body for expanding presidential control over defense and security policy. As a result, the president became the chairman of that body, with the first deputy being the Prime Minister and two second deputies being the Defense Minister and National Security Bureau chief. Other speakers from the Sejm and Senate rounded out the institution. Clarifying the president's action, the NSC was responsible for national security matters including defense, public security and order, and security of citizens, while "the BBN was tasked with identifying threats to national security and presenting solutions to eliminate them."<sup>15</sup> By the end of 1993, the NSC became the highest organ responsible for defense and security.

By this decree, Walesa successfully enhanced his authority over the military. Having subordinated BBN and established favorable changes in the NSC, Walesa, with the support of ambiguous laws, became the most powerful military decision-maker in Poland. As a result of this president's policy, while the powers of the president, prime minister, defense minister and Parliament were not clarified, the tensions between these bodies started to occur.

The first crisis regarding this issue took place in the spring of 1992, when the president intervened in Defense Ministry affairs. He offered the position of Chief of the General Staff to General Tadeusz Wilecki, while the current defense minister refused his candidature. In this case, Walesa successfully got rid of the incooperative defense minister and implemented his plan to appoint Wilecki as CoS. As a result Wilecki, supported by the president, appointed his colleagues to key positions in all military districts.<sup>16</sup> What is more, "all newly appointed personnel felt their appreciation to the president as the source of their military career success."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 17.

<sup>16</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Central European Civil-Military Relations and NATO Expansion* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1995), p. 55.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

Simultaneously, the current defense minister signed an order putting the General Staff in charge of strictly military matters. The Defense Ministry changed its structure and consisted of three departments: education, defense policy and plans, and infrastructure, each headed by a deputy minister. Implementation of such a structure clarified the civilian-military management of the ministry.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, despite the success of the next step in the normalization of Polish civil-military relations, the General Staff expressed its discontent as the weaker executive power with regard to the Defense Ministry.<sup>19</sup> In other words, tensions and clashes between these two institutions became more and more visible.

Another step forward was the government's adoption of a military doctrine that was expressed in the November 1992 document *The Security Policy and Defense Strategy of the Republic of Poland*. Security and defense policy for Poland, with its new purposes and tasks, was established. In the document, the central purpose of the armed forces was "to uphold the nation's sovereignty, independence, and territorial inviolability."<sup>20</sup> What is more, for the first time in an official document, the goal of NATO membership was expressed. After the adoption of the document, "the participation in peacekeeping operations was of fundamental importance for bringing military integration closer."<sup>21</sup>

Adoption of the so-called "Small Constitution" in December 8, 1992, which voided the 1952 Constitution, was another small step forward in the normalization of civil-military relations. According to the newly passed document, the president had the right to approve all top military appointments. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the Constitution made the president "Supreme Commander" of the Polish armed forces, the

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<sup>18</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 21.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>20</sup> Paul Latawski, "Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Postcommunist Poland: the Interplay of History, Political Society and Institutional Reform" in *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmundus, Anthony Forster. (New York, 2002), pp. 23-24.

<sup>21</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 24.



document did not clarify the defense ministry's and the president's executive powers. According to the Small Constitution, every appointment of the defense minister required the president's consultation.<sup>22</sup>

The crucial character during the Polish struggle to work out appropriate civil-military regulation was Piotr Kolodziejczyk. In September 1993, as a Minister of Defense, Kolodziejczyk's first move was to reduce the size of his ministry and place special services like intelligence and counterintelligence under General Staff supervision - an unnecessary action regarding the developed democratic defense structure. Nevertheless, despite this unnecessary action, Kolodziejczyk started to express his mature views regarding civil-military relations. He spoke loudly of an "urgent need" to define by law the functioning of the Defense Ministry and establish the exact responsibilities and division of powers between the General Staff and civilian components. Additionally, Kolodziejczyk suggested that the Universal Military Training Act should be improved. Issues such as the identification of government agencies' responsibilities and powers, identification of emergency powers, national guard function, and appropriate legislation and modernization programs of the national defense system had to be revised or set up.<sup>23</sup> Kolodziejczyk also presented a document titled *Defense Problems and Military Aspects of the Polish Republic's Security Policies*. The document proposed the post of general inspector instead of CoS, with responsibility for strictly military issues. Furthermore, the general inspector of the armed forces, according to Kolodziejczyk, should be subordinated to the defense minister. The document also spelled out a supervision procedure for Polish defense institutions.<sup>24</sup>

Some of Kolodziejczyk ideas, such as establishing three types of forces and setting up a crisis group to monitor threats to national security, were implemented. Nevertheless, the proposal for a general inspector subordinate to the minister of defense

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<sup>22</sup> Paul Latawski, "Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Postcommunist Poland: the Interplay of History, Political Society and Institutional Reform" in *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmundus, Anthony Forster. (New York, 2002), p. 32.

<sup>23</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 32.

<sup>24</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Central European Civil-Military Relations and NATO Expansion* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1995), pp. 66-67.

was rejected by the president. After Kolodziejczyk openly said that “our generals see the need for changes, but they can’t accept the limitations on their power and civilian control,”<sup>25</sup> the Kolodziejczyk-Walesa relationship was headed for a collision.<sup>26</sup>

Such a chain of events inevitably led to a major political crisis that began at the 30 September 1994 meeting of military cadres at Drawsko Pomorskie training grounds. During the dinner, attended by the president, the current defense minister, and Wilecki as CoS with his subordinated generals, Walesa polled the military personnel on Kolodziejczyk’s competence. In response, the generals expressed their lack of confidence in the minister.<sup>27</sup> The president had, with his authoritarian attitude toward the military, just discredited the power and authority of the current minister of defense. As a result, the government clearly lost control and oversight of the military affairs, while the military personnel became engaged in policy matters. What is more, the Drawsko event had enormous impact not only domestically, but also internationally, especially on the NATO observers. NATO and Western partners expressed their belief that the impediment of civil-military relations was “the most serious obstacle to Polish membership in NATO.”<sup>28</sup> Hence, the lack of democratic control over the military was evident. Walesa continued to believe that military generals should take care of the military matters. Such an attitude from the head of State, along with the lack of a precise law codifying the subordination of the General Staff to the Defense Minister, was the source of increasing tensions between those institutions.<sup>29</sup>

This phase, regarding the changes in civil-military relations through the end of the Lech Walesa presidency (1991-1995), culminated in the establishment of the Law on the Office of the Minister of National Defense. The regulation was passed by the Sejm, and

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<sup>25</sup> John Pomfret, “NATO Worries About East European Armies Meeting Standards,” *The Washington Post*, sec. A, Feb. 19, 1995, final edition.

<sup>26</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Central European Civil-Military Relations and NATO Expansion* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1995), p. 67.

<sup>27</sup> Paul Latawski, “Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Postcommunist Poland: the Interplay of History, Political Society and Institutional Reform” in *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmundus, Anthony Forster. (New York, 2002), p. 29.

<sup>28</sup> Istvan Gyarmati and Theodor Winkler, eds., *Post-Cold War Defense Reform, Lessons Learned in Europe and the United States* (Washington, D.C., 2002), pp. 174-175.

<sup>29</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), pp. 38-42.

limited the powers of the president over defense matters. According to the regulation, the chief of staff, National Defense Academy, and military intelligence services would be subordinated to the defense minister. Also, the defense minister was “to be responsible during peacetime for all activities of the armed forces to include preparing national defense doctrine, conducting personnel policy related to the armed forces, managing finances of national defense, and conducting international agreements concerning participation of Polish military contingents.”<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, this regulation was challenged by Walesa, who rendered it ineffective in the Constitutional Tribunal.

So, until the end of 1995, the changes in government-military relations from communist times were significant, but not sufficient to comply with Western requirements. Issues like depoliticization of the military, creation of institutions to oversee the military, adoption of new NATO-oriented military doctrine, putting the General Staff in charge of strictly military matters, the defense ministry structure development, and the development of the structure of the General Staff were successes of Polish domestic policy. Nevertheless, there were many issues effectively thwarting Polish efforts to join the Western military structure. The main obstacle was the lack of a new Constitution clarifying the effective civilian oversight of the military. As a result, tensions between these bodies were inevitable, leading to the big civil-military relations crisis in Drawsko. Clear lines separating presidential and governmental authority to supervise the military had to be created.<sup>31</sup>

## **B. LECH WALESZA’S FOREIGN POLICY STRUGGLE TO JOIN NATO**

Despite Walesa’s poor understanding of civil-military relations, his foreign policy to enter NATO was straightforward and tough, raising the subject of NATO enlargement as the priority of top decision-makers. The results of Walesa’s international meetings, as well as his conception of PfP and the role of Russia as an argument for early NATO accession, will be described in this part of the chapter.

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<sup>30</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 46.

<sup>31</sup> Jeff Simon, “Central European Civil-Military Relations and NATO Expansion,” in *Civil-Military Relations in Post-Communist States, Central and Eastern Europe in Transition*, ed. Anton A. Bebler. (Westport, Connecticut, 1997), p. 120.

After the first NATO enlargement in post-communist Europe, when Germany was officially reunified in 1990, the issue of further NATO growth disappeared from the international scene. The reality was that neither Washington nor Moscow raised NATO expansion as an issue anymore. Consequently, Central and East European leaders started to push the NATO enlargement issue by themselves.<sup>32</sup> After the initial Polish initial described above, with the main issue of military doctrine change with its NATO objective, the top Polish policy makers started to pressure NATO for early accession.

The first occasion to put the issue of further NATO enlargement on the international table was the opening of the Holocaust Museum in Washington in late April 1993. As an official guest, President Walesa had opportunity to meet with President Clinton. Walesa, supported by the presidents of the Czech Republic and Hungary, complained about Polish vulnerability to the Russians, whom he still feared. From Walesa's point of view, if Russia adopted its aggressive policy again, it would be directed against Poland. Furthermore, he stated that he was also scared of the prospect of having a powerful Germany on the one side and a powerful Russia on the other. Then Walesa made the argument that there was no chance for the West to start its assistance to Russia while neglecting Central European stabilization. The only course for Europe, he continued, was to start the integration process eastward. Walesa also complained about the attitude of the West. He openly stated that Western Europe was not interested in opening its doors to Central and Eastern Europe. His argument was that the West, fresh from winning the Cold War, had left Central and Eastern Europe on its own. Finally, Walesa firmly raised the issue of NATO enlargement.<sup>33</sup>

Hence President Clinton, impressed by Walesa's and others' arguments to join the Western military structure, started taking into consideration the possibility of NATO enlargement.<sup>34</sup> In sum Clinton, having an emotional and philosophical predisposition toward enlarging NATO, started a discussion regarding the issue.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 3-6.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>35</sup> Stanley R. Sloan, *NATO, The European Union, and the Atlantic Community: The Transatlantic Bargain Reconsidered* (New York, 2003), p. 138.

Another of Walesa's diplomatic successes was the result of the Walesa-Yeltsin meeting in 1993. On his visit to Poland, Yeltsin was shown by the Polish president how badly the former Warsaw Pact nation wanted to join the West. Walesa was so convincing that the meeting ended with a Russian statement agreeing to Poland's joining NATO.<sup>36</sup> The most important sentence of this communiqué was that "in the long term, such a decision (to join NATO) taken by a sovereign Poland in the interest of overall European integration does not go against the interest of other states, including the interests of Russia."<sup>37</sup> What is more, Yeltsin agreed to withdraw all remaining Russian troops from Poland by October 1, 1993, three months before the planned date.<sup>38</sup>

After the communiqué was published, Walesa's spokesman stated that, "Now the West has no argument to say no to Poland. Until now the West has been using the argument 'We don't want to upset the Russians.' Now we will see the true intentions of the West toward Poland."<sup>39</sup> According to another point of view, the West should have started preparing NATO accession regulations as soon as possible, before Russia changed its mind. Walesa also wrote a letter to the top world decision-makers advising them to take advantage of the "communiqué" statement and allow Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to join the NATO structure.<sup>40</sup>

Unfortunately, on September 15, 1994 Russia's ambassador to Poland, Yuri Kashlev, told reporters that Russia's stance on Polish membership in NATO had been "oversimplified and misunderstood" and that the Russian-Polish joint declaration referred to "eventual NATO membership in the larger process of European integration." He also suggested that the Alliance should first evolve into the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe's (CSCE) military arm.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Jane Perlez, "Yeltsin Understands Polish Bid for a Role in NATO," *The New York Times*, sec. A, Aug. 25, 1993, final edition.

<sup>37</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 37.

<sup>38</sup> Jane Perlez, "Yeltsin Understands Polish Bid for a Role in NATO," *The New York Times*, sec. A, Aug. 25, 1993, final edition.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 40.

<sup>41</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 24.

Although the Russians backpedaled from the above statement later on, this event was Walesa's great diplomatic success. He showed the Westerners Poland's great desire to join NATO by making the previously unthinkable Russian agreement a reality. Even if only for a short time, Polish diplomacy had an argument with which to press Western Europe.

Another issue that showed Polish impatience with the delaying of NATO enlargement was the idea of Partnership for Peace (PfP) implemented in January, 1994. For the West, PfP was the offer of initiation and cooperation with Eastern Europe, including Russia. The most significant aspect of the PfP idea, however, was the fact that there was neither specification of eventual NATO membership timing nor criteria of accession.<sup>42</sup> As a result, Polish diplomats initially rejected PfP, expressing their disappointment with the plan. Furthermore, Walesa did not hesitate to accuse the West of an attempt to create "another Yugoslavia tragedy" by delaying the NATO expansion process. Although Walesa demanded NATO's security guarantees, he finally agreed to sign the Partnership for Peace, claiming that Poland was too weak to reject the proposal.<sup>43</sup> He cast himself as a pragmatic man who had to accept the situation as it was. He explained that "it was sometimes necessary to crawl even though there was a historic opportunity to leap forward into a new relationship between East and West Europe."<sup>44</sup>

Nevertheless, the Polish president was still fighting for early accession. He started presenting arguments like the possibility of creating another eastern collective military structure led by Ukraine, which had 1,700 nuclear warheads at that time. Another argument was the possibility of Russia's nationalistic tendency to control Eastern Europe. Walesa warned that "without an acceleration of the pace of Eastern Europe's economic and military integration with the West, a bastardized communism will emerge here, relegating this region to years of instability and poverty."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Daniel Williams, "U.S. Trying to Sell NATO 'Partnership'; Ex-East Block Countries Want Full Seat," *The Washington Post*, sec.1, Jan. 1, 1994, final edition.

<sup>43</sup> John Pomfret, "Walesa Warns Communism My Reemerge; Polish President Pleads for West to Include E. Europe in NATO," *The Washington Post*, sec. 1, Jan 4, 1994, final edition.

<sup>44</sup> David B. Ottaway, "War Games In Poland Proposed; E. European Officials Reluctantly Endorse NATO Partnership," *The Washington Post*, sec. 1, Jan. 8, 1994, final edition.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

In other words, Walesa fought for Poland by using every possible argument to convince the Western leaders to expand NATO as soon as possible. His determination was so high that he took the lead among Eastern European leaders in criticizing the United States' PfP proposal and calling it too vague and "lacking a concrete guarantee of NATO membership to the new democracies emerging from 45 years of Soviet domination."<sup>46</sup> He went even further by lecturing the U.S. about Russia, which he compared to a bear. According to Walesa's way of thinking, there was no other way to tame a bear but to catch it in a cage.<sup>47</sup> In other words, there was no other way to deal with Russia--regarding the issue of NATO expansion--to present the Russians with a fait accompli.

Walesa's efforts finally paid off. His complaints about PfP and push to clarify the NATO expansion timeline and admission criteria forced high-ranking world politicians to make reassuring statements. Clinton assured Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary that their security was very important to the security of the United States. He also added that Americans would not allow any mentioned nation "to be seriously threatened by Russia without a U.S. response."<sup>48</sup> During the NATO summit in January 1994, the U.S. and its allies embraced in principle the goal of enlargement. Soon thereafter, President Clinton stated in Prague that enlargement was no longer a question of if but when and how.<sup>49</sup>

Walesa's last presidential meeting with Clinton took place in San Francisco in late June 1995. The subject of NATO expansion and Poland's early accession was raised again. As usual, Walesa argued to Clinton that the time for the decision to start the enlargement process had already come, and that the longer it took to actually reach that decision, the more difficult it would be. What is more, he told Clinton that it was Clinton's responsibility to take the appropriate steps. Clinton concluded the meeting by

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<sup>46</sup> David B. Ottaway, "War Games In Poland Proposed; E. European Officials Reluctantly Endorse NATO Partnership," *The Washington Post*, sec. 1, Jan. 8, 1994, final edition.

<sup>47</sup> John Pomfret, "Walesa Warns Communism My Reemerge; Polish President Pleads for West to Include E. Europe in NATO," *The Washington Post*, sec. 1, Jan 4, 1994, final edition.

<sup>48</sup> Ann Devroy and Daniel Williams, "Clinton Boosts A-Arms Pact In Ukraine; Legislators Oppose Giving Up Warheads," *The Washington Post*, sec. 1, Jan. 13, 1994, final edition.

<sup>49</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 40.

emphasizing the significance of the role of the PfP program as well as supporting the concept of NATO expansion regardless of Russia's position. He added that political decisions had been taken and there was no return from them.<sup>50</sup> In other words, final Walesa's presidential meeting with Clinton was a success. He again extracted from President Clinton a declaration of the inevitability of NATO enlargement.

In summary, President Walesa's devotion to Polish foreign affairs regarding early NATO accession was enormous. Walesa, in stepping forward as a leader and spokesman for the rest of the candidate countries, turned international attention toward Poland.

The first positive result of the Walesa–Clinton meeting was the initiation of discussions regarding NATO expansion. This was a direct result of Walesa's 1993 meeting with Yeltsin, which had shocked the Western decision-makers and put them in the difficult position of having no clear argument against NATO expansion, as Russia had already agreed to it. Walesa's negative perception of PfP forced President Clinton and other top NATO leaders to formulate security assurances for Eastern Europe, as well as to determine the possible date of NATO enlargement. The last presidential Walesa–Clinton meeting confirmed the already stated assurances, making NATO expansion the next logical step. Although Walesa did not fully understand how to create an appropriate domestic civil-military relations structure, his diplomatic skills helped hasten NATO decisions.

### **C. THE LAST STEPS TOWARD NATO ENLARGEMENT, 1995-1999**

The successor of President Walesa was Aleksander Kwasniewski. His tasks were to assure the Western world that the already adopted course toward NATO would not change, to finish ongoing reforms regarding civil-military relations, and to set up the New Polish Constitution.

After President Walesa's defeat by Kwasniewski in November 1995's presidential elections, an alarm was raised in the West, especially in America. Poland was the key country regarding the issue of NATO enlargement. Passive Polish policy in this area

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<sup>50</sup> Polish Press Agency news agency, Warsaw, "Foreign Relations; Walesa and Clinton discuss European security, NATO and EU," *The British Broadcasting Corporation*, sec. 2, Jun. 29, 1995, final edition.



would slow down the already initiated process. The situation looked even worse after President Clinton's condolence call to the defeated Walesa, who warned Clinton about the difficulties of dealing with the former communist Kwasniewski.<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, despite the potentially bad scenario, Kwasniewski assured the international community of Poland's aspiration to become a full-fledged member of the North Atlantic Alliance at the earliest possible time. Kwasniewski called NATO "the key factor of stability in Europe."<sup>52</sup> Additionally, the president assured the world that Poland would continue to strongly support the United States' political and military presence in the Alliance.<sup>53</sup> In another statement, he repeated the belief that the U.S. presence in Europe was a guarantee of the continuing existence of NATO and provided a stable environment.<sup>54</sup> Unlike Walesa, Kwasniewski supported the idea of the Partnership for Peace program. He stated that "security measures can be advanced through the continuation of the PfP program, maintaining dialogue within the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, and through the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe."<sup>55</sup>

Until that point, Walesa's and Kwasniewski's perceptions of foreign affairs were similar. The first disparity became visible when Kwasniewski touched on the issue of the NATO enlargement timetable. He stated that it was better "to discuss this problem with many partners...because the decision about enlargement of NATO is the decision not only of the U.S.; it's a decision of 16 members of NATO."<sup>56</sup> In contrast to Walesa,

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<sup>51</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 153.

<sup>52</sup> Center for Strategic Decision Research, "Poland and NATO," *President of the Polish Republic Aleksander Kwasniewski*, <http://www.csdr.org/96Book/Kwasniewski.html> (accessed Jul. 20, 2004).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Center for Strategic Decision Research, "New Members of NATO: New Challenges, New Functions," *President of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski, The Road to NATO*, <http://www.csdr.org/98Book/kwas98.html> (accessed Jul. 20, 2004).

<sup>55</sup> Center for Strategic Decision Research, "Poland and NATO," *President of the Polish Republic Aleksander Kwasniewski*, <http://www.csdr.org/96Book/Kwasniewski.html> (accessed Jul. 20, 2004).

<sup>56</sup> PBS, "Transkript," *The NewsHour looks at the aftermath of the November 1995 Polish elections that ousted Lech Walesa in favor of former Communist Kwasniewski*, [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/july96/polish\\_prez\\_7-8.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/july96/polish_prez_7-8.html) (accessed Jul. 20, 2004).

Kwasniewski did not push for an early NATO enlargement date, but he nonetheless was interested in the issue. He understood that the decision to enlarge had to be approved by the 16 member parliaments and could take some time.<sup>57</sup>

Another of Kwasniewski's foreign affairs conceptions that differed from the Walesa approach was the issue of Russia while working out the NATO enlargement process. Kwasniewski did not perceive Russia as a continuing threat. He claimed that Poland wanted to be in NATO, not against Russia. What is more, he wanted a Polish-Russian strategic partnership. He stated: "we are absolutely interested to have the best relations with our Eastern neighbors..."<sup>58</sup> Later on, President Kwasniewski's opinion was that a dialogue between NATO and Russia needed to be transparent and had to take Polish and other Central European perspectives into account.<sup>59</sup> Even though the Kwasniewski policy diverged from the Walesa one, it was very close to Clinton's preference of carrying out the NATO policy while simultaneously reaching out to Moscow.<sup>60</sup>

At the beginning of his presidency, Kwasniewski also reminded his Western counterparts of the progress that Poland had already made. He mentioned the development of Polish democracy with its pluralistic party system and economic growth. He believed that Poland's political system had "all the characteristics of a mature and stable democracy."<sup>61</sup> Kwasniewski also stated that Poland had made good progress in its domestic preparations for effective civilian control over the Polish armed forces. Despite

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<sup>57</sup> PBS, "Transkript," *The NewsHour looks at the aftermath of the November 1995 Polish elections that ousted Lech Walesa in favor of former Communist Kwasniewski*, [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/july96/polish\\_prez\\_7-8.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/europe/july96/polish_prez_7-8.html) (accessed Jul. 20, 2004).

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Center for Strategic Decision Research, Aleksander Kwasniewski, "New Designs in Europe," *XIVth NATO Workshop On Political-Military Decision Making, Toward a Peaceful, Democratic And Undivided Europe* (June 1997), <http://www.csdrr.org/97Book/KWANSI.HTM> (accessed Jul. 20, 2004).

<sup>60</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 153

<sup>61</sup> Center for Strategic Decision Research, "Poland and NATO," *President of the Polish Republic Aleksander Kwasniewski*, <http://www.csdrr.org/96Book/Kwasniewski.html> (accessed Jul. 20, 2004).

the fact that the issue had not yet been resolved, President Kwasniewski promised that, by the time of Polish negotiations for membership in the Alliance, the civil–military aspect would be “decisively and irreversibly settled.”<sup>62</sup>

Thus the initial concern over disparities between the NATO course taken by Walesa and the yet unknown foreign policy direction of Kwasniewski disappeared. Later, Kwasniewski was perceived as the appropriate person in the appropriate position. There was a general opinion that he felt more comfortable in Washington and the capitals of Western Europe than he did in Moscow. What is more, he became recognized as a diplomatic agent of Polish policy toward NATO accession and a market–based economy.<sup>63</sup>

The time for clarifying the civil–military relationship had come. In his inaugural address, Kwasniewski noted that his main goal was to implement the new Constitution, defining the spheres of competence for different institutions. His other plan was to set up the National Security Council (NSC) that would include professionals with the right to advise on the most important state problems.<sup>64</sup>

The road to the Constitution started when all government entities reached consensus on the need for reform. Representatives of the prime minister, defense minister, and Parliament decided to limit the powers of the General Staff. The strategy of reform was “to wrest control from Wilecki by empowering the Defense Ministry through restructuring both it and the General Staff and to acquire control over armed forces reform by gaining control of the budget and the acquisitions.”<sup>65</sup> In other words, the solution to the existing problem was the structural change of the above bodies, with the simultaneous transfer of budget and acquisition rights to the civilian side.

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<sup>62</sup> Center for Strategic Decision Research, “Poland and NATO,” *President of the Polish Republic Aleksander Kwasniewski*, <http://www.csdr.org/96Book/Kwasniewski.html> (accessed Jul. 20, 2004).

<sup>63</sup> Tom Hundley, “In Poland, a New Version of Solidarity Mounts a Comeback,” *Chicago Tribune, sec. News*, June 15, 1997, final edition.

<sup>64</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 32.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Several steps were taken immediately. First, President Kwasniewski validated the Law on the Minister of Defense which was previously ineffective in the Constitutional Tribunal. This was significant because the Law subordinated the military prosecutors, courts, and General Staff to the defense minister. The next move was the establishment of a commission, chaired by the first deputy defense minister, to develop two documents: a Defense Ministry Statute outlining the new structures of the ministry and an outline detailing the activities of the defense minister.<sup>66</sup>

Another reform was Defense Minister Dobrzanski's actions to subordinate the General Staff Directorate's personnel management functions to the Defense Ministry Cadre Department. These functions included the power to assign the positions. Dobrzanski also created a new Command Department, which consisted of the General Staff, Air Force/Air Defense, and Navy as well as the new position of commander of Land Forces. This reform also transferred the responsibilities for education, infrastructure, and logistics from the General Staff to the Land Forces Command.<sup>67</sup>

Nevertheless, despite a few positive steps toward efficient civil–military regulation, some impediments from the old times persisted. Minister of Defense Dobrzanski started to complain about General Staff personnel who resisted and opposed his decisions. Other complaints came from the BBN chief, who questioned General Wilecki's competence as a Chief of Staff. Also, Chairman Jerzy Szmajdzinski concluded that the civil–military reform was delayed because of the General Staff's protests against subordination to the Defense Ministry. President Kwasniewski took action immediately by signing the new Civil Service Law in July 1996, clearly defining political and military posts, but the problem persisted.<sup>68</sup> General Wilecki questioned the legality of the rules and threatened to take his challenge to the Constitutional Tribunal. He also said that he did not believe the regulations limited his command functions.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>68</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 61-62.

<sup>69</sup> Jane Perlez, "Poland's Top Commander Resists Terms for NATO," *The New York Times*, sec. A, Jan 22, 1997, final edition.

Having such problems with high-ranking officers, another step for controlling them was set up--the organizational regulations for managing the Defense Ministry. Thereafter, "the General Staff was directly subordinate to the defense minister and limited to as much authority as the minister wished to delegate."<sup>70</sup> The Navy, Air Force/Air Defense, and Land Forces Command headquarters were directly subordinated to the defense minister.<sup>71</sup>

Kwasniewski took still another step to tame the old cadre. On November 22, 1996, he appointed a general who had refused to vote against the former defense minister at Drawsko on the position of Land Forces commander. Other steps, such as Minister Dobrzanski's appointments of new Land Forces deputy commanders and dismissal of Wilecki protégé without his consent, limited the Chief of Staff's powers. Nevertheless, Wilecki's opposition to the next planned reforms, like the implementation of timely rotation of positions from brigade commander to chief of the General Staff persisted, creating tensions with the Defense Ministry.<sup>72</sup> In other words, the old military cadre reformation trials were useless, and the only cure for improving the situation was to get rid of Wilecki and his strong supporters within the General Staff.

The crucial decision came in March 1997, when President Kwasniewski fired Gen. Tadeusz Wilecki. The decision was of vital importance because it brought relief not only to the Polish ministry of defense, but also to the Pentagon, where the issue of Polish military subordination to civilian control had been in question since former President Walesa had wanted to keep broad authority in the hands of his generals.<sup>73</sup> Following this decision, President Kwasniewski carried out more changes and dismissed most of Wilecki's supporters who had participated in the Drawsko event. Finally, Dobrzanski implemented the reform of placing the Military Districts under the command of the chief

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<sup>70</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 63

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>73</sup> Jane Perlez, "The World; With Promises, Promises, NATO Moves the East," *The New York Times*, sec. 4, April 26, 1998, final edition.

of Land Forces and giving authority over administrative and management decisions of the Districts to the ministry of defense.<sup>74</sup> In sum, after a few years of dominating Polish military forces, the Wilecki era finally ended.

The final draft of the new Polish Constitution had been prepared for three years. After the constitutional debates on April 2, 1997, the National Assembly approved the Constitution of the Polish Republic. Presidential and Sejm emergency powers and armed forces oversight roles were defined. According to the regulation, the Sejm had the authority to station Polish forces abroad or allow foreign troops on Polish soil. Nevertheless, in case of emergency like the danger of external invasion or international obligation the president, at the government's request, could assume the same power as the Sejm. The president also had the right to declare martial law for a period up to ninety days if the Sejm could not convene during a situation of danger posed to the constitutional system, security of the people, or public order. This decision had to be approved by the Sejm within forty-eight hours.<sup>75</sup> In other words, the president's and Parliament's rights in emergency situations were established.

According to the new Constitution, the president had the power to appoint the chief of the General Staff and the commanders of the Land Forces, Air Force/Air Defense, and Navy for specific periods of time. The prime minister's role in that case was the right of approval of the nominations. Nevertheless, the president's power was weakened in comparison to the previous regulations; he no longer had the power to appoint the heads of the defense, foreign affairs, and interior ministries.

Summing up, President Kwasniewski's devotion to the establishment of the appropriate civil-military relations finally paid off. Yet, the price of a young democracy is time. In the Polish case, military leaders' fight to preserve as much power as possible, as in the "good old communist years," badly retarded the progress of civilian oversight of the military. After a series of personnel reshuffles, the next wave of generals began to respect the civilians' authority over them. Finally, in 1997, Poland achieved the principle requirement for joining NATO: a Constitution with precise regulations regarding the

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<sup>74</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO, A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (New York, 2004), p. 66.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

issue of civil–military relations. Following the words of President Kwasniewski, the adoption of the Constitution and decisions concerning NATO were the greatest successes of Polish domestic and international policy.<sup>76</sup>

In conclusion, Poland’s achievements in successfully affecting domestic reforms, and its appropriate and sometimes aggressive international policy, were the crucial factors influencing the process of NATO enlargement. The initiation of the NATO enlargement discussion started after Walesa’s visit to San Francisco in 1993. If that had not happened, the NATO growth issue would not have been raised for some time, delaying the whole procedure indefinitely. What is more, Poland forced NATO leaders to take more seriously the idea of the PfP as a guarantee of future enlargement. In addition to that policy, the civil–military relations reform success in 1997 prepared Poland for the accession.

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<sup>76</sup> Polish Radio 1, Warsaw, “President looks back at last year,” *The British Broadcasting Corporation*, sec. 2, Dec. 24, 1997, final edition.

### **III. THE U.S. POLICY TOWARD NATO INCLUSION OF POLAND**

This chapter is devoted to American actions taken to enlarge NATO from 1993 till 1999. It will cover President Clinton's decisive policy toward NATO transformation, with the main goal of enlarging the alliance, the U.S. Republican legislative actions that put enlargement on top priority, and finally the efforts to refute the arguments of enlargement adversaries. Describing the American contributions to NATO enlargement in 1999, I will argue that the U.S. was the driving force in influencing the whole process of NATO reform.

I will start the chapter by describing the development of the NATO enlargement idea within the Clinton administration. In this chapter I will raise the issues of: Partnership for Peace and other assistance programs to the potential NATO members, the main ideas of the NATO Enlargement Study, President Clinton's and his administration's approach and policy toward Russia, and the final achievement--the success of the Madrid Summit in 1997. In the second part of the chapter I will describe the Republicans' policy regarding NATO growth in the 1990s. I will briefly present their approach to the subject and the number of legislative actions pushing the enlargement forward. The last part of the chapter will be devoted to the opposition's arguments against enlargement and the counterarguments to their claims. I will also describe actions that were taken to gather Senate support regarding the enlargement issue.

#### **A. PRESIDENT CLINTON AND HIS ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARD NATO GROWTH**

The presidency of Bill Clinton (1993-2000) was very significant and decisive during the structured transformation of NATO. Under his leadership, the concept of NATO enlargement was given careful consideration and then implemented. In order to erase the European East-West division line, the U.S. president needed both his terms in office to extend NATO's umbrella over Central and Eastern Europe.



After being inspired by the Central-Eastern European leaders during the opening of the Holocaust museum, President Clinton put the NATO enlargement issue at the center of the administration's foreign policy.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, under the policy of enlargement of the Alliance's military structure, Clinton urged young Eastern democracies to consolidate and strengthen while applying for NATO. The criteria that were set to comply with NATO requirements were flexible enough to allow for military development and rigid enough to consolidate democracies.

The earliest NATO enlargement statements leaked from administration officials in October 1993. In the *New York Times*, an unnamed official stated that the United States had decided to support an expansion of NATO. He added that the expansion could include the countries of Eastern Europe and other former members of the Warsaw Pact. He also said that new cooperative ventures in peacekeeping and military training and planning would be proposed to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Additionally, the official signaled that during the January NATO summit, the statement of principles for opening the door to new members, with the possibility of full membership, might be raised. Even the United States did not have a specific timetable in mind and added that the summit should formally open the door to NATO expansion as an evolutionary process.<sup>78</sup>

In fact, the mentioned issues were not just America rhetoric. The idea to start seriously thinking about NATO enlargement came from the president, who ordered the establishment of an Inter-agency Working Group (IWG) in mid-June. The agency's goal was to review the administration's policy toward Europe and NATO before the NATO summit in January. The main initiatives that the Working Group proposed were the establishment of Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs) and, most importantly, the

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<sup>77</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 19.

<sup>78</sup> Elaine Sciolino, "U.S. to Offer Plan on a Role in NATO for Ex-Soviet Block," *New York Times*, sec. A, Oct. 21, 1993, final edition.

Peacekeeping Partnership.<sup>79</sup> While the CJTFs stood for the creation of more mobile and flexible command structures and forces, the Peacekeeping Partnership was understood to draw post-communist states more closely into the structure of security.<sup>80</sup>

As a result, during the NATO summit in January, the U.S. and its allies adopted the goal of NATO enlargement in principle and launched the Partnership for Peace (PfP). The administration's idea of PfP was to "expand and intensify political and military cooperation in Europe, extend European stability eastwards, diminish threats to peace, and build a better relationships with former communist countries through practical cooperation and commitment to democratic principles."<sup>81</sup>

Although the U.S. and NATO did not extend their military commitments to the PfP formula, it was agreed that "Partnership for Peace would remain part of the administration's approach, both as a waiting room for would-be NATO members and as an alternative to membership for countries like Russia that are unlikely to be admitted into the Alliance."<sup>82</sup> In other words, PfP was treated as the pathway to NATO membership for those partners who wished to join the Alliance.<sup>83</sup>

Another step toward the NATO transformation idea was President Clinton's visit to the PfP participant countries from Central-Eastern Europe. His first statement in Prague, that it was no longer a question of whether but when the former communist countries would join NATO, was a signal that the U.S. would not change its mind regarding the enlargement issue. Also, after the Prague statement, Clinton agreed with Polish journalists in Warsaw that a timetable should be developed for NATO expansion.

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<sup>79</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 35.

<sup>80</sup> James M. Golgeier, *Not Whether but When, The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 24.

<sup>81</sup> Federation of American Scientists, "GAO United States General Accounting Office," *NATO Enlargement: NATO and U.S. Actions Taken to Facilitate Enlargement*, <http://www.fas.org/man/gao/nsiad96092.htm> (accessed Jan. 23, 2005).

<sup>82</sup> Dobbs Michael, "Wider Alliance Would Increase U.S. Commitments," *Washington Post*, sec. A, July 05, 1995, final edition.

<sup>83</sup> Federation of American Scientists, "GAO United States General Accounting Office," *NATO Enlargement: NATO and U.S. Actions Taken to Facilitate Enlargement*, <http://www.fas.org/man/gao/nsiad96092.htm> (accessed Jan. 23, 2005).

He also pointed to Poland as a leading candidate for membership.<sup>84</sup> After this trip, Clinton signaled to NATO enlargement opponents in his administration that this was the only course his foreign policy would take.

As a result of these events, the U.S. initiated the Study on Enlargement. The main goal of the Study was to assess the feasibility of Enlargement and the way it should occur. The Study also identified goals such as: enhancing stability and security in the Euro-Atlantic area, eliminating the old Cold War barriers without creating new ones between the East and West, encouraging democratic and economic reforms in aspiring NATO members, emphasizing common defense and extending its benefits and increasing transparency in defense planning and military budgets, reinforcing the tendency toward integration and cooperation in Europe, strengthening the Alliance's ability to contribute to international security through peacekeeping activities, and strengthening the trans-Atlantic partnership.<sup>85</sup>

For the first time since initiating the NATO enlargement process, the accession criteria were set up for the aspiring members. With regard to military standards, the Study on Enlargement assumed the basic requirements of interoperability and command structure for the potential members. According to the Study, the new members' obligations would be participation in NATO exercises, appropriate engagement in the command structure and contribution to the Alliance's collective defense, and other missions.<sup>86</sup>

Political expectations for the new members were strictly connected to the concern about democratic values. It was stated that aspirants would be expected to conform to principles of democracy, individual liberty and rule of law, demonstrate a commitment to

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<sup>84</sup> Michael Dobbs, "Wider Alliance Would Increase U.S. Commitments," *Washington Post*, sec. A, July 05, 1995, final edition.

<sup>85</sup> Federation of American Scientists, "GAO United States General Accounting Office," *NATO Enlargement: NATO and U.S. Actions Taken to Facilitate Enlargement*, <http://www.fas.org/man/gao/nsiad96092.htm> (accessed Jan. 23, 2005).

<sup>86</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Issues-Study on Enlargement," *1995 Study on Enlargement*, [http://www.nato.int/issues/study\\_on\\_enlargement/](http://www.nato.int/issues/study_on_enlargement/) (accessed Jan. 23, 2005).

and respect for OSCE norms and principles, show a commitment to promoting stability and well-being by economic liberty, social justice and environmental responsibility, and establish appropriate democratic and civilian control of their defense forces.<sup>87</sup>

Despite the fact that the Study did not assess any individual aspirant's progress toward NATO membership and the timetable of enlargement was not established, the Study discussed how an aspiring member would join NATO. The study stated that the process would begin with an informal invitation from NATO's North Atlantic Council to enter the talks. The next step would be a formal notification from the country of its firm commitment, in accordance with domestic legal requirements, to join the Alliance. The final steps described necessary bureaucratic procedures to be followed until the formal invitation to accede to the North Atlantic Treaty.<sup>88</sup>

Hence, not only were clear accession standards established, but also the procedures to follow in the enlargement process were detailed. It was a big success of the U.S. and NATO as a whole to prepare this document, in light of the allies' differing attitudes toward the speed of enlargement.

The most valuable American assistance for aspiring NATO members came from President Clinton, who proposed financial contribution through the so-called Warsaw Initiative. This program was a bilateral agreement designed to "facilitate the participation of partner states in exercises and interoperability programs, promote interoperability with NATO, support efforts to increase defense and military cooperation with PfP partners, and develop strong candidates for NATO membership."<sup>89</sup>

As mentioned, the Warsaw Initiative consisted of several interoperability programs. The first one, the Regional Airspace Initiative, helped to develop civil and military airspace regimes and rules that would be interoperable with West European civilian organizations. Another program called the Defense Resource Management Exchange provided assistance to create defense management systems in partner countries

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<sup>87</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Issues-Study on Enlargement," *1995 Study on Enlargement*, [http://www.nato.int/issues/study\\_on\\_enlargement/](http://www.nato.int/issues/study_on_enlargement/) (accessed Jan. 23, 2005).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, Report to the Chairman, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, *NATO Enlargement: U.S. and International Efforts to Assist Potential New Members*, June 1997.

similar to those of NATO. The Defense Planners Exchange Program's goals were to familiarize potential members' military personnel with the methods of building strategy-based defense programs. The Defense Public Affairs Exchange Program was designed to exchange NATO's defense public affairs information with the offices of potential members. Another program, the Partnership Information Management System, was created to establish a computer network linking partners' capitals, U.S. government facilities and the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe partnership coordination unit. The next program, Command and Control Studies, was focused on the ability of the potential members to assess weaknesses in their command and control systems and propose corrective actions. The last program, the Personnel and Readiness Exchange was focused on the proper implementation of the reforms related to personnel management and readiness issues.<sup>90</sup>

In addition to the Warsaw Initiative, the United States provided assistance by means of a few more bilateral programs that helped to enhance potential members' military equipment and operations. The program called the Joint Contact Team Program provided assistance in establishing appropriate civil-military relations regulations. Military liaison teams exchanged ideas and shared concepts regarding the issue. The International Military Education and Training Program was another very important and valuable assistance that was proposed to the potential NATO members. This program, which is still in operation, provides funds to transport, train, and supplement living allowance for foreign students at military training facilities. Additionally, program funds have been used to purchase English-language laboratory equipment in the potential members' countries. In many cases, the program provided training instructors to improve English-language teaching effectiveness. The program called Excess Defense Articles Transfer offered U.S. excess equipment to foreign countries through the Foreign Military Sales program or by grant transfer.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, Report to the Chairman, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, *NATO Enlargement: U.S. and International Efforts to Assist Potential New Members*, June 1997.

<sup>91</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, Report to the Chairman, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, *NATO Enlargement: NATO and U.S. Actions Taken to Facilitate Enlargement*, May 1996.

The above-mentioned programs constituted the most valuable U.S. assistance to the aspirant countries. These initiatives not only helped financially, but also provided professional personnel to assist potential NATO members in coping with urgent deficiencies while applying to the Alliance.

In addition to President Clinton's policy pushing for enlargement, he was also encouraging Russia to join with NATO in cooperative security arrangements. This approach consisted of gradual steps toward expanding the Alliance.<sup>92</sup> In other words, the purpose of this policy was to ease the Russians gradually into the idea of inevitable enlargement. Clinton realized that the Russians were still too powerful for the West to put them in the position of outright losers. So, to achieve the goal of NATO enlargement, the best solution was a gradual but firm policy of inevitable transformation.

One such policy achievement was the formulation of the already mentioned PfP plan, both to prepare potential members for accession<sup>93</sup> and to avoid jeopardizing the emerging American-Russian connection.<sup>94</sup> At first the Russians were reserved, as they understood PfP to be a U.S. policy to delay enlargement. Nevertheless, once they started to realize the true nature of the program, Yeltsin officially stated that "Russia does not want to live in isolation and NATO will leave Europe plunging into a cold peace."<sup>95</sup>

Although Yeltsin's words sounded like they were spoken during the Cold War, Clinton viewed him as the only Russian leader who could accept the enlargement. Furthermore, Clinton held off the decision of the "who" and "when" of NATO enlargement until after the Russian presidential election. He was afraid that these statements would be harmful to Yeltsin as a presidential candidate and other parties, such as the nationalists and communists, could take advantage of them and win the election.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Michael Dobbs, "Wider Alliance Would Increase U.S. Commitments," *Washington Post*, sec. A, July 05, 1995, final edition.

<sup>93</sup> Warren Christopher, *In the Stream of History, Shaping Foreign Policy for a New Era*, (Stanford University Press, California, 1998), p. 129.

<sup>94</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, "A Bigger and Safer Europe," *New York Times*, sec. A, Dec. 1, 1993, final edition.

<sup>95</sup> James A. Kupchan, "It's a Long Way to Bratislava; The Dangerous Fantasy Of NATO Expansion," *Washington Post*, sec. Outlook, May 14, 1995, final edition.

<sup>96</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 105.

After Yeltsin won the election, Clinton announced that NATO would be enlarged on the Alliance's fiftieth anniversary in 1999. At the same time, the talks to reach a NATO-Russian agreement accelerated.

While negotiating the NATO-Russian agreement, the Clinton administration stood firm in not crossing certain "red lines" regarding the NATO transformation process. Firstly, there was no agreement to Russian veto right over the Alliance's decision making. Proposals such as the subordination of the Alliance to another institution such as the UN, slowing down the enlargement process, creating second-class members in Central and Eastern Europe, or closing the door to future enlargement for other countries were rejected.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, the Clinton administration achieved a great political success with the signing of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, in Paris, May 27, 1997.

As a result of the Act, the Permanent Joint Council was established as a mechanism for consultations between NATO and Russia in times of crisis, or for any other situation affecting peace and stability. According to the Act, the member States of NATO reiterated that they did not have intentions or plans to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members. Another issue concerned the deployment of conventional forces on their soil. It was stressed that rather than permanent deployment, the Alliance would carry out its collective defense and other missions by ensuring interoperability.<sup>98</sup>

Summing up, the administration officials' diplomatic skills resulted in great success. The Founding Act content was ambiguous enough that it did not preclude permanent deployment of conventional forces and nuclear weapons in Central-Eastern Europe.

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<sup>97</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 191.

<sup>98</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Basic Texts," *Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation*, Paris, 27 May 1997," <http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm> (accessed Jan. 20, 2005)

After this chain of events, the next step before the Madrid summit was to declare which states would be invited to join in the first round of NATO enlargement.<sup>99</sup> The decision came on June 12, 1997; President Clinton named Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic as the United States' three candidates for membership. On July 8, 1997, at the Madrid summit, NATO named these countries as candidates, starting the process of entering the Alliance.<sup>100</sup>

## **B. THE U.S. REPUBLICAN PUSH TOWARD ENLARGEMENT**

The U.S. Republicans' policy to support NATO enlargement had its roots in the Ronald Reagan approach toward the communist bloc.<sup>101</sup> The tradition of supporting freedom and independence movements in the former Soviet satellite countries through the Cold War was long and significant. For example, the ideological and financial assistance to the Solidarity movement in Poland in the 1980s not only strengthened the communist opposition, but started a chain of events that contributed to the collapse of the Polish Communist Party as well.<sup>102</sup> Thus the majority of the Republicans' attitude to the enlargement issue was well known from the very beginning. As a result, not only did the Clinton administration work on the legislative and organizational procedure of the enlargement issue on its own initiative, but was spurred on by Republican pressure, as well.

The Republicans' political moves regarding NATO enlargement process started to be visible after their victory in the November 1994 midterm congressional elections. Having a majority in Congress, their tactic was to approve as many legislative documents supporting enlargement as possible. Nevertheless, they concentrated on the Visegrad

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<sup>99</sup> James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When, The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 117.

<sup>100</sup> Paul E. Gallis, *CRS Issue Brief, NATO: Congress Addresses Expansion of the Alliance* (Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, 1999).

<sup>101</sup> James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When, The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 110.

<sup>102</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 80.



countries as the leading candidates for NATO membership, setting 1999 as the date of first accession. Their actions also authorized the president to provide defense equipment to assist these countries in their defense modernization efforts.<sup>103</sup>

The Republicans' first legislative initiative was the NATO Expansion Act. Proposed in the spring of 1994, the document recognized the Visegrad countries as candidates for NATO accession by 1999. The authors of this legislation picked the candidates and set the date of enlargement. They also accused the Clinton administration of being too slow and ambiguous regarding the idea of enlargement.<sup>104</sup> Although the president did not support their legislation, the Republicans did not turn against his other legislative actions regarding enlargement.

The next Republican action was the introduction of the NATO Participation Act. This legislation declared that "full and active participants in the Partnership for Peace in a position to further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area should be invited to become full NATO members in accordance with the Article 10 of such Treaty at an early date..."<sup>105</sup> This document further authorized the executive to provide excess military equipment and other assistance to the potential NATO members.<sup>106</sup> This legislation was a strong signal from the conservatives to President Clinton. If it rejected this legislation, the administration could expect further Republican action while working its own strategy toward NATO growth.

As expected, the Republicans introduced another piece of legislation in mid-January 1995. This one was called the National Security Revitalization Act and was more detailed and better organized than the previous bills.

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<sup>103</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 80.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>105</sup> Federation of American Scientists, "107th Congress 1st Session H. R. 3167 in the Senate of the United States, sec. 2. Findings," <http://www.fas.org/asmp/resources/govern/hr3167-107-is.htm> (accessed Jan. 31, 2005).

<sup>106</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "NATO Review," *The American public, Congress and NATO enlargement*, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1997/9701-3.htm> (accessed Jan 20, 2005).

Under the title of Revitalization and Expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Act suggested the United States' policy approach toward the enlargement issue. First, it stressed the active role of U.S. leadership in NATO. Other subparagraphs called for the U.S. and the other allies to redefine the role of the Alliance in the post-Cold War world, taking into account "the fundamentally changed security environment of Central and Eastern Europe, and the need to assure all countries of the defense nature of the Alliance, and the desire of its members to work cooperatively with all former adversaries."<sup>107</sup> Next, the more precise wording suggested that Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia should be the leading candidates for the first accession to the North Atlantic Treaty not later than January 10, 1999 as full NATO members. Nevertheless, it was stated that the candidates should have met appropriate standards by that time, including:

- "Shared values and interests;
- Democratic governments;
- Free market economies;
- Civilian control of the military, of the police, and of the intelligence services;
- Adherence to the values, principles, and political commitments embodied in the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe;
- Commitment to further the principles of NATO and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area;
- Commitment to accept the obligations, responsibilities, and costs of NATO membership;
- Commitment to implement infrastructure development activities that will facilitate participation in and support for NATO military activities;
- Remain committed to protecting the rights of all their citizens and respecting the territorial integrity of their neighbors."<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Committee on National Security House of Representatives, *H.R. 7-National Security Revitalization Act*, 104<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1995, p. XX.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XXI.

Almost all of the mentioned criteria were included in the NATO Enlargement Study standards for the potential members. As a result, in short order these political criteria became the official basis for the aspirants. For the first time there were some future obligations with which the new members had to comply, besides the requirements of democratic values.

Another paragraph of the Revitalization Act urged the United States and other NATO members to provide appropriate assistance to facilitate the transition periods of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.<sup>109</sup> Such open Congressional statements calling for assistance also contributed, to some extent, to the development of the U.S. and potential candidates' bilateral development programs. Even though the majority of the proposed and executed programs came from the Clinton administration, the president's bureaucracy was working under Republican pressure that demanded greater engagement.

The next paragraph criticized the Partnership for Peace proposal. It stated that the program "offers limited military cooperation to many European countries not currently members of NATO, but fails to establish benchmarks or guidelines for eventual NATO membership."<sup>110</sup> Such a statement was supported by the arguments that Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia had made significant progress toward establishing democratic institutions, free market economies, civilian control of their armed forces, police, intelligence services, and the rule of law since the fall of the communist regime.<sup>111</sup>

All the Republicans legislative actions culminated in the inclusion of NATO enlargement as a plank in the Republican Contract with America during the congressional campaign.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Committee on National Security House of Representatives, *H.R. 7-National Security Revitalization Act*, 104<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1995, p. XXI.

<sup>110</sup> Committee on National Security House of Representatives, *H.R. 7-National Security Revitalization Act*, 104<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1995, p. XX.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When, The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 78.

Under the Contract's title of United States Policy With Respect to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the section regarding NATO enlargement was called the NATO Revitalization and Expansion Act of 1995. This legislation was more specific about the conduct of assistance programs. One of the paragraphs suggested that the U.S. and other NATO members support transition countries in:

- “Joint planning, training, and military exercises with NATO forces;
- Greater interoperability of military equipment, air defense systems, and command, control, and communications systems; and
- Conformity of military doctrine.”<sup>113</sup>

Moreover, the Contract authorized the president to provide the leading NATO candidates with certain types of security assistance. The document mentioned the transfer of excess defense and non-lethal articles. Additionally, it suggested assistance relating to the Economic Support Fund, international military education and training, and Foreign Military Financing Program.<sup>114</sup> Nearly all the programs that were suggested by the Republicans were implemented by the Clinton administration and NATO.

Another step forward was made in July 1996, when the NATO Enlargement Facilitation Act was introduced. The legislation authorized the president to spend sixty million dollars on the development programs for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. The Republicans' goal regarding the Act was to provide financial help only to those aspirants who were best prepared for the enlargement.<sup>115</sup>

In 1997 the next piece of legislation, called the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, provided thirty million dollars for foreign military financing grants for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. Moreover, it “allocated twenty million to subsidize lending up to two hundred and forty two million for purchases of U.S. defense articles, services, and training by these three countries.”<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> United States House of Representatives, “Republican Contract With America,” <http://www.house.gov/house/Contract/CONTRACT.html> (accessed Jan. 23, 2005)

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When, The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 78, p. 102.

<sup>116</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, Report to the Chairman, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, *NATO Enlargement: U.S. and International Efforts to Assist Potential New Members*, June 1997.

Another charge that the Republicans leveled while the Clinton administration was working out NATO-Russia relations regarding enlargement was that Clinton was too soft on Russia. Republicans pressured the U.S. executive to adopt a tougher policy toward Moscow. Moreover, they perceived NATO as the organization that was capable of preventing potential residual neo-imperial Russian impulses.<sup>117</sup> Again, the NATO-Russia Founding Act, which was devised by the Clinton administration, was very clear about Russia's minimal influence on NATO affairs and the NATO enlargement issue.

In summary, the Republicans' foreign policy goal in the mid 1990s was to pull the former Soviet satellite countries into the NATO Alliance. Their policy was to introduce as many NATO enlargement legislative acts as possible. The first ones provided the basic Republican approach toward enlargement, while the following documents were more concrete and concise. Although it is difficult to estimate to what extent the administration was influenced by all these pieces of legislation, there is no doubt that the parallel work by both parties on the enlargement issue made the whole NATO enlargement process move faster.

### **C. DEALING WITH ENLARGEMENT OPPOSITION WITHIN THE U.S.**

On April 28, 1998, the final vote in the United States Senate to approve Polish, Hungarian, and Czech accession to NATO was 80-19, with 45 Republicans and 35 Democrats in favor.<sup>118</sup> Hence it was clear that U.S. Senate advocates' arguments for enlargement had outweighed those of enlargement opponents. Nevertheless, the effort to achieve such a goal after the Madrid summit had formally invited Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic was not as easy as it seemed to be. There were clashes among Senators, public officials, and major publications even up to the day of final voting.

The opponents of NATO's enlargement had very strong and convincing arguments. They charged that the expansion process poisoned relations with Russia. Critics warned that NATO underestimated Russia, which could turn its nuclear power against the West. Moreover, they claimed that NATO enlargement would divide Europe, isolate Russia and start strategic tensions on the continent. Arguments suggesting Russia

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<sup>117</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 119.

<sup>118</sup> James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When, The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 108.

would be less willing to reduce its nuclear arsenal after enlargement were also very popular.<sup>119</sup> Another argument stated that NATO expansion would destroy NATO and replace it with something inferior to keep Eurasia stable. Additionally, it was claimed that “the bigger the Alliance becomes, the more difficult it is to develop consensus for military action, and the less secure all states will then feel.”<sup>120</sup> Nevertheless, the most popular argument against enlargement was the cost of NATO transformation. Many Senators claimed that the Clinton administration was underestimating the billions of dollars that expansion could cost American taxpayers. Moreover, opponents said that the administration had not taken into account other costs like weapons transfers, leases and loan programs for military purchases.<sup>121</sup> It was also heard that the absolute cost of expansion was impossible to estimate because so many variables, like inflation, were in play and no one knew how extensive the military modernization and the weapon systems’ interoperability programs would have to be.<sup>122</sup>

Facing such arguments, President Clinton decided to create a special NATO Enlargement Ratification Office. This body answered directly to the Secretary of State and “was to be the command post for coordinating the entire Administration’s political effort to ensure enlargement’s ratification.”<sup>123</sup> Personnel of the office spent time and effort convincing members of Congress to support enlargement. They also answered the wide range of questions the Senators had about the NATO expansion issue. Although it was ultimately up to the Senate to decide whether to support or reject enlargement, the Ratification Office staff talked to the public as well. Going all over the country, personnel explained the rationale behind NATO growth.<sup>124</sup> By the spring of 1998, they had visited

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<sup>119</sup> Paul Mann, “Senate Considered Likely to Ratify NATO Expansion,” *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, sec. headline news, Feb. 16, 1998, final edition.

<sup>120</sup> Robert J. Art, “Creating a Disaster: NATO’s Open Door Policy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, no. 3 (1998): 113.

<sup>121</sup> Helen Dewar, “Senate Rejects Cap on NATO Costs; Chamber to Vote on Admission of Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic,” *Washington Post*, sec. A, April 29, 1998, final edition.

<sup>122</sup> Paul Mann, “Clinton, Senate Duel Over NATO Expansion,” *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, sec. headline news, July 14, 1997, final edition.

<sup>123</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO’s Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 253.

<sup>124</sup> Federation of American Scientists, “Transcript: Jeremy Rosner Interview on NATO Enlargement,” [http://www.fas.org/man/nato/offdocs/us\\_97/97102902\\_ppo.html](http://www.fas.org/man/nato/offdocs/us_97/97102902_ppo.html) (accessed Jan. 15, 2005).

more than 40 states, giving lectures to local leaders, editors, and groups representing different segments of American society<sup>125</sup>-- from the veterans' community to the religious, business, and ethnic communities.<sup>126</sup> As a result, the Enlargement Ratification Office goal to gather widespread public support was achieved. More than sixty organizations representing ten million Americans officially supported NATO enlargement.<sup>127</sup>

In another initiative to ensure that during the final voting more than two-thirds of the Senate was going to support the enlargement, the NATO Observer Group and U.S. Committee to Expand were established. Similar to the Enlargement Ratification Office, these organizations focused on seeking maximum support in the Senate and throughout the country. The members of the NATO Observer Group conducted lectures to senior administration officials explaining military and political issues related to enlargement, provided periodic issue summaries, and consulted them in advance on key questions, such as which states to support for admission to the Alliance.<sup>128</sup> The U.S. Committee to Expand, on the other hand, explained that NATO enlargement would be good for business. It made new NATO members an attractive market for U.S. firms supplying a wide variety of products and services.<sup>129</sup>

All the mentioned organizations provided clear and convincing arguments in favor of enlargement. In regard to the costs of expansion, it was explained that larger alliances would save money. First, pooling resources in collective defense would be cheaper than national defense.<sup>130</sup> Moreover, it was added that even though the costs seemed high, the future decades of security and stability in Europe were an excellent

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<sup>125</sup> Roland D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 258.

<sup>126</sup> Federation of American Scientists, "Transcript: Jeremy Rosner Interview on NATO Enlargement," [http://www.fas.org/man/nato/offdocs/us\\_97/97102902\\_ppo.html](http://www.fas.org/man/nato/offdocs/us_97/97102902_ppo.html) (accessed Jan. 15, 2005).

<sup>127</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 258.

<sup>128</sup> Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, "Letter of Transmittal," <http://usinfo.org/usia/usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/laws/treaties/nato.htm> (accessed Jan. 15, 2005).

<sup>129</sup> James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether but When, The U.S. Decision to Enlarge NATO*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 135.

<sup>130</sup> Paul Mann, "Clinton, Senate Duel Over NATO Expansion," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, sec. headline news, July 14, 1997, final edition.

investment.<sup>131</sup> NATO expansion supporters emphasized that enlargement would extend the Alliance's stabilizing influence, thereby greatly reducing the risk of aggression or renewed conflict in Central Europe. Instead of re-dividing Europe, enlargement would help consolidate democracy and free economies in the ex-Soviet sphere.<sup>132</sup> Those opponents who were afraid of possible Russian influence on the NATO internal affairs were assured that the NATO-Russia Founding Act gave Russia no opportunity to dilute, delay, or block NATO decisions.<sup>133</sup> Leaving NATO's door open for the others and not excluding Russia, enlargement supporters assured the still-hesitant Senators about reasonable Russian behavior while transforming NATO.

So, even after the official invitation of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic during the Madrid Summit, NATO supporters in the U.S. did not stop working on the issue. Creating the necessary two-thirds majority in the Senate in favor of enlargement and significant enlargement opposition constrained their behavior. The devotion of the NATO advocates, seeking every potential vote and visible public support, resulted in success on the day of voting.

Summing up this chapter, the U.S. approach and policy toward NATO enlargement resulted in successful transformation of the Alliance in 1999. President Clinton and his administration took the appropriate steps to gradually and steadily prepare both the aspirant candidates and Russia for NATO enlargement. These steps included implementation of PfP and other assistance programs, preparation of the NATO Enlargement Study that for the first time included the criteria for the potential members, and the Clinton administration's approach and policy toward Russia vis-à-vis the NATO-Russia Founding Act, and constituted the major successes of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s. Nevertheless, the final result of NATO enlargement was also possible thanks to the efforts of U.S. Republicans. Although Clinton's policy was more visible in the international arena, the majority of official actions taken toward NATO growth were

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<sup>131</sup> Federation of American Scientists, "Transcript: Jeremy Rosner Interview on NATO Enlargement," [http://www.fas.org/man/nato/offdocs/us\\_97/97102902\\_ppo.html](http://www.fas.org/man/nato/offdocs/us_97/97102902_ppo.html) (accessed Jan. 15, 2005).

<sup>132</sup> Paul Mann, "Senate Considered Likely to Ratify NATO Expansion," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, sec. headline news, Feb. 16, 1998, final edition.

<sup>133</sup> Alison Mitchell, "NATO Debate: From Big Risk To Sure Thing," *New York Times*, sec. A, March 20, 1998, final edition.



instituted by the Republicans' legislation. Their push for a faster and more decisive policy toward Russia had its implications while working out the NATO-Russia Founding Act. Although the candidates were officially invited in 1997, the critical period regarding the NATO enlargement procedure had just begun. That was the time to face the opposition's arguments, gather Senate support and explain the enlargement rationale to the public.

The actions taken by NATO expansion advocates transformed the enlargement issue from an idea to a reality.

## **IV. POLICIES OF NATO NATIONS IN ENLARGEMENT, 1991-1999**

This chapter explores the European NATO members' policy and their contributions to NATO enlargement in 1999. The first part of the chapter will focus on the position of these countries with regard to the transformation of the Alliance. I will mention the first institutions established to initiate the cooperation of the allies with the post-Soviet bloc, NATO members' concerns about enlargement, their perception of PfP and Russia, and the final decisions and statements about enlargement. Another part of the chapter is totally devoted to Germany's engagement in the NATO transformation process. I will discuss that country's evolving attitude to NATO enlargement. I will also describe Germany's initial push for NATO growth in Central-Eastern Europe, the reasons for this policy, German policy to slow down the enlargement process because of Russia, and their final support of the expansion issue.

### **A. THE ALLIES' GENERAL POLICY AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATO ENLARGEMENT IN 1999**

The first institution that aimed at improving NATO member cooperation with the post-Soviet bloc was the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) implemented in November, 1991. The main focus of this body lay in "formalizing the liaison relationship by establishing a more routine set of meetings among the Sixteen and the liaison countries (post-Soviet bloc)."<sup>134</sup> Although a majority of the allies supported this small step of cooperation with the former communists, some significant actors opposed the idea. The British did not like the name of the institution, which in their perception sounded too much like the NATO Council. The French, on the other hand, opposed equal consultation and information sharing with Central-Eastern Europeans.<sup>135</sup>

Despite this opposition, the proposal was adopted and further developed. Under the official name of NACC, some subordinated bodies were set up. These were the Group on Defense Matters and Ad-hoc Group on Co-operation in Peacekeeping. While the

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<sup>134</sup> Marti A. Smith, *NATO in the First Decade After the Cold War* (Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, 2000), p. 107.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

former's principle subsidiary aim was to promote western norms on issues like civil-military relations and democratic control of armed forces, the latter's goal was to "exchange experience and expertise on peacekeeping and related matters."<sup>136</sup>

Although the goals and ambitions of the newly created institution and its subsidiary bodies were ambitious, the obligations of the involved parties were not precisely defined, making this initiative very ineffective. Additionally, the rarity of NACC meetings, held jointly with the NATO council meetings, emphasized this institution's weakness and dependence. Moreover, a majority of the allies refused NATO's closer cooperation with the former Soviet satellite countries. Another argument against further cooperation was that using Central-Eastern European territory for training could damage NATO's relations with Russia.<sup>137</sup> As a result, "co-operation programs were not developed beyond the phase of seminars and discussions."<sup>138</sup>

When the Clinton administration's foreign policy first took a more decisive approach toward NATO enlargement, many concerns immediately emerged among the allies. The visions of widening European institutions, difficulties with continental rearranging of power bases, and the necessity of greater integration with those less advanced all constrained a discussion between western politicians.<sup>139</sup> The opinion that the potential enlargement would cause Russia to behave in a hostile manner, and that Europe was not ready for extended Alliance commitments, were very popular. Thus NATO expansion, and its obligation to provide assistance for Central-Eastern Europe, created the possibility of the West's refusal to comply with its demands. As a result, some believed that it "might weaken the cohesion of the Alliance and its capability to maintain collective defense."<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Marti A. Smith, *NATO in the First Decade After the Cold War* (Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, 2000), p. 108.

<sup>137</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 21.

<sup>138</sup> Marti A. Smith, *NATO in the First Decade After the Cold War* (Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, 2000), p.110.

<sup>139</sup> Rick Atkinson, John Pomfret, "East Looks to NATO To Forge Links to West," *Washington Post*, sec. A, July 06, 1995, final edition.

<sup>140</sup> Helga Haftendorn, "Gulliver in the Centre of Europe: International Involvement and National Capabilities for Action," in *Germany in Europe in the Nineties*, ed. Bertel Heurlin. (St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1996), p. 99.

Nevertheless, facing the inevitability of spreading not only the Alliance's military institutions, but also Europe's economic ties, a policy dilemma emerged over which enlargement should be carried out first. Advocates of EU enlargement as the priority claimed that potential NATO members must possess sufficient economic strength and stability before their accession to the Alliance. Such economic preparation, they said, would allow aspirants to make a greater contribution to the European defense system rather than allowing them to be essentially useless militarily, while still making profits for being under NATO's security protection. Additionally, some Western politicians argued that "EU membership prior to NATO enlargement was also the easiest way to explain to Russia why others could join NATO before Russia, if ever, did."<sup>141</sup>

Advocates of NATO enlargement as the priority, on the other hand, claimed that the Alliance's security guarantees for the region of the potential EU members would create appropriate conditions for secure Western investment and would help to develop market capitalism.<sup>142</sup> While the option of enlarging the EU first had its advantages, the second option became more popular over time. A majority of European leaders argued that NATO enlargement, compared to that of the EU, required less logistical effort than transforming post-communist economies to bring them into rough parity with the economies of current member states. Moreover, the argument was introduced that NATO expansion was less costly. While investing only in particular items such as NATO-standard communications equipment, and concluding that former Eastern Bloc nations would have to invest more in restructuring their armies,<sup>143</sup> the argument for enlarging NATO first became more rational. In addition, the choice to take the path of widening the military Alliance rather than the economic one was also strengthened by the fact that the EU had a very limited budget at that time. Moreover, other EU concerns, such as the

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<sup>141</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 21.

<sup>142</sup> Rick Atkinson, John Pomfret, "East Looks to NATO To Forge Links to West," *Washington Post*, sec. A, July 06, 1995, final edition.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

creation of a Single Market through implementation of a single currency, and common justice and home-affairs issues, dissuaded policy makers from advocating EU enlargement first.<sup>144</sup>

Yet in reaching a consensus about the priority of NATO enlargement over EU growth, some Western countries had their own perceptions about future political actions.

Britain, with its weak public support for the potential Article V obligation to defend Central-Eastern Europe in case of potential invasion, was worried and still not prepared for enlargement, as was seen in 1993. Moreover, in the same year British politicians said that the decision to enlarge had to precede the enhancement of the security of European nations, including Russia.<sup>145</sup> According to the politicians, NATO growth was possible but in the future, with a possible option of tens of years away.<sup>146</sup>

While Britain was afraid of weakening the Alliance through enlargement, France was worried that it could strengthen NATO. Other French politicians claimed that Central-Eastern Europeans were looking for American security guarantees while rejecting the guarantees of Western Europe at the same time. As a result, French politicians proposed the Balladur plan, with the main idea being to provide stability in Central-Eastern Europe. This was the first EU common foreign and security initiative toward the post-communist bloc. Hence, France was perceived as the major force that tried to balance the actions of enlarging NATO and pushing for Western European Union (WEU) expansion of associate members.<sup>147</sup>

At that time, the Danish position with regard to NATO enlargement was also one of concerns. First, it called for more caution and time while making the decision of NATO transformation. It was also emphasized that the decision must be accepted by all

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<sup>144</sup> Heather Grabbe, "Challenges of EU Enlargement," in *Ambivalent Neighbors: The EU, NATO and the Price of Membership*, ed. Anatol Lieven and Dimitri Trenin. (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003)

<sup>145</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 46.

<sup>146</sup> David White, "US defers prospects of NATO enlargement," *Financial Times*, sec. 4, Oct. 21, 1993, final edition.

<sup>147</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 47.

European members, including arrangements for, and with, Russia. Moreover, Danish officials asked questions that revealed their doubts and worries about the NATO enlargement approach. They raised concerns such as:

- Russia's direct ability to influence the process;
- NATO readiness to offer its security guarantees—stationing of allied troops on the potential members' territory and inclusion of the new members under the nuclear security system;
- worries about U.S. Senate support for inclusion of NATO countries governed by ex-Communists;
- lack of precise knowledge about the costs of the potential enlargement;
- doubts about NATO's ability to promote internal stability in the new member countries; and
- doubts about the publicity of eventual guidelines for the potential members.<sup>148</sup>

By 1994, these particular countries' views represented the general European approach to the idea of NATO enlargement. Both British and Danish concern over the possible weakening of NATO through enlargement, as well as worries about Russia's reaction, were the most popular emotions at that time. Only France had its own interpretation of the changes coming within the NATO structure. Contrary to the concerns of the majority, it anticipated and feared the U.S.' enhanced position in Europe through NATO enlargement.

The U.S. initiative of Partnership for Peace (PfP), formally adopted at the January NATO Summit of 1994, resulted in differing views about the consultation rights of the potential members of the program. While some NATO officials called for the same consultation rights from the start, others called for "offering these rights after a partner program was well under way, and particularly France opposed consultations of any kind."<sup>149</sup> Although some allies viewed PfP both as a substitute body for NATO and tool of delaying enlargement issues, actions following this initiative contributed to earlier NATO transformation. Eventually, some NATO members supported the United States with initiatives to help PfP partners prepare for membership. Although their support was

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<sup>148</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 25.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

not very significant--compared to that of the United States--the fact that some allies displayed a positive attitude toward the NATO enlargement issue was perceived as a big step forward. It was during that period that work on NATO's Study on Enlargement started.

Parallel to the U.S. initiative of PfP, the European Union's defense organization proposed a status of association to nine former communist countries. This step followed the earlier Balladur plan. Although this so-called "Kirchberg Declaration" had ambitious plans for preparing these associates for integration and eventual accession to the European Union, the lack of appropriate Western engagement made it fruitless. Contrary to the PfP, the declaration did not perceive the associates as partners. Having no ability to take part in decisions and consultations regarding future exercises and operations, and with no clear definition of the potential for EU membership, the former communist countries saw themselves in this new institution as "a cheap labor without a vote."<sup>150</sup> As a result, the more attractive PfP program attracted more participants.

Nevertheless, in 1995 the Allies achieved great success by issuing the NATO Enlargement Study. Although the study clarified NATO's approach to enlargement, "in the summer of 1995 the debate on the accession of the new members did not begin in any European legislature."<sup>151</sup>

Hence, the main concerns of a majority of the allies were Russia and the U.S.' fast NATO transformation approach. First, France stated that the U.S. was moving too fast on enlargement. Moreover, it made an argument that because of the fact that the Russian people perceived NATO as a threat, the policy to force enlargement would only worsen the problem. Additionally, France stressed that "NATO should not move forward on enlargement unless it first had a NATO-Russia agreement in hand."<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 51.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>152</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 143.

Many Westerners shared the French preference to slow down the enlargement process. In fact, the Italians suggested a more cautious and gradual course toward NATO growth. The Portuguese, on the other hand, claimed that expansion could not pose any threat to Russia. Many thought that the determination of “how” and “why” to enlarge should take place a year later. It was explained that early consultations with the aspirant countries could cause “different interpretations of NATO responsibilities and as a result divide alliance members themselves.”<sup>153</sup> At that time, Britain seemed to be more diplomatic than the others. Initially, British officials emphasized that the Alliance needed time to make appropriate decisions regarding enlargement, and that Russia had to be taken into account as well. Yet other British statements stressed the inevitability of NATO’s enlargement and importance of the Alliance, while promoting democracy in Central-Eastern Europe.<sup>154</sup> In fact, by 1997 London gave signals of its willingness to enlarge, while neglecting the idea of a prior NATO-Russia agreement.<sup>155</sup> At that time, Norway also began to express its support for NATO enlargement. The leader of the Norwegian Conservative Party suggested the creation of a representative unit from Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, and its implementation into the Major Subordinate Commands. Additionally, he raised the idea of these countries’ participation in NATO activities such as the NATO School in Oberammergau, and closer cooperation with the NATO Standardization Office.<sup>156</sup>

Despite the many different views of the allies, at the end of 1995 a three-point second-phase program was created for the next year. The NATO foreign ministers decided to:

- “pursue intensified dialogue through bilateral and multilateral consultations, with partners building on the foundation of the enlargement study;
- strengthen the PfP, which for some partners will facilitate their ability to assume the responsibilities of membership; and

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<sup>153</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 80.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>155</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO’s Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 183.

<sup>156</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 83.



- consider what internal adaptations are necessary to ensure that enlargement preserves the effectiveness of the alliance, particularly resource and staffing implications.”<sup>157</sup>

The program’s idea was to give the aspirants a chance to familiarize themselves with the details of NATO membership. This second-phase program worked in both ways, and also gave opportunity for the allies to learn more about the potential NATO members’ capabilities and possible contributions. Moreover, during the time of differing views about PfP, a consensus was reached to strengthen the partnership. Additionally, this initiative stressed the necessity to start working out the adaptation programs for the NATO-aspirant countries. Although the second-phase program did not presume to clarify who would join NATO and when, and there were no details about future actions, the initiative gave signals that NATO enlargement was a foregone conclusion.

At the end of 1996, when the enlargement decisions had not come out yet but were expected in the near future, Turkey threatened to block NATO’s eastern push. Contrary to the Western allies’ concerns about Russia, Turkish officials worried that NATO enlargement would in time strengthen the Western European Union. Moreover, Turkish officials perceived Alliance growth as the EU’s ‘open door’ policy for the prospective new NATO members. It was heard that “it is not realistic or justifiable that Turkey, an ally of the West for 44 years, is denied the European perspective while at the same time we are (Turkey) expected to enter into additional alliance commitments when NATO’s enlargement is concluded.”<sup>158</sup> Thus, since the decision to enlarge had to be ratified by the parliaments of all member states, the Turkish threat looked serious. Nevertheless, as time passed, Turkey ended up changing its mind and adopting the same position as the others regarding the admission of the new members.

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<sup>157</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 88.

<sup>158</sup> Christopher Bellamy, “Turks threaten to block NATO’s eastern push,” *The Independent*, sec. International, Oct. 15, 1996, final edition.

In 1997, the most significant factor that showed all the allies the right and secure path to NATO enlargement was the signing of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation. Thereafter, the concerns about Russia's potential aggressive behavior evaporated. As a result, a consensus was reached to invite new members to join NATO.

During the Madrid Summit in 1997, the NATO leaders affirmed their decision to open the Alliance door for Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

## **B. GERMANY'S ENGAGEMENT IN ENLARGEMENT**

Germany had enjoyed a peculiar relationship with Poland since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Shortly after this event, German unification allowed East Germany to become a part of the Federal Republic's commitments and alliances. Hence, the western border of Poland became the border with the EU, WEU and NATO—the organizations and commitments of Polish desire. As the closest western neighbor, Germany was perceived as a country that could act as either advocate for or adversary to Polish efforts to join the Western structures. Moreover, Germany's voice with regard to NATO enlargement had great weight. Its population, size, and financial contributions to the Alliance made Germany's NATO enlargement approach significant and unique.

Germany, on the other hand, looked at the eastern part of Europe with great concern. The unstable economies and political weakness of Poland and other Central-Eastern Europeans was perceived as a threat to western democracy and market-based economy. Moreover, this "eastern threat" could at any time influence German prosperity and security.<sup>159</sup> As a result, to avoid such a situation, the German approach emerged to stabilize the region behind its eastern border. It became apparent that a "successful democratization and liberalization process in the former communist countries was crucial to develop stable political structures."<sup>160</sup> Additionally, militarily stable eastern regions would provide security for developing market-based economies, offering export markets

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<sup>159</sup> Daniel Hamilton, "New Bargains: Germany As Europe's Central Power," in *Germany in a New Era*, ed. Gary L. Geipel. (Hudson Institute, 1993), p. 131.

<sup>160</sup> Helga Haftendorn, "Gulliver in the Centre of Europe: International Involvement and National Capabilities for Action," in *Germany in Europe in the Nineties*, ed. Bertel Heurlin. (St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1996), p. 107.

for German commodities and capital investment.<sup>161</sup> As a result, Germany's approach to assist former communist countries with their NATO and EU integration struggle had convincing arguments.

At the beginning of the 1990s, different opinions were heard in the German Bundestag. Among the NATO supporters, FDP defense spokesman Werner Hoyer stressed that the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was not the appropriate institution for integration. With its goal of giving Central-Eastern Europeans a sense of artificial western military inclusion, NACC did not have a future and was irrelevant. Hoyer also stated that early exclusion of these countries' accession to NATO was not wise. CDU foreign-affairs spokesman Karl-Heinz Hornhues also supported the above point of view and, additionally, warned against "blocking Central-Eastern Europeans' effort to join NATO permanently."<sup>162</sup> The most outspoken German advocate supporting the idea of full and early accession of the new democracies to NATO was Volker Ruhe, the German Defense Minister.<sup>163</sup> He emphasized the top priority of the Alliance's enlargement, claiming that politically both Western Europe and the candidates themselves had already made sufficient preparation for the forthcoming association of the candidates with the European Communities. He added that "NATO expansion is not a question of whether, but who and when."<sup>164</sup> In addition to these arguments, German military planners argued that "the defense of Berlin required Poland in NATO."<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Helga Haftendorn, "Gulliver in the Centre of Europe: International Involvement and National Capabilities for Action," in *Germany in Europe in the Nineties*, ed. Bertel Heurlin. (St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1996), p. 107.

<sup>162</sup> Clay Clemens, "A Special Kind of Superpower? Germany and the Demilitarization of Post-Cold War international Security," in *Germany in a New Era*, ed. Gary L. Geipel. (Hudson Institute, 1993), p. 229.

<sup>163</sup> Carey Schofield, "Bundeswehr battles budget cuts amid campaign for wider alliance," *The Times*, sec. Overseas news, Jan. 5, 1994, final edition.

<sup>164</sup> New York Times News Service, "Yeltsin Rips NATO Expansion; he Tells Alliance: Don't Move East," *Chicago Tribune*, sec. News, Dec. 10, 1993, final edition.

<sup>165</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 31.

Contrary to those in favor of expansion, some top-level German politicians such as German National Security Advisor Bitterlich emphasized that Ruhe's point of view at that time was his private opinion and that he spoke on his own behalf.<sup>166</sup> Others such as Hans-Dietrich Genscher and almost all Democrats were skeptical about enlarging NATO. Arguments that further NATO growth would make the organization irrelevant in the future, or that the Alliance was not prepared to start talks about enlargement, were also popular among German politicians.<sup>167</sup> German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel claimed that the issue of NATO enlargement should be resolved eventually, but not precipitously. He also appealed for great care to be taken with the process.<sup>168</sup>

Despite these differing opinions regarding NATO transformation and its relevance, the general German approach at that time advocated the idea, with the priority being to extend membership in security policy rather than in economic structure. German political parties showed major support for NATO acceptance of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary: CDU/CSU 61 percent, SPD 58 percent, FDP 57 percent, Greens 54 percent, PDS 56 percent, and Republicans 51 percent.<sup>169</sup> Additionally, 58 percent of the German population supported NATO's extending security guarantees to Visegrad countries as a priority over the potential European Union enlargement.<sup>170</sup> Moreover, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl officially clarified that he perceived NATO "as the critical defense institution for the foreseeable future, not the EU."<sup>171</sup> He also instructed other diplomats and German officials that Germany could not play the role of the country sharing the border with the east. The Chancellor's approach decisively supported Poland's early membership in NATO.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 47.

<sup>167</sup> Clay Clemens, "A Special Kind of Superpower? Germany and the Demilitarization of Post-Cold War international Security," in *Germany in a New Era*, ed. Gary L. Geipel. (Hudson Institute, 1993), p. 229.

<sup>168</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 31.

<sup>169</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Germany's Geopolitical Maturation*, (RAND, 1995), p. 20.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xi.

<sup>171</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 91.

<sup>172</sup> Jim Hoagland, "Countdown for Kohl," *Washington Post*, sec. OP-ED, Oct. 03, 1996, final edition.

By the end of 1993, the German attitude to the emerging PfP formula was also positive. While contributing to the development of the above idea, Germany shared with the United States the same goal, to “reconcile Russia’s objections against enlarging the Alliance to the East.”<sup>173</sup> Almost two years later, most German politicians’ differing approaches with regard to the enlargement issue were reconciled. Bonn showed its homogenous approach to NATO enlargement. Karsten Voigt, spokesman on defense issues for the opposition Social Democrats and president of NATO’s parliamentary arm at that time, pressed to start the first round of enlargement by 1998.<sup>174</sup>

Nevertheless, the Russian factor began to influence the German attitude toward the Visegrad countries’ early NATO accession. During the 1995 trip to Washington, Chancellor Kohl urged President Clinton to be more cautious with his NATO transformation policy and advised him to not announce a timetable for NATO enlargement by the end of 1995.<sup>175</sup> He also emphasized the necessity of a parallel NATO-Russia track, stressing that “NATO enlargement only makes sense if it does not lead to increased hostility with the Russians.”<sup>176</sup> Later that same year, Kohl urged Clinton to slow down the pace of the NATO enlargement process. Although he emphasized the importance and inevitability of NATO growth, Kohl also informed the American president of Russian concerns over the U.S. Republicans’ actions in pressing for early expansion. This German policy to delay enlargement reached its peak at the beginning of 1996, when Chancellor Kohl proposed “two years of calm” for the West in relations with Russia. He explained that postponing a decision on NATO enlargement for the above period would result in better relations with Russia. Moreover, German National Security Advisor Bitterlich added that this proposed period of calm had implications for the planned 1997 NATO enlargement summit—which he felt should be postponed.

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<sup>173</sup> Vitaly Zhurin, “Russia and Germany – from Enemy to Partner? A Contradictory Relationship,” in *Germany in Europe in the Nineties*, ed. Bertel Heurlin. (St. Martin’s Press, Inc., 1996), p. 217.

<sup>174</sup> Rick Atkinson, John Pomfret, “East Looks to NATO To Forge Links to West,” *Washington Post*, sec. A, July 06, 1995, final edition.

<sup>175</sup> Lionel Barber, “US policy strains transatlantic ties: Europe’s leaders want a new deal with Washington,” *Financial Times*, sec. Pg. 18, Feb. 20, 1995, final edition.

<sup>176</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO’s Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 102.

Additionally, Bitterlich suggested that instead of pressing for NATO growth during the planned summit, 1997 should be used to further expand PfP. He also added that he would share this idea with Britain and France.<sup>177</sup>

Such statements and suggestions coming from a significant ally impressed not only the United States, but also strong NATO enlargement supporters in Germany. Kinkiel explained that the “two years of calm” would not weaken Germany’s commitments to NATO enlargement course. Although even Kohl personally stated a few days later that he was surprised about such a bad interpretation of his words, he emphasized the importance of “keeping the enlargement issue out of the Russian and the U.S. presidential campaigns.”<sup>178</sup> In other words, Kohl perceived Yeltsin as the only possible option as the next president of Russia. By giving up the NATO enlargement issue during the presidential campaign in Russia, Kohl’s intention was to enhance Yeltsin’s candidacy.

After the signing of the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and Russia, Germany’s approach toward NATO growth did not differ from that of the U.S. Moreover Kohl, with his great diplomatic skills, succeeded by negotiating the key compromises relating to the number of candidates during the NATO summit in Madrid.

Summing up this chapter, the allies’ attitude to NATO enlargement was one of reluctance and numerous concerns. The NACC institution--as the first approach to the former communists--appeared to be too neglected to be effective. Co-operation programs were not developed beyond the phase of seminars and discussions. Concerns about NATO transformation were so great that arguments in favor of Alliance enlargement were almost nonexistent. The next phase of the political battle was over the priority of NATO vis-à-vis EU enlargement. Concluding that the military option was more rational, trials to create a EU co-operation program parallel to the PfP appeared to be a weak duplication of NATO’s idea. Facing the inevitability of NATO transformation, the

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<sup>177</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO’s Door, How the Alliance Remade Itself For a New Era* (Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 124, 142.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

Western allies' policy then was to delay the final decision to enlarge, fearing unpredictable Russian behavior. Nevertheless, the key argument that convinced the allies to support enlargement was the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.

From the very beginning, the German approach to NATO expansion was very supportive and full of positive arguments. In criticizing NACC, and backing the priority of NATO enlargement over that of the EU, Germany gave preference to Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to join the Alliance first. German arguments for this policy centered on making its own territory safe from instabilities in the region of the above countries.<sup>179</sup> Germany also appeared to be a strong supporter of PfP and the idea of reconciling Russia's objections against enlarging the Alliance. Nevertheless, the Russian factor influenced the German policy significantly, and the intention to delay the enlargement process became evident. Finally, the success of the NATO-Russia Act made Germany fully engaged in the process of finalizing the decision-making of NATO enlargement.

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<sup>179</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 32.

## V. CONCLUSION

Poland's achievements regarding successful domestic reforms and its appropriate, and sometimes aggressive, international policy were the crucial factors influencing the process of NATO enlargement. The initiation of the NATO enlargement discussion started after Walesa's visit to San Francisco in 1993. If that had not happened, the NATO growth issue would not have been raised for some time, delaying the whole procedure. What is more, Poland forced NATO leaders to take more seriously the idea of PfP as a guarantee of future enlargement. In addition to that policy, the civil-military relations reform success in 1997 prepared Poland for accession.

The United States' approach and policy toward NATO enlargement resulted in successful transformation of the Alliance in 1999. President Clinton and his administration took the appropriate steps to gradually and steadily prepare both the aspirant candidates and Russia for NATO enlargement. These steps included implementation of PfP and other assistance programs, preparation of the NATO Enlargement Study that for the first time included the criteria for the potential members, and the administration's approach, and policy toward Russia vis-à-vis the NATO-Russia Founding Act and constituted the major successes of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s. Nevertheless, the final result of NATO enlargement was also possible thanks to the efforts of U.S. Republicans. Although Clinton's policy was more visible in the international arena, the majority of official actions taken toward NATO growth were impelled by Republican legislation. Their push for a faster and more decisive policy toward Russia had its implications while working out the NATO-Russia Founding Act. Although the candidates were officially invited in 1997, the critical period regarding the NATO enlargement procedure had just begun. That was the time to face the opposition's arguments, gather Senate support and explain the enlargement rationale to the public. The actions taken by NATO expansion advocates on these matters resulted in the final success of Senate support for the above idea.



The allies' attitude to NATO enlargement was reluctant and full of concerns. The NACC concept--as the first approach to the former communists--appeared to be moribund and ineffective. Co-operation programs were not developed beyond the phase of seminars and discussions. Concerns about NATO transformation were so great that arguments in favor of Alliance could barely be heard. The next phase of the political battle was over the priority of NATO versus EU enlargement. Most concluded that the military option was more rational, and trials to create a EU co-operation program parallel to the PfP appeared to be merely a weak duplication of NATO's idea. Facing the inevitability of NATO transformation, the Western allies' policy then was to delay the final decision to enlarge, in fear of unpredictable Russian behavior. Nevertheless, the key argument that convinced the allies to support enlargement was the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act.

The German approach to the NATO expansion idea was very supportive and full of positive arguments. Criticizing NACC, and backing the priority of NATO enlargement over that of the EU, Germany gave preference to Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary to access the Alliance first. The German argument in favor of this policy centered on protecting Germany from instabilities in the region of the above countries.<sup>180</sup> Germany also appeared to be a strong supporter of PfP and the idea of soothing Russia's concerns about enlarging the Alliance. Nevertheless, the Russian factor influenced the German policy significantly, and the intention to delay the enlargement process became evident. Finally, the success of the NATO-Russia Act made Germany fully engaged in the process of finalizing the decision-making of NATO enlargement.

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<sup>180</sup> Gerald B. Solomon, *The NATO Enlargement Debate, 1990-1997: Blessings of Liberty* (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1998), p. 32.

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