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European Security Policy in the Aftermath of the Dissolution of the Soviet Union

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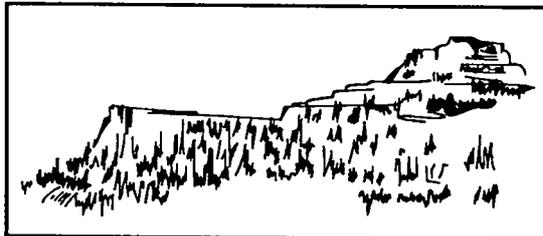
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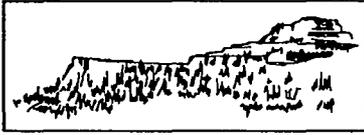
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EUROPEAN SECURITY POLICY IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE DISSOLUTION OF THE SOVIET UNION *

Theodor H. Winkler

THE END OF THE COLD WAR

In retrospect the failed coup attempt in the Soviet Union of August 1991 was an event of great significance, if not of historic proportions. It profoundly reshaped the international security policy map (and indeed quite literally the map of Europe) as well as the international security policy agenda. It was both a culmination of the profound upheavals in Europe since 1989 and a key event that provoked even more revolutionary change, leading to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in late December.

The stagnation of the Brezhnev period rendered reforms in the USSR inevitable and urgent. Even the conservatives within the Soviet leadership could no longer deny that only major reforms would ultimately preserve the country's prospects. Consequently,

Mikhail Gorbachev was given a chance. He set out on a reform course that was by no means revolutionary in its original concept. He wanted to modernize the system, not to throw it overboard. Yet his reforms underlined the fact that the system itself had become the biggest obstacle in the endeavor to ensure the Soviet Union a future; therefore, what had been initiated with limited objectives had to evolve into a challenge to the existing system itself. Gorbachev, continuously frustrated in his reform policies, turned ever more radical in his rhetoric, thus creating additional scope for debate. The USSR turned increasingly inwards.

The Soviet Union was no longer capable, or willing, to formulate firm policy guidelines toward Eastern Europe, thus increasing freedom for political maneuver there. At the same time, the USSR needed a breathing

*This paper is based on a talk given at the Los Alamos National Laboratory on October 15, 1991. Political and economic developments have been brought up to date as of the beginning of 1992. Most of the problems that the author identifies, for example, Yugoslavia and the Czech and Slovak Republic, have worsened during the first six months of 1992.



spell in foreign policy (a *peredyshka*, as Lenin had called it in the 1920s). Relations with the West, and particularly with the United States, improved. Major progress was achieved in the area of arms control. This change in East-West relations further increased the political freedom of maneuver for Eastern Europe. In May 1989 Hungary used it and cut a hole through the Iron Curtain. Six months later the regimes in Eastern Europe had collapsed, Germany was on the way to unification, and the Warsaw Pact on the road toward its dissolution.

In the meantime the Soviet internal debate had turned bitter. Gorbachev's position had become increasingly embattled. He needed Western credits, technology, and assistance if his reform drive, and he himself, were to survive. Courageously, he accepted in July 1990 a united Germany in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)—thus banking politically on Europe and the West and, even more importantly, separating the German question from the convulsions of the Soviet domestic situation. This meant, by the same token, that the West had greater freedom of maneuver with respect to the USSR when reactionary forces tried to grasp power by force on August 18, 1991. The outside pressure applied to the Soviet Union in those critical days, combined with the resistance of the Soviet population and the leadership of men like Boris Yeltsin, led to the failure of the coup (though the clumsiness of the coup attempt also helped).

The failure of the coup swept not only reactionary forces out of many positions of power, but also dealt a terrible blow to the

Communist party—by now an organization forbidden in most parts of the former Soviet Union. If the unification of Germany had symbolized the end of the Cold War, these developments opened up the possibility of overcoming the essentially bipolar structure that had marked international relations ever since World War II. There is a chance for Europe to grow together again, guided by the principles enshrined in the Paris Charter of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). For the first time there is some basis for dreams such as a “Europe from San Francisco to Vladivostok” (as Italian Foreign Minister de Michelis put it).

This positive outcome should not mislead us, however, into believing that all problems have been solved and, as one U.S. observer has said, that we witness the “end of history.” What we witness is, quite to the contrary, both a return of history and its acceleration. Nationalist feelings and passions long suppressed by the communist dictatorship and the Cold War erupt in a most dangerous way all over Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union. The reduced likelihood of an East-West conflict is, unfortunately, by no means identical to an absence of any danger of war. The threat of chaotic conflicts, triggered by civil wars in Eastern Europe and in the Balkans, escalating into international conflicts is very real indeed. Old problems, such as nuclear proliferation, acquire in this chaotic environment a new and even more dangerous dimension.

There is, in short, the risk that the chain of positive changes that have fed additional positive change might be broken and be

replaced by stagnation or even by negative chains of events. The West has won the Cold War; however, it has not yet succeeded in filling with Western ideals and values the vacuum which the collapse of its old antagonist, the communist dictatorship, left behind. There is not only a dangerous lack of stability in Europe, but also an urgent need for crisis management and crisis prevention capabilities. The political and defense structures created by the West—most notably NATO, the European Community (EC), and the Western European Union (WEU)—have entered a period of transformation in order to adapt to these changed circumstances. This transition has, though, only begun. The West is confronted with a new and difficult challenge. There is a need for a coordinated, forward-looking, and sustainable Western strategy to cope with the new situation.

Nowhere is this need as evident as in the four major problem areas of post-Cold War Europe: the former USSR, the Balkans, Central Europe, and the area of new security policy challenges.

THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE SOVIET UNION

What we witness in the former Soviet Union is something totally new and dangerous—for what is disintegrating is a nuclear superpower with an arsenal of perhaps 30,000 nuclear warheads. To call this situation

potentially dangerous would be an understatement.

The problem is not restricted to the question of the command authority and physical control over the nuclear arsenal. This dimension does exist, though. Russian attempts to tell the West that the problem has been solved do not really sound all that encouraging as soon as one probes a little deeper. There were stories by TASS that transports of nuclear weapons from border republics to the Slavic heartland had been stopped by local national militias and forced to turn around. The attitude of Ukraine toward the nuclear question is, to say the least, not clear. Yet, in essence the problem goes much further than that. Not only the nuclear warheads, but also nuclear facilities of all kinds, nuclear source materials, the delivery vehicles and their production facilities (the SS-18 is produced at Dnepropetrovsk in Ukraine), the research labs (even Tajikistan has a major SDI-type research facility at Nurek near Dushanbe; Sary Shagan lies in Kazakhstan), and the human expertise have to be taken into account.

Nuclear proliferators in the third world, such as Iraq, have been hampered and slowed down in the past by the fact that they possessed (and could clandestinely produce) only relatively small amounts of weapons-grade nuclear source material. Should the disintegration of the USSR lead to a black market of such source material and, even more worrisome perhaps, of nuclear expertise, the proliferation picture might deteriorate dramatically. Scientists capable of producing highly

sophisticated conventional triggers could significantly reduce the amount of weapons-grade source material a would-be proliferator would need in order to fulfill his dreams.

Determined international action is clearly imperative to cope with this new problem. Such action should include clear signals to the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, as well as an internationally coordinated move against those companies that illegally supported Saddam Hussein's nuclear-weapons program (and in all probability would not hesitate—or even worse, are not hesitating—to supply other would-be proliferators). Equally, to tolerate that China continues to stay outside the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), that North Korea can avoid International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards (and almost openly seek nuclear weapons), and that countries such as Iran can embark on a road leading rapidly toward the bomb, is courting disaster. If the international community does not address these problems swiftly, it may well be too late.

Beyond the nuclear dimension, the most burning problem presented by the situation in the former Soviet Union appears to be the sober fact that the country has not yet any fully working political institutions. Most political bodies that survive are either leftovers from the communist past or at least lack democratic legitimacy. This is, in many respects, not the hour of institutions but the hour of individuals (such as Boris Yeltsin). The transition towards genuine democracy will take considerable time and may be a painful process, marked by many setbacks,

even under the best of circumstances. Realities have changed and continue to change swiftly in the former Soviet Union; however, mentalities will take much more time to evolve.

In some states the old guard survived and still controls their former fiefdoms. They may now no longer call themselves communists, yet their new policy line—a mixture of nationalism, religious fundamentalism, and totalitarianism—remains anything but democratic. In other states the new leadership shows a worrisome tendency to adopt the leadership style of its communist predecessors. This trend further accentuates the centrifugal tendencies within the country and augurs badly for the future. The constituent parts of the former Soviet Union may opt for widely different political futures. The problems the new plans for a reshaped economic and political commonwealth encounter are neither surprising nor necessarily temporary. The stronger the position of Russia in the new commonwealth, the greater will be the tendency of the other states to go their own way. There is here, in short, a *circulus vitiosus* in the making. And there is also the possibility that the Islamic states of the southern rim of the former USSR might form some quite unholy alliances with Islamic fundamentalism.

The situation in the country is, moreover, overshadowed by a rapidly deteriorating economic situation. The most recent production figures show a decline of frightening proportions in the crucial energy sector. If the situation is not rapidly improved, Russia may

turn from a net energy exporter into a net energy importer (a prospect that would be disastrous not only for Russia itself, but for the entire international system). The agricultural sector is facing major problems—as does the chronically deficient transport sector. The supply situation in the major cities is reaching critical proportions; not even the supply of bread can be taken for granted.

Russian leaders state openly that the country might be threatened by a second conservative coup should attempts to stabilize the situation not succeed within the next eighteen months. This warning was repeated in a policy paper, at least partly endorsed by the new KGB leadership, predicting that the former USSR might be heading for a situation similar to that of Yugoslavia if the supply situation is not improved quickly. Public opinion polls confirm that the food and supply situation is the main concern of the population—and far outstrips in the mind of the people the concern to strengthen democracy. Clearly, the West is confronted in this area with a major challenge. Empty shelves in Moscow and St. Petersburg had always been a shame. Since August 18, 1991, we know that they also constitute a major international security problem. Determined and coordinated Western action is imperative.

THE BALKANS

If the situation in the former USSR looks bleak, that in the Balkans is even worse.

Communist regimes have survived in several countries. There is hardly any border in this region that is not contested. Hence, each conflict in the region contains the risk of escalating into an international armed conflict. The nationalities problem in this region is indeed not a problem, but a nightmare. The economic situation of most countries is almost hopeless (which Western company, for instance, would currently invest in Yugoslavia?).

What is going on in Yugoslavia is, to say it bluntly, intolerable and totally incompatible with every single principle of the CSCE Paris Charter (which Yugoslavia has also signed). The country has broken apart. Serbia's attempt to create through brutal force and cunning a Greater Serbia simply illustrates the fact that all concepts to maintain at least some loose confederation are built on illusions. The most dangerous reality is that the horror tales of the old generation from World War II now become the terrible experience of the young. The abyss between the warring factions grows deeper every day.

The Yugoslav civil war has to be stopped immediately if a new European security order is to have any chance at all. The blood that is shed every day sends a terrible signal to the problem-torn regions of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. If we simply accept a civil war in Yugoslavia, why should other nationalities not resort to violence in order to get what they want? Aggression and brute force cannot be permitted to pay. The worst outcome of all, the most disastrous signal, would be that the West gets involved in the

search for a solution—and then fails. Such an outcome is a certain recipe for disaster on a large scale. If we do not want further Yugoslavias, we cannot tolerate the one we already have. The EC has opted for political intervention. Having, rightly, chosen this avenue, it cannot give up. The imposition of sanctions was both logical and inevitable. The stakes, however, condemn the EC—possibly together with the UN—to see the matter through if it does not want to do serious damage to its credibility and its ability to influence positively other future crisis situations. The first inclination of the United States to watch with some *Schadenfreude* the perplexities of the EC in this endeavour was dangerous and shortsighted. To encourage a stable European security order, based on democratic principles, must be a key U.S. interest. President Bush's decision to support the pressure applied by the EC on the warring parties can, therefore, only be described as wise.

On a larger scale, the situation in Yugoslavia raises another, fundamental question. So far, Article 2 of the UN Charter—stipulating that all countries will refrain from interfering in the domestic affairs of other countries—has been an important basis of international relations. The CSCE Paris Charter has moved beyond that approach, almost without this being realized, and given preeminence to such fundamental concepts as human rights. The international community has entered, thereby, uncharted waters. It is urgent to define a new code of international conduct in this crucial area, if chaos is to be averted.

CENTRAL EUROPE

The revolutions of 1989 have given birth to democracies in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republic. These young democracies have inherited a heavy burden from communism. They have long democratic traditions, but still lack democratic experience. Their economic situation is difficult, their environment all too often poisoned. They have, for all practical purposes, returned to Europe—but are still kept at arm's length by Western Europe (thus, for instance, the customs levied on their agricultural produce by the EC actually exceed the community's financial assistance extended to them; the negotiations for association agreements with the EC could, at one moment, be blocked because of the parochial interests of French meat producers). This attitude is extremely shortsighted and dangerous.

During the critical days of the Soviet coup in August 1991, the problem became fully apparent. Nobody was feeling lonelier during these dramatic days than the three Central European democracies. Their fears of being downgraded to the position of a buffer zone, a no man's land in between NATO and the USSR, seemed about to become true. It is a lesson the West should not easily forget.

How serious the situation is may be illustrated by the Hungarian example. The country has roughly 10 million inhabitants—but an additional 4 million people of Hungarian descent live in neighboring countries. Should Hungary opt for a nationalist and/or populist policy, it could create havoc. The country has

resisted the temptation of such an approach (which would turn people's minds away from the difficult economic situation of the country and focus it on other issues). This responsible attitude is a factor contributing significantly to European stability. Yet, if we look at the situation Hungary is faced with in its neighborhood, it should not be simply taken for granted that this responsible attitude will always and automatically prevail. Hungary's southern neighbor, Yugoslavia, is torn apart by a civil war (and there are some four hundred to five hundred thousand Hungarians living in Slavonia). Serbian aircraft almost routinely violate Hungarian air space. On at least one occasion they attacked targets in Hungary itself. Hungary's southeastern neighbor, Romania, still remains in turmoil. Nationalist tensions impact on the roughly 2.5 million Romanians of Hungarian descent. The future orientation of Ukraine, which also holds a substantial minority of Magyar descent, remains at least not clear. In the north the Czech and Slovak Republic may disintegrate into a Czech and a Slovak state. There are five hundred to seven hundred thousand persons of Hungarian descent living in Slovakia, and some two hundred thousand of Slovak descent living in Hungary. A dam project at Nagymaros on the Danube has, in addition, caused serious strains between Slovaks and Hungarians. In short, the only border the Hungarians have that does seem perfectly quiet is that with Austria.

It is obvious that the West has a profound interest in keeping the situation in Central Europe stable. There is, however, only one

way to do this: to provide the populations of these three young democracies with a clear and promising perspective. To ignore this necessity would mean to ignore three basic facts: First, these three countries together form a firewall against the potential chaos in the East and in the Balkans. Should they be engulfed in this potential chaos, that chaos would be extended into the very heart of Europe—and, possibly even more dangerously, to the very borders of a Germany that will need time and much effort to add to the political unification a second, social and economic, unification. Second, it cannot be in the interest of the West to replace the Iron Curtain with a new, invisible, but all the more real, East-West divide that separates a rich West from a poor East. The inevitable result would be a major migration wave that the West could not absorb and whose impact would be highly dangerous. Finally, if countries such as the three Central European republics should not succeed in the transition towards democracy, a market economy, and improving standards of living, who should then succeed? Hungary has been on an economic reform course for more than three decades. The presence of Western companies can be seen in Budapest. If we let the experiment these countries have embarked on fail, we send the worst signal imaginable to the eastern half of Europe. We would pave the way for a return of totalitarianism.

Although Central Europe has a good chance to succeed, it will not be able to succeed on its own. Much depends on the West's ability to recognize this fact and to live up to the

challenge—not through words, but through concrete and internationally coordinated deeds.

NEW DIMENSIONS OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Much more complex than the geographically defined problem areas so far discussed are what many observers call the “new dimensions of international security,” meaning such highly different problems as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (and their associated delivery vehicles); migration; demographic pressures; drugs; illegal arms transfers; organized crime of a transnational type; or the growing phenomenon of religious, particularly Islamic, fundamentalism. In reality, hardly any of these phenomena and dangers are new. They have been with us for millennia (such as religious fundamentalism or organized crime) or at least for decades (such as nuclear proliferation). What is “new” are not the problems per se, but rather the fact that these difficult issues show a net tendency to combine. Some examples may illustrate the point.

Nuclear proliferation is not a new concern. What renders it a particularly burning issue in the 1990s is the fact that it interacts, and is encouraged by, a whole host of other factors—such as the proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction (most notably chemical, but also biological, weapons), the proliferation of ballistic missiles of medium range

and their associated production capabilities, the frustration of large segments of the Arab world about the outcome of the Gulf War (and, possibly very soon, either about the content of a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict or, alternatively, about the failure of the attempts to reach such a settlement), the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Similarly, the economic gulf separating a rich North and a poor South is nothing new; however, today it has acquired new, security-policy-related dimensions. There is a link between the slightly improved medical and hygienic conditions in most parts of the third world, leading in times of constant demographic pressures to a population explosion symbolized by the fact that roughly one-half of the population living on the southern shores of the Mediterranean is twenty-four years old or younger, on the one hand, and the declining economic perspectives and terms of trade in the Southern hemisphere, leading to a growing indebtedness of the third world, hunger, poverty, and the almost total lack of economic perspectives on the other hand. Human beings that have no perspective (but can watch on TV how the rich North lives) will eventually migrate to this apparent paradise in which people seem to get from social welfare institutions more than they could aspire to earn through the hardest of labors at home. It is no surprise that Europe today is flooded by people from the third world seeking political asylum, but all too often are simply trying to escape the terrible economic conditions at home. In times of worldwide air links and organized gangs specializing in

smuggling people (under terrible conditions and in return for extortionist fees) across borders, geographical distances no longer constitute a serious obstacle to migration.

Those who come usually were the underprivileged in their country of origin, those who had no chance whatsoever. They had only the possibility to trust in God. They belong, in other words, very often to fundamentalist streams of religion, rendering not only assimilation difficult, but creating additional problems of all sorts. To mention just one: fundamentalists cannot be easily convinced of the values of birth control. One analyst claims that the combination of strong migration patterns and high birth rates among the immigrant population would mean, if current patterns continue, that France might have a Muslim majority by 2025. This may be exaggerated, but the problem is real. The wave of people from the third world seeking asylum in Europe is indeed changing the attitudes of a large sector of the European population in a dangerous way. There is a growing wave of brutal violence directed against these immigrants in many European countries (not only in the former East Germany), creating a nourishing ground for fascist groups. The leading role asylum seekers play in drug pushing and the role gangs of immigrant youths without any perspective play in criminal suburban gang warfare in Europe's large cities (most notably Paris and Marseille) are hardening the attitude even of average citizens. Movements such as *Le Pen's* in France thrive on this reality. The North-South divide in wealth has, in short,

ceased to be a deplorable fact Europeans can take note of with sighs of regret (and then forget). It is by now a burning problem, likely to affect all of us in our daily lives.

Again, organized crime has always existed—and so have drugs. What is new, however, is again the interrelationship between many factors. As long as there is a demand for illegal drugs in the Western world, there will be drug dealers. Since demand is high (and profits are large) the stream of drugs will grow rather than decrease. That provides the drug barons with such enormous amounts of money that they are increasingly capable of almost taking over some production countries (in the Caribbean as well as in Latin America and Asia). And because there is easy money to be made, others inevitably have started to look at this business opportunity—from terrorist groups to terrorist countries. The migration wave offers an almost unlimited supply of couriers. Traditional criminal organizations—like the Italian Mafia—are all too eager to join in the business. The Mafia is indeed currently experiencing a genuine revival and extending its operations well into northern Italy (and perhaps soon even beyond the Alps). Finally, the whole problem is connected with illegal arms transfers of all kinds. The rumored former triangular relationship among Cuba, the M-19 guerillas in Colombia, and the drug dealers and the current situation in Peru are examples of this kind.

Many additional examples could be given. Similar links exist among a whole host of so-called old problems. The inevitable result is

always that these modern linkages create problems that tend to enter the realm of international security problems. None of these new challenges has, given its manifold roots, simple answers. All of them require coordinated international response if there is to be any chance whatsoever of formulating an answer. Nowhere is the need for a genuine new world order as evident than in this difficult area.

IMPLICATIONS

The end of the Cold War, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the appearance of a growing number of new problems have profoundly changed the security policy situation in Europe. It will take considerable time until the new situation becomes clearer, but some conclusions can already be drawn:

The danger of a great East-West conflict is rapidly diminishing. Armed conflict—in the form of civil wars with a substantial potential to transcend borders and to turn into international conflicts—has not only become a genuine possibility, but a frightening reality. The most urgent task, therefore, is to control this new conflict potential. There is a clear need for mechanisms for crisis management, crisis prevention, and crisis solution in Europe.

The instrument that seems, in principle, best suited for this task is the CSCE process. Yet the CSCE so far is only a fair-weather institution because it is largely based on the principle of consensus. The proposals to strengthen the CSCE mechanism are pointed

in the right direction. It appears worthwhile to think more seriously about the old Swiss proposal to create, within the framework of the CSCE, a compulsory mechanism for the settlement of disputes.

In spite of the constant threat of chaotic conflicts and crises, the gradual evolution of a European security order has ceased to be a dream and has become a tantalizing possibility. The CSCE Paris Charter has established a basis of common values, ideals, and objectives. The establishment of such a European security order will, however, take time under the best of circumstances. The principles of the Paris Charter have to be transformed into an actual code of conduct, respected by all players.

During this transitional period on the road toward such a European system, Western organizations, in particular the EC, will play a key role. The weight of the EC is rapidly growing. It is on the road toward a common foreign, security, and possibly even defense policy. Such an integrated set of policies, combined with the massive economic potential of the EC, will give the EC decisive influence beyond its borders. It already strongly influences large parts of Central and Eastern Europe.

The other side of the same coin, however, is that the EC appears unlikely to stick to its integration approach of the late 1980s (i.e., on giving absolute priority to vertical over horizontal integration). Jacques Delors's concept of concentric circles—the EC as the hard core of European integration, linked through European Economic Space (EES) with the European Free Trade Association

(EFTA) countries and through association agreements with the three Central European countries (and later possibly other countries)—is no longer a viable proposition. Central Europe cannot, and should not, be kept at arm's length. Membership after a transitional period of adaptation of their national economies seems inevitable. Similarly, the EES is considered by many EFTA countries no longer as an objective in itself, but rather as a transitional step toward full EC membership. Austria and Sweden have already formally applied for EC membership, and others (including Switzerland) may follow.

The EC of the late 1990s might not necessarily resemble a beautiful French *chateau*, gracefully balanced, perfectly symmetrical, with nice attached wings, every detail subordinated to one aristocratic will. It appears far more likely that it will rather resemble an English garden, less visibly structured, in which many flowers and plants are permitted to grow—and which is, for that very reason, closer to human nature. It appears also rather likely that an EC transforming itself into a motor of European integration on a larger scale will have to be a more federalistic structure and a more democratic one. Again, there cannot be much harm in that prospect.

If the end of the Cold War is not to be confused with the end of history, then it is certainly also true that it does not mean the end of NATO's history. Quite to the contrary, the alliance has embarked at the London and Rome summits on an important new road, expanding significantly its political dimension. NATO will remain an important secu-

rity provider—both with respect to Soviet residual military capabilities (irrespective in whose hands those capabilities will eventually lie) and to the possibility of chaotic crises. NATO will, above all, also be indispensable for the continuing transatlantic partnership.

The United States has emerged from the turbulent last few years as the only remaining world power. It is a position the country does not feel at ease with. Far from aspiring to the role of a world policeman, the United States is flirting again with the idea of isolationism—not in the White House but in Congress. The trend must be taken particularly serious in an election year: it is obviously, from a parochial point of view, much more convenient to close a military base in, for instance, Germany than to close a national guard base in one's own district. A continued U.S. presence in Europe, including a continued military presence and a reduced nuclear presence, remains, however, indispensable to keep the transatlantic partnership alive. There are two basic reasons for this:

- Should the United States no longer consider itself as a European power, there is the distinct risk that nagging tensions in the economic area (particularly within the context of the GATT negotiations and of the growing debates on protectionist practices and government subsidies to private enterprises, in general) might quickly escalate. There is, today, a certain danger that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development area might break down into three rival trading

blocks (North America, Europe, and the Asian-Pacific region). Recent books such as *The Next War with Japan* are an ominous sign. This cannot be the road the West should take.

- Within the European context the United States is the great equalizer. It balances out all forms of special relationships and factors—such as the Franco-German partnership, the special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States, or the constant fears of Europe's smaller nations of being dominated by any given country or combination of countries. This is an important function, often overlooked by the U.S. public. The argument made by some people in Congress that the U.S. taxpayer will not subsidize a U.S. military presence for political reasons (but only, if these troops have a clear military mission) may be correct within the U.S. domestic policy context. It still remains wrong. The mission of armed forces has to be, above all, to provide stability and security. Armed forces do not need an enemy in order to justify their existence.

To keep the United States in Europe, particularly in times of high budget deficits and shrinking defense budgets, will, in all probability, mean that Europe itself has to shoulder a fair share of the defense function. Thus, a European defense identity is not necessarily directed against the United States, but might indeed be an indispensable precondition for maintaining the U.S. military presence in Europe. The *conditio sine qua non* is, however, in this respect that the European defense identity is strengthening and not weakening

NATO. The concept of the WEU forming a bridge between the EC and NATO responds to that necessity. A WEU transformed into the defense arm of the EC and rivalling NATO would, on the other hand, appear to be an excellent way to wreck in the longer term the transatlantic partnership. A wisely constructed bridge function of the WEU would not only avoid that, but actually open up possibilities for a new type of burden sharing in which NATO would, in the military field, ensure the security of its members (and act as an indirect security provider even beyond the immediate alliance perimeter) while the WEU might take over some of the out-of-area tasks, particularly in Europe itself, that NATO could never agree on.

There cannot be a stable Europe without stability in the area that used to be the Warsaw Pact; and only democratic states in those regions will, in the end, be stable ones. To ensure Europe peace, stability, democracy, and prosperity requires a broad vision. Nothing would be more shortsighted than to construct beautiful buildings on the Western half of the European building lot, and to leave the eastern half to its own destiny. The West, in its own well understood interest, has to develop a clear, coherent, and sustainable strategy toward Eastern Europe.

One of the most remarkable features of European affairs during the last few years has indeed been Germany's willingness to move both quickly on its key interest, but also with moderation and good sense. Germany has not asked for additional weight within the EC. It has, after some early errors (due to the 1990 election campaign), shown remarkable

sense in its handling of Poland. It is a testimony to the clear-sightedness, both of Germany and Poland, that neither the unification, nor the ensuing special relationship between Russia and Germany has been perceived so far as a threat by the Polish population. Equally, Germany has shown sensitivity toward French feelings in not questioning—at least openly—French plans for a defense community of the EC (though that idea does contain a certain anti-German sting) and has been willing to help paper over French frustrations—when that project ran into trouble—by accepting the creation of a French-German corps. The latter makes hardly any sense from a military point of view, but very much sense from a political point of view. Germany's will to focus on what is important and to offer concessions to those who are bound to remember history has been a major source of stability in Europe during the last few years.

There are, though, more worrisome dimensions to the issue. On the one hand, the unification has not simply resulted in an enlarged Federal Republic of Germany. The country has changed in a much more important way. Social problems have increased significantly. The number of unemployed has more than doubled. Entire regions, if not the entire former German Democratic Republic (GDR), are marked by serious strains to the economic and social fabric. The prospect of a gradual improvement of the economic situation in the former GDR from 1992 onwards hardly changes this reality. Not every West German is thrilled by the idea that the taxes he pays are going to be invested,

to an important extent, in the five new *Bundeslander*. Germany has, in short, as a price of its unification, inherited many and difficult problems. They are the breeding ground for a certain revival of nazi and fascist ideals among those segments of the young that are not offered any economic prospect in the short to medium term (or see their prospects—through the additional demands on the treasury resulting from the unification—even further thwarted). Between January and October 1991, there were no less than 600 neo-nazi incidents in Germany, mostly involving those disaffected youths. This is dangerous—not because there is the slightest chance of a nazi revival in Germany (who, for instance, would believe that the Parliament of Westminster is about to be toppled because of British soccer hooliganism, recruiting its culprits from precisely the same social strata as German neo-nazi movements)—but because such phenomena acquire inevitably a different meaning in the eyes of many, if they happen in Germany. Nothing would be more dangerous than to play these incidents up, as ugly as they are. The worst that could happen would be a return of history, of nationalist sentiments and fears (ranging from Bismarck to Adolf Hitler), of the nineteenth century, in Western as well as in Eastern Europe.

On the other hand, Germany has recognized—partly as a price for its unification, partly out of farsightedness—that it needs to provide substantial help to the former Warsaw Pact nations. According to the Bonn government, in 1991 total German financial and other contributions to the former nations amounted to no less than 60 billion DM. This

is dangerous for two reasons. First, it overtaxes even the German economy. To overcome the current recession the West depends on the German economy as a motor for recovery. To overburden that economic locomotive cannot be a wise course. A fairer burden sharing, which the Germans ask for, is indeed sound policy. Second, the disproportionately high German contribution already gives rise in some quarters to new fears. The ugly word that the deutschmark is currently reaching farther than the *Wehrmacht* ever did has already been uttered. This is not only dangerous, but unfair.

A coherent and coordinated Western approach to the new problems of the Eastern half of the Continent appears imperative, not only because the problems decisively influence Europe's prospects for the future, but also because Germany should, in a wise approach, not be overburdened, but have sufficient resources at its disposal to have its political unification followed by a social and economic one. Otherwise, the fears about Germany, that are mistakenly *en vogue* in some corners of Europe, might in the longer term become indeed a self-fulfilling prophecy.

On quite another level, recent developments in Europe raise questions about the future of arms control. There has been substantial progress in this area since 1987. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces, CFE, and START agreements have been important milestones. President Bush's unilateral initiative of September 1991 and the Soviet response brought additional swift progress (whose importance cannot be overestimated

in light of the unstable situation in the former USSR). Major work still lies ahead, most notably the ratification of CFE (as long as the agreement makes sense, given recent developments) and START, the conclusion of a convention to ban all chemical weapons, and an Open Skies agreement. There is also an obvious need to strengthen the NPT regime after the blow Iraq dealt to it. A widening of the missile technology control regime and further restraint in the transfer of weapons to the third world (coupled with a conventional-arms transfer register) are equally needed. Much speaks also in favor of the idea to negotiate a new universal agreement—along the lines of the chemical weapons convention—banning all ballistic missiles with sub-strategic ranges.

Yet, the impression remains that arms control in its traditional form may no longer be the most promising avenue. START took nine years to negotiate; CFE more than two. Such agreements and their inevitable attention to even the smallest and most bewildering details may simply no longer be in line with the very rapid change on the political level. Bean counting is no longer what the military is expected to do; it isn't wise to ask our arms-control negotiators to continue to focus on that very approach to problems.

There is a need for a continuous security policy dialogue capable of adjusting military realities to changing political circumstances in a much more flexible way. Instead of a formal CFE II negotiation—aimed at further cuts that do not actually matter—one might rather think of some sort of a conventional standing consultative commission (similar to

that of START, yet with wider powers, giving it more flexibility), capable of concluding agreements where they are needed and opening up an important channel of communication and clarification in periods of crises or tension.

Similarly, there may be a need for qualitatively new forms of confidence- and security-building measures. It appears, for instance, highly desirable to solve the problem of Soviet residual forces through assistance in the conversion of the Soviet defense industry toward more useful production patterns than through pressure on Russia to scrap a few thousand more tanks (to which Russia might agree, yet for which it might, in practical terms, not even have the money or the technical capabilities). Similarly, it is far from clear whether the former Soviet Union has the technical potential and expertise to implement the agreements it has already entered into—most notably the bilateral agreement with the United States on the destruction of chemical weapons stocks and the unilateral declaration on tactical nuclear weapons. Western assistance would not only accelerate the process of eliminating these dangerous weapons (and time might indeed be a precious commodity given the continuing turbulences in the former USSR), but even indirectly provide for some form of verification.

Finally, the role of armed forces in the Europe of the 1990s will change. Their traditional primary task—war deterrence and the capability to offer a credible resistance to any aggressor—will remain. Peace has clearly not yet broken out. Yet, there will be increasingly additional and equally important tasks

demanding from the armed forces. They include such highly different missions as

- verification, observation, and inspection
- humanitarian missions of all kinds
- relief missions after catastrophes of both natural and technical origins
- missions linked to possible refugee and migration waves (that will swiftly overstretch civilian authorities)
- peacekeeping in all its forms
- support of international good offices missions (such as the support of the recent UN missions to observe the elections in Namibia and the Western Sahara).

These new tasks will imply an even greater importance of flexibility and mobility of armed forces. They should also caution parliaments against cutting defense budgets too easily—as convenient such an approach may appear in times of huge budget deficits.

SOME ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGY

The West would be well advised to formulate a coherent, integrated, and sustainable political strategy in front of the complex and bewildering set of new problems that have emerged. Some elements of such a strategy are given below.

- The war in Yugoslavia has to be stopped—now. Pressure must be brought to bear on the warring parties, and particularly the Yugoslav army, which is out of political control. If this war is permitted to con-

tinue, there remains only a remote chance that any stable European security order can ever be constructed.

- The key importance of the three Central European democracies must be fully recognized, and their return to Europe must be encouraged and assisted. To delay this historic process would not only be unwise, but even dangerous. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak Republic must be treated, in terms of economic and technical assistance, as Western Europe's privileged partners. Investments in these countries by Western companies should be encouraged through the creation of tax and other incentives.
- Beyond the immediate humanitarian needs of the former USSR there are urgent infrastructural requirements. The case of the former GDR has shown how catastrophically inadequate and antiquated was the infrastructure communism left behind. Whatever the eventual political configuration of the former USSR, those needs will have to be addressed if the country is to have any chance whatsoever to make the step toward a market economy and a working democracy. It is urgent, therefore, to move toward a stocktaking right now. Experienced Western experts should be dispatched on fact-finding missions identifying and prioritizing the problems. Such objective findings will be indispensable if Western assistance is not to be simply a waste of money and effort.

Some areas for possible Western action can, however, already be identified.

First, islands of communications have to be established. No Western business man is going to invest a penny in the former Soviet Union if it takes three to five hours to call his home company from Moscow and if he cannot count on a decent telefax link. The idea to rent out the new U.S. embassy building in Moscow to companies makes perfect sense in this respect (the building holds an excess of communication gear). It might serve as an example for the creation of additional communication islands in other cities (St. Petersburg, Kiev, or Minsk).

Second, the energy sector of the former USSR has to be brought out of its current desperate crisis as quickly as possible. There are enormous energy reserves, but the technology used to tap the resources is more often than not antiquated. A lowering of standards of the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM) in the energy sector (perhaps linked to the granting of joint venture possibilities in this area to Western oil companies) would dramatically change the picture. It cannot be in the Western interest to see the former USSR turning into a net energy importer. Such a development would, on the one hand, further accentuate Western dependence on the energy resources of the volatile Middle East (a dependence which will grow dangerously within the next ten years). On the other hand, the former USSR for the foreseeable future can obtain hard currency only through energy and other raw material exports. If the

West does not see to it that these hard currency incomes are maintained and gradually increased, then it will have to assist the former USSR financially and economically for times eternal. It appears wise to assure the former USSR a maximum capability to solve its own problems.

Third, major Western investment support programs in the conversion of the Soviet defense industry seems to be money wisely invested. On the one hand, all these conversion programs will reduce the residual Soviet military threat (which cannot be totally ignored as long as there continues to exist the possibility of another conservative coup) much more significantly than any arms-control agreement can do. On the other hand, the Soviet military industrial complex has, comparatively speaking, the best equipment and the most qualified people. The Soviet attempts in the conversion area more often than not have been ludicrous. To cite but one example, it certainly was not a good idea that the plant producing the *Proton* launch vehicle should now be partly switched over to the production of tricycles (whose brakes, on top of all, do not even function). It seems to make much more sense to have conversion thoroughly analyzed in collaboration with the Russians. A company that has specialized in electronic warfare equipment or in military radios should, for instance, also be capable of producing civilian telecommunications gear that works (which might be precisely one of the

crucial items needed to permit an economic take-off).

- Long-term aid to the former USSR, particularly long-term financial aid, will have to complement these shorter-term measures; yet, it should be linked to political conditions—above all a continued transition towards genuine democracy, the respect of human rights, and the establishment of a market economy. Such conditions reflect the aspirations of the population itself. They are, moreover, the only recipe to solve eventually the problems bedeviling the former republics.

It has been pointed out earlier that progress towards those objectives is likely to be uneven among the former republics. Some of them show no inclination whatsoever to move in that direction. Others are tempted by autocratic leadership styles, at least for a transitory period. If one form of totalitarianism should not simply be replaced in this vast country by another, any Western long-term assistance should take into account these factors and be selective. It would be wise to create an unambiguous set of incentives and disincentives by the West encouraging positive developments. This is particularly true because only democracy, the respect of human rights, and the transition towards a market economy can gradually create the necessary preconditions for the former USSR to solve its vast problems itself. Even the largest Western aid packages would, in the end, only be a drop of water on a hot stone. The West cannot solve the country's problems;

however, it can actively encourage the solution to these problems by the former Soviet Union and its constituent republics themselves.

- The CSCE process has to be further strengthened and transformed into a mechanism that can work not only in fair weather, but also in situations of crises.
- Arms-control agreements that have been signed—specifically the CFE and START agreements—should be ratified as soon as possible. Loopholes in the existing arms-control regime (specifically in the area of a chemical weapons convention, ballistic missiles, and Open Skies) should be closed. The NPT needs strengthening. Beyond these immediate measures new constructive thinking in the direction of a continuous security policy dialogue and qualitatively new security and confidence-building measures are needed.
- The CSCE Paris Charter, which goes in many respects beyond Article 2 of the UN Charter, has to be gradually transformed into, or supplemented by, a code of conduct.
- With respect to the manifold new dimensions of international security policy, Europe cannot be turned into a laggard. Rather, the chance to develop a new world order should be seized, after the end of the Cold War and the essentially bipolar nature of the international system. This will include not only the active encouragement of democracy and the respect of human rights, but also a serious and sustained effort to address the conflicts ravaging the third world, in general,

and the Middle East, in particular. There cannot be a new world order only for the Northern Hemisphere; the problems of the Southern Hemisphere must also be taken seriously. This will include the determination to address the proliferation problem in its nuclear, chemical, biological, ballistic missile, and conventional dimensions. Stringent non-proliferation measures on an internationally coordinated level seem in this respect as necessary as voluntary restraint by the major supplier countries.

- The role of peace-keeping is likely to grow, both inside and outside Europe. The necessary instruments to react flexibly and efficiently to this challenge should be strengthened.

To create a new European security order responding to the urgent needs of the European people and to lay, beyond Europe, the foundation for a new world order will not be an easy undertaking, even under the best of circumstances. Yet, it is the challenge with which we are confronted and which must be addressed. Mikhail Gorbachev, when confronted with the bewilderingly complex problems of the USSR, once exclaimed in order to highlight the need for action: "If not us, who? If not now, when?" It is an attitude that applies also to the approach needed in order to overcome the equally complex sets of problems confronting post-Cold War Europe.