

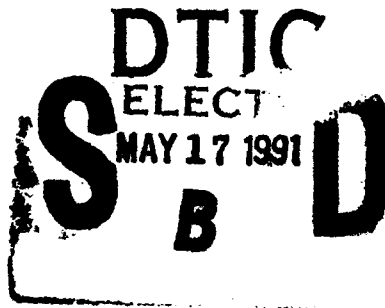
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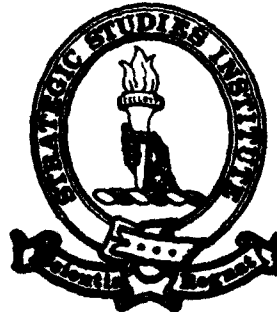
**NATO Strategy  
in a New World Order**



**Gary L. Guertner**

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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED			1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS			
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY			3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.			
2b. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE						
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) ACN 91014			5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)			
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION Strategic Studies Institute		6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable) AWCI	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION			
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) U.S. Army War College Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050			7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)			
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION		8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (if applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER			
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)			10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS			
			PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.	TASK NO.	WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.
11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) NATO Strategy in a New World Order						
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) Guertner, Gary L.						
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Final		13b. TIME COVERED FROM _____ TO _____		14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 91/4/10	15. PAGE COUNT 30	
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION						
17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) NATO; Wurope; security regime; European security			
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP				
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number) This study examines the new strategy that is slowly taking shape within the alliance, and the role that NATO is most likely to play within a larger European security regime where responsibilities may be shared with other European multination organizations--the European Community (EC), the Western European Union (WEU), and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), for example.  These and other organizations, the author contends, may compete, evolve, engage in cooperative ventures, even merge. Their collective challenge is to accommodate Europe's emergence from a U.S.-dominated security umbrella (NATO) while maintaining an American presence in a new political-economic-security order. The outcome will be determined through a slow, iterative process driven by either declining or resurgent threats, and compromises among states over divergent domestic agendas, limited willingness to relinquish national (over)						
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS			21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED			
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL Marianne Cowling			22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (717) 245-3001	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL AWCI		

DD Form 1473, JUN 86

Previous editions are obsolete.

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE

UNCLASSIFIED

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# **NATO STRATEGY IN A NEW WORLD ORDER**

**Gary L. Guertner**

**April 10, 1991**

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## FOREWORD

American military forces contributed to the victories in two European wars and in a protracted cold war. Victory, however, has not ended the U.S. commitment to NATO or to European security. On the contrary, the post-cold war world confronts the alliance with an even broader range of security issues. This study examines the new strategy that is slowly taking shape within the alliance, and the role that NATO is most likely to play within a larger European security regime where responsibilities may be shared with other European multinational organizations—the European Community (EC), the Western European Union (WEU), and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), for example.

These and other organizations, the author argues, may compete, evolve, engage in cooperative ventures, even merge. Their collective challenge is to accommodate Europe's emergence from a U.S.-dominated security umbrella (NATO) while maintaining an American presence in a new political-economic-security order. The outcome will be determined through a slow, iterative process driven by either declining or resurgent threats, and compromises among states over divergent domestic agendas, limited willingness to relinquish national sovereignty, suspicions between large and small states, and varying commitments to the American trans-Atlantic relationship.

The author would like to thank Mrs. Marianne Cowling and Colonels David Jablonsky, John J. Hickey, Jr., Robert R. Ulin, Phillip W. Mock, and Donald E. Lunday for their helpful comments and suggestions.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to present this study as part of the continuing debate over NATO strategy and the U.S. commitment to European security.



KARL W. ROBINSON  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Director, Strategic Studies Institute

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR**

GARY L. GUERTNER is the Director of Research at the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College. He holds B.A. and M.A. degrees in Political Science from the University of Arizona and a Ph.D. in International Relations from the Claremont Graduate School. A former Marine Corps officer and veteran of Vietnam, Dr. Guertner has also served on the staff of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and as a Professor of Political Science at the University of California, Fullerton. His latest book is *Deterrence and Defense in a Post-Nuclear World* (St. Martin's, 1990).

# **NATO STRATEGY IN A NEW WORLD ORDER**

The most immediate threat to Western Europe during the cold war was the shadow of Soviet military superiority looming from the East, proscribing Western political and economic freedom. NATO and its link to U.S. military power deterred political intimidation as well as a less probable military thrust into Western Europe. But these threats have faded under Mikhail Gorbachev, replaced by revolutions in Eastern Europe, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, receding Soviet military power, German unification, and the stirring of political and economic freedom nurtured by the West.

These events are linked directly to the Gorbachev domestic revolution, a revolution that depends not only on domestic change, but equally on political-economic integration with the West and dramatic shifts from defense to domestic investment. New Soviet military thinking, arms control, and unilateral cuts in Soviet conventional force structure are dramatic in themselves. But when projected on a new map of Europe, these events call for a major reexamination of NATO military strategy and the future role of the U.S. military in a revised NATO.

A new strategy for NATO has been quietly taking shape since 1989, the debate often muffled by more dramatic events in the Soviet Union and more recently by war in the Persian Gulf. By the spring of 1991 the broad outlines of a new NATO within a radically new European security regime began to emerge.<sup>1</sup> This study assesses both the emerging new strategy and the larger European security environment in which it will evolve.

## **THE CHANGING THREAT**

American military forces have contributed to the victories in two wars and in a protracted cold war. Victory, however, does not end a commitment. On the contrary, victory in the cold war



has left the United States with new as well as old interests and objectives in Europe. These include:

- Political stability
- Deterrence of residual Soviet threats
- Deterrence of intra-regional conflict in Eastern Europe
- Economic participation in European markets
- Preservation of newly emerging democratic governments

The continuity of U.S.-European relations will lie in Washington's ability to formulate a new strategy for the continued linkage of American and European security. The framework of that strategy must include clearly articulated objectives and strategic concepts for achieving those objectives when they are confronted with a range of evolving threats.

The immediate and urgent Soviet problem is economic recovery. Soviet military forces had to be reduced to finance economic reform. We should not, however, underestimate the risks that unilateral withdrawals of military forces from Eastern Europe, the CFE, and the START treaties entailed for Gorbachev. Historically, the Soviet Union depended disproportionately on its military might for superpower status. Previous Soviet leaders assumed the convertibility of military power to diplomatic, economic, and psychological gains consistent with Soviet desires to extend their influence. The size and sophistication of Soviet forces historically have been the most visible product of industrial modernization, and they have conveyed the trappings of success. In Soviet eyes, respect and authority must certainly spill over to their political and ideological claims.

Gorbachev openly challenged these sacred assumptions. Security, he has argued, and by inference superpower status, cannot rest on military power alone. Political and economic cooperation with the West is an essential part of state security

in the nuclear age. The Gorbachev domestic agenda signaled a new, more cooperative phase in Soviet-American relations and ultimately a stronger, more competitive Soviet industrial base. No one can say, however, whether a rehabilitated Soviet socioeconomic system will spawn a more assertive foreign policy or a status quo mentality anxious to preserve the benefits of reduced tensions abroad and higher living standards at home.

The logic of Gorbachev's reform strategy suggests that Soviet national interests would be served in the preservation of a cooperative, economically integrated international order that aids and abets economic perestroika. But two undesirable outcomes are also possible—a reconstituted technological base and assertive military or, at the other extreme, total failure and systemic collapse accompanied by accelerating violence and separatist tendencies within the USSR. Either could confront NATO with novel and unforeseen challenges. Neither is compatible with U.S. or European interests. Responding to a technologically revived Soviet military requires significantly different measures than those needed to confront the pressures resulting from a breakdown of authority and potential civil war or revolution. The Soviet political system is in the early phases of a profound revolution, the final phase of which cannot be predicted. Systemic collapse, a conservative restoration of power, or political instability throughout the Soviet Union seem more likely than successful perestroika in the next 10-15 years.

A worst-case scenario posited by Soviet reformers is a Soviet Union that is trapped in the same political-economic trends as Germany in the 1920s. In Weimar Germany, fragile democratic institutions failed to reverse the hopeless economic conditions from which radical nationalist movements grew and seized power. A Soviet version would be a "nightmare for the Soviet Union and Europe."<sup>2</sup>

NATO should, therefore, aim for capabilities that afford maximum flexibility to meet residual Soviet military threats as well as new threats to the political stability of Europe. It would be shortsighted and dangerous to truncate NATO's military capabilities irreversibly at the precise moment that traditional

nationalisms are reappearing in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is balancing between chaos and repression. Throughout the former "Eastern bloc" and in a united Germany, there remain the problems of reconciling geography, historic territorial claims and fears of hegemony, with the political requirements for European stability. NATO's contribution in some form to that stability remains indispensable, because even after CFE and follow-on arms control treaties are implemented. Europe will remain the most heavily armed continent on earth, with millions of troops and tens of thousands of tanks deployed there. The 20,000 tanks CFE permits each group of countries (NATO and the former members of the Warsaw Pact) to retain is nearly five times the number Nazi Germany had when World War II began.<sup>3</sup>

Europeans themselves have acknowledged potential long-term, non-Soviet threats in several little noticed provisions of the CFE Treaty signed at the Paris Summit of the 34-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) on November 19, 1990. For example, the British and French insisted on the Article VII provision that imposes national as well as alliance limitations. These provisions recognize that existing alliances will not last in their current form forever. Moreover, the limitations on individual countries within NATO as well as on former members of the Warsaw Pact were matched by provisions for a comprehensive verification regime. The treaty permits not only alliance to alliance (formally called "groups of countries" in the treaty) inspection, but also allows each country to inspect *any* other member of its own "group."<sup>4</sup> The British, for example, may inspect German installations, Germans may inspect the French, Hungarians may inspect Poland. No signatory may deny on-site inspections to any other signator.

These examples reflect a sober long-term perspective by individual signatories. The precise means for maintaining stability in Europe, however, will depend on the structure of and relationships between emerging organizations that will compete for roles in a future European security regime.

## **NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPTS AND STRUCTURES**

Changes in NATO strategy have always come gradually, patiently shaped by balancing change with the consensus building that is always vital to political cohesion and credible coalition deterrence. NATO today is experiencing unprecedented change in its grand strategy as well as in alliance military strategy. Grand strategy encompasses all aspects of NATO strategy—political, economic and military.

New architecture and military strategy will emerge in an environment that must continue to satisfy simultaneously the strategic objectives, individual political agendas, and domestic constraints of member nations. The European Big Four (Britain, France, Germany, and Italy) for example, simultaneously want a strong European pillar, reduced American influence, and long-term guarantees against the hegemony of a single state or coalition. Small states want a U.S. presence that balances the European Big Four. Flank states (Norway and Turkey, for example) want no transfer of power or responsibilities to other European institutions such as the European Community (EC), Western European Union (WEU), or the CSCE.

New and old European institutions are competing for prominent positions in a new European security regime. NATO, however, remains the dominant and most bureaucratically powerful institution as well as the principal institution that legitimizes the essential North American, trans-Atlantic military link to European security. NATO is also the only institution that is formulating a broad new grand strategy.

The first significant steps were incorporated in the July 1990 London Declaration, which affirmed new elements of a strategy that included smaller forces, lowered readiness, multinationality, less reliance on nuclear forces, an arms control regime, and mutual security. The London Declaration literally kicked off "brainstorming" sessions within Alliance Councils which, in turn, fed a major strategy review.<sup>5</sup> This review produced a political-military strategy which, in turn, provides guidance to the NATO Military Committee (MC) from which specific operational concepts are derived. At this writing,

a broad political strategy has emerged from which tentative conclusions may be drawn about the military strategies that are most likely to be developed in support of it.

The old strategy that placed emphasis on the deterrence of war and defense of territory is being redirected to a strategy that deals with a broader operational continuum from peacetime operations to crisis management to war. The new strategy assumes an arms control regime composed of a matrix of treaties and confidence building measures, and the reduced forward presence of military forces. It also assumes that NATO must develop new relationships with other European multinational institutions that may acquire security and defense roles, especially for non-NATO states in a more fully integrated European community. Figure 1 illustrates which of these institutions is most likely to play a significant role, with NATO, across the continuum from peace to war. Whatever may happen, however, it seems almost certain that as issues cross the continuum from peace through crisis to war, institutional responsibility will narrow and NATO will remain the dominant organizational instrument on which European security will ultimately depend.

### EVOLVING STRATEGY AND STRUCTURES

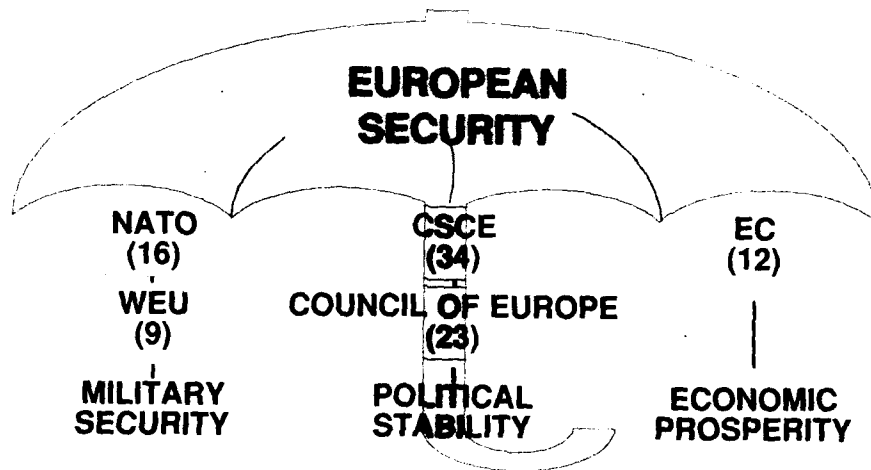
PEACE	-----> CRISIS	-----> WAR
CSCE	CSCE	NATO
COUNCIL OF EUROPE	WEU	WEU*
EC	NATO	
WEU		
NATO		

\* WEU FOR OUT-Of-THEATER OPERATIONS ONLY

Figure 1

There is no question that in a post-cold war Europe, NATO will share responsibilities with other multinational institutions. CSCE, for example, may evolve into the major peacetime Pan-European political forum. The EC may expand its Western European Base, acquiring new interests in security issues as it grows. The emerging EC preference, particularly in Bonn and Paris, is to broaden the organization's mandate to include a common European defense policy. The WEU may evolve as the principal European security pillar, bridging NATO and the EC. Both Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterand have endorsed the organic relationship between the EC and WEU, and a strong European pillar under which more active French military participation in European defense would be acceptable to Paris.

The WEU may also play a key role in future out-of-area contingencies and operations discussed below. All of the major bodies illustrated in Figure 2 function to promote and reinforce European integration. They are analogous to retail outlets in



## EVOLVING EUROPEAN SECURITY REGIME

Figure 2

an open security market. As such, they may compete, evolve, engage in cooperative ventures, even merge. Their collective challenge is to accommodate Europe's emergence from a U.S.-dominated security umbrella while maintaining an American presence in a new political-economic-security order. The outcome will be determined through a slow, iterative process driven by either declining or resurgent threats, and compromises among states over divergent internal agendas, limited willingness to relinquish national sovereignty, suspicions between large and small states, varying commitments to the trans-Atlantic relationship, and perhaps even the difficulty of integrating "neutral" states in a new European security regime.

### **PEACETIME MISSIONS FOR NATO**

NATO peacetime functions inevitably will be subordinated to other European institutions that will lead political and economic changes. NATO's organizational structure, bureaucratic skills, and credibility born of four decades of experience can, however, give the alliance a major role as the guardian of a growing arms control/confidence building regime and multilateral deterrent that will remain vital to the long-term stability of Europe.

Paradoxically, a liberal-conservative anti-NATO coalition has emerged in the American Congress. Conservatives see U.S. troop withdrawal as a logical consequence of the reduced Soviet military threat. Liberals maintain that Europeans are financially capable of providing for their own defense.<sup>6</sup> While the major thrust of their arguments is true, it is equally true that the U.S. presence in NATO has always had political as well as military objectives. The size and scope of U.S. military presence will continue to diminish, but the political, as well as security benefits of NATO will continue to justify a significant U.S. role.

Military presence will link the United States to European stability, deter both intra-regional conflicts and residual Soviet conventional threats, ease fears of a hegemonic Germany, and provide the United States with leverage for its economic interests—interests that are potential sources of acrimony

between the two continents. Getting a foot in the economic door is considerably easier when you remain firmly committed to an evolving European security regime.

More directly, NATO will have a major peacetime mission in cooperative ventures with CSCE in monitoring the current arms control regime (INF and CFE Treaties) and negotiating additional treaties. NATO is also organized to support a wide range of confidence-building measures and military-to-military contacts including:

- Military exchanges and seminars
- Joint officer education
- Cooperative exercises
- Joint plans for disaster relief and environmental clean-up
- Contingency planning against international terrorism
- Intelligence sharing for counternarcotics operations

These missions alone do not justify maintaining an elaborate collective defense under NATO. Peacetime operations serve only as a reminder that NATO's primary mission is deterrence during an evolutionary process. Its objective continues to be collective defense in the cost-effective, burden-sharing sense of the term as well as resisting trends toward the nationalizing of defense policies, trends from which rogue states historically have emerged to threaten European security.

From the Soviet perspective, peacetime missions for NATO that emphasize cooperation with the East and the reduction of all NATO forces in the Central Region through the CFE process help Soviet reformers play to conservative constituents. This includes the military, already unhappy and fighting rear guard actions against the prospect of reductions in the Soviet strategic arsenal, the evacuation of Soviet forces from East Europe, and a reunified Germany in NATO.



## CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND WAR

Crisis management and war are the mid- and extreme points on NATO's emerging operational continuum. Crisis resolution, the successful outcome of crisis management, requires not only skillful diplomacy, but also a security architecture backed by credible military capabilities. Deterrence of conflict and intimidation remains the central objective in at least four exclusive NATO functions:

- Deter and defend against residual threats from the Soviet Union.
- Deter and defend against threats from countries other than the Soviet Union (both in the European theater and out-of-area operations).
- Preserve the strategic balance within Europe, especially against the Soviets.
- Serve as a trans-Atlantic forum for consultation on security issues.

Although most of these objectives are familiar, their success in a new Europe required shedding many "sacred cows" embodied in old NATO planning documents such as Military Committee Document 14/3 (flexible response) and related perennial debates over nuclear modernization. Figure 3 contrasts NATO's old strategic concepts and environment with the "new thinking." The analysis that follows expands on these new elements of strategy.

**General Defense.** As European security becomes more fully integrated, new operational concepts will have to address a broader spectrum of contingencies and more specialized forces to meet threats from residual Soviet military power to intra-European conflict, terrorism, and low- to mid-intensity operations outside the region that may have a major impact on European and U.S. interests.

Short-term changes in NATO strategy should avoid steps which in fact or perception isolate the Soviet Union at a time of domestic turmoil and political factionalism. Isolation is likely to

## NATO STRATEGY — WHAT HAS CHANGED

OLD	NEW
● SPECIFIC THREAT	● GENERAL DEFENSE
● FORWARD DEFENSE	● REDUCED FORWARD PRESENCE
● FIXED DEFENSIVE POSITIONS	● MOBILITY AND FLEXIBILITY
● FLEXIBLE RESPONSE/EARLY USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS	● LAST RESORT
● NATIONAL FORMATIONS	● MULTINATIONAL FORMATIONS
● SMALLER RESERVES/RAPID MOBILIZATION	● GREATER RELIANCE ON RESERVES
● SHORT WARNING	● LONGER WARNING TIME

Figure 3

strengthen repressive forces, reinforcing their traditional siege mentality at the expense of reformers who favor greater Soviet political and economic integration with the West. This requires both the peacetime, cooperative mission described above and a pragmatic posture towards Moscow that supports evolutionary change in the Soviet internal empire without strident calls for the dissolution of the USSR. Threats arising from Soviet domestic volatility or Soviet counterparts in Eastern Europe (Yugoslavia and Romania, most notably) can be contained or even deterred through active NATO collaboration with other organizations that emerge in the new European security regime, and with a continued U.S. presence that provides both symbol and substance for an American guarantee to the security of its European allies — old and new.

Perhaps the most immediate concern associated with NATO's shift to a more general, post-cold war defense posture is the issue of out-of-area operations. This recurring and divisive issue resurfaced early in the Gulf crisis when the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General John R. Galvin, argued that NATO should adopt a new "fire brigade" strategy

designed to facilitate rapid deployment beyond the existing NATO Treaty area.<sup>7</sup> "Fire brigades" represent a significant evolution in Washington's original preference for a geographically delimited alliance so that it could pursue its cold war interests without the interference of junior allies, and, at the same time, not be drawn into their overseas adventures. By contrast, the "New World Order" of the 1990s requires burden sharing not only in its economic sense, but also because broad, collective action is required to legitimize the use of force. As the Gulf War demonstrated, even the collective action of NATO members was possible only because it took place in support of United Nations resolutions and under WEU coordination. Even this did not satisfy Soviet conservative commentators who fear that the allied victory means NATO will see itself as the world's policeman and will present a greater danger than ever to the Soviet Union.<sup>8</sup>

Old guard Soviet fears may be justified in terms of NATO capabilities. General Galvin's concept for out-of-area operations has, in fact, been dramatically put to the test. Two of the ten American divisions (Seventh Corps representing 50 percent of the American forces stationed in Western Europe) that fought in the Gulf were deployed from Europe, along with one French division and also a British division with Royal Air Force units deployed directly from Germany.

It is misleading, however, to suggest that the deployment of NATO forces to the Gulf War represented a common view within the alliance. In fact, a divisive debate ensued throughout the crisis, and strains on the alliance were avoided, as they have been in the past, by *ad hoc* arrangements among consenting members and the appearance of passive solidarity by nonparticipants.

NATO members were united in support of economic sanctions against Iraq, but quickly split between the U.S.-UK bloc which was preparing for war and a European-Canadian bloc which favored a diplomatic solution. These factions nonetheless demonstrated caution and moderation in their handling of these policy differences, due to a common concern that the alliance might not survive a recriminatory public

dispute over the Kuwait issue in an era of declining Soviet threat.<sup>9</sup>

A lesson of the Gulf War was that European governments which chose to support military operations coordinated their policies under the auspices of the WEU rather than NATO. They recognized the value of bolstering the "European Pillar" of the NATO Alliance both to accommodate the American pressure for burden sharing and as an expression of individual regional security consciousness. Because military cooperation was easier to achieve within the WEU, it is likely to gain support as the bridge (or safety valve) between NATO and individual members who desire to move European security policies beyond the narrowly defined cold war boundaries of NATO collective defense.

**Forward Presence, Mobility and Flexibility.** Forward defense, the NATO concept of defending at the inter-German border without trading space for time, seems conceptually archaic today. Like busts of Lenin in Warsaw, old strategic concepts are being replaced by the symbols of a new Europe. The precise shape, size, or disposition of post-cold war NATO forces in Europe is not clearly visible, but there is no doubt that their numbers will be radically reduced and they will be deployed over a wider area, obscuring familiar landmarks such as NATO's "Center" and "Flanks."

Reduced forces, including an American presence that may fall from an estimated 300,000 troops assigned to Europe to below 100,000 deployed in a corps (two divisions) and several Air Force wings, will require new doctrine and operational concepts built around mobility. In war, they will require the capacity to bring both air and ground forces swiftly to bear against concentrations of hostile forces on a nonlinear battlefield.

Mobility is vital at both the strategic and operational levels. Strategic mobility is the air- and sea-lift capability to move forces from the United States to Europe, or, as in the Gulf War, from the United States and Europe to another theater. Operational mobility was dramatically demonstrated by coalition forces that outflanked the Iraqi army in two days with

nearly 200,000 troops in two heavy corps. But operational mobility is more than wheels on combat forces. It includes every functional asset required to sustain combat operations—logistics, combat service support, air defense, counter air, and the ability to suppress the mobility of the other side.

The minimum operational force capable of executing these missions is, according to General Galvin, a U.S. Corps. Anything less denies the United States operational flexibility and strategic planning in war. "That," in the worst sense of the term, would constitute "an entangling alliance."<sup>10</sup>

In peace, U.S. forces must be deployed in a fashion consistent with German sovereignty and German sensitivities to "singularization" in the sense that Germany not remain the host for the bulk of allied forces. Harmonizing national force structures with an alliance that assumes new peacetime missions and at the same time must provide credible deterrence in and out of the European theater will be successfully accomplished only if the alliance can agree on other mutually supporting strategic concepts that are changing as dramatically as forward defense.

**"Last Resort": The New Flexible Response.** Declaratory changes in flexible response announced at the London meeting of the North Atlantic council mark the transition from a nuclear-dominant American NATO pillar to a nonnuclear-dominant European pillar. "There will be," according to the London Declaration, "a significantly reduced role for sub-strategic nuclear systems of the shortest range...in the transformed Europe, they [the allies] will be able to adopt a new NATO strategy making nuclear forces truly weapons of last resort."<sup>11</sup>

"Sub-strategic nuclear systems" or short-range nuclear forces (SNF) represent the critical link between conventional defense in Europe and escalation to strategic nuclear exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union. The American nuclear umbrella has not necessarily been removed, but it has become less relevant because of the reduced risk of attack by massive Soviet ground forces that

would have triggered the chain of escalation embodied in the old NATO strategy.

Old flexible response, in theory, was an initial defense of Europe with conventional forces. In practice, political requirements within the alliance resulted in a more ambiguous strategy. Flexible response did not threaten precise timetables for escalation from conventional to nuclear war. NATO's exact response to aggression confronted Soviet planners with three possible responses if deterrence failed: (1) "Effective defense" by conventional forces; (2) the threat of early escalation to nuclear weapons; and (3) the threat of nuclear retaliation against Soviet territory. Confronted with a credible NATO force structure, Soviet leaders could not be certain which level of response their actions, even if limited to conventional forces, might trigger.

Deterrence of nuclear war between the United States and the USSR was directly linked to NATO strategy for deterring war in Europe. Europe was the crucible from which nuclear escalation would be triggered. Strategic coupling of U.S. nuclear weapons with European security has been the dominant factor in NATO strategy for 40 years. Strategy evolved, but its evolution always centered on how best to structure credible extended deterrence by linking the American infantryman in Europe to U.S. strategic nuclear weapons.

Ambiguity in the form of prewar threats to escalate conflict to nuclear strikes on Soviet territory strengthened deterrence. For Americans, however, strategic coupling, forward defense, and reliance on the early use of nuclear weapons were among the least obstructed paths to intercontinental nuclear war if deterrence failed. Together they became an escalation trap that stripped away all pretense of crisis management. A strategy that depended on rapid escalation to intercontinental nuclear exchanges was credible only for extreme contingencies such as massive Soviet conventional and nuclear attacks across a broad front in Europe and/or against the United States.<sup>12</sup>

The collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the signing of the CFE Treaty undercut these long-standing Western

requirements for early nuclear escalation. There is no longer any overwhelming Soviet conventional superiority to be offset by nuclear weapons. Moreover, many, if not all, Soviet SNF have been reportedly redeployed to the Russian republic; no former ally in the Warsaw Pact is a willing host, and the non-Russian republics pose growing security risks.<sup>13</sup>

Soviet withdrawals mean the elimination of a large portion of the fixed targets that drove the size of NATO nuclear deployments. In the unlikely event of a Soviet attack in the near future, NATO's principal targets would be Soviet forces crossing back into Eastern Europe and their supporting bases. Such targets would be more suitable for conventional weapons that are politically acceptable in peacetime, immediately responsive in a conflict, and more discriminant and effective if available in sufficient numbers.

Extended deterrence in the form of military presence requires credible U.S. efforts to assist NATO allies in their own defense, in Europe. Under current political conditions, strategic coupling of that defense to U.S. strategic nuclear weapons is neither a prudent strategy for Americans nor a reasonable expectation for Europeans. The nuclear umbrella is a symbol of the cold war. Attempts to hold it over a revolutionary new Europe will only succeed in strengthening those factions on both sides of the Atlantic who will use it as an excuse for not supporting conventional deterrence in Europe. The result could produce self-deterrence and political impotence.

A continuing American presence and conventional weapons modernization under CFE limitations that provide a range of options from mid-intensity conflict (in or out of the European theater) to the massive firepower required to deter residual Soviet capabilities will provide the most credible deterrent to Europe's most likely conflicts in the first decades of the 21st century.

The most important objective for NATO in an expanding European security regime is to achieve stable deterrence by denying Soviet (or others in the future) capabilities for short-warning attack, and the embodiment of that threat in large numbers of armored divisions and artillery. These have traditionally been "the root of military instability in Europe."<sup>14</sup>

These broad objectives have and should continue to be pursued through a three-pronged strategy that reduces the requirements for nuclear weapons. The first is arms control (CFE, INF and perhaps SNF) to reduce offensive structure; the second is the confidence building and arms control verification regimes that, together with the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and withdrawal of Soviet forces behind their own borders, restrict operational capabilities; and the third is conventional arms modernization of residual NATO forces.

Conventional arms modernization and new military doctrine are inextricably linked in U.S. Airland Battle concepts. Airland Battle integrates modern high-tech weapons and operational mobility to strike anywhere on the battlefield. It is defined by smart bombs, stealth fighters, short-range tactical missile systems (ATACMS) and the Multiple Launched Rocket System (MLRS) both with "smart" submunitions, helicopters, air assault forces, modern tanks and infantry fighting vehicles; all linked and directed by space and airborne warning and target acquisition systems. These are the weapons, the doctrine, and the technologies that former Soviet Army Chief of Staff, Marshall N.V. Ogarkov predicted during their early testing phases would give "conventional forces on the defensive the same degree of lethality as battlefield nuclear weapons."<sup>15</sup>

To a degree, the worst fears of Marshall Ogarkov and his successors were realized in the deserts of Iraq and Kuwait when U.S.-led coalition forces devastated a former Soviet ally along with thousands of Soviet tanks, artillery units, air defense systems, and other equipment. The Iraqi test-bed for U.S. high-tech conventional forces and the doctrinal capabilities of Airland Battle against a numerically superior force strengthens the position of those who argue that NATO's new military strategy should adopt similar operational concepts for the defense of Europe.<sup>16</sup>

The imperatives for conventional deterrence are further underscored by U.S. and NATO decisions to forgo modernization of the Lance surface-to-surface nuclear missile (FOTL) and nuclear artillery shells. Moreover, no NATO capital appears willing to host any new nuclear system, including the



problem-plagued tactical air-to-surface missile (TASM) that was to have been deployed on U.S. aircraft in Germany and the United Kingdom.<sup>17</sup>

SNF negotiations are compelling to NATO allies who want a process that formally binds all parties, and provides a defense against political reversals. The prospects for an SNF agreement, however, were much better before the Gorbachev peace offensive was derailed by internal problems. The conservative party-military backsliding in other arms control fora (CFE and START) suggests that SNF negotiations may become a solution in search of a problem. Tacit bargaining and informal agreements may be more expedient. At worst, the level of political uncertainty in the Soviet Union means the uncontroversial retention of current NATO air-delivered nuclear weapons. The withdrawal of Soviet SNF and air defenses from Eastern Europe means that a small, air-deliverable theater nuclear arsenal and conventional missiles and smart weapons can credibly hold Soviet targets at risk. NATO's greatest obstacle may be more political than military—namely, its nuclear addiction as a substitute for conventional deterrence.

**Multinational Formations.** The massive changes in NATO's political-military strategy require a new stationing regime that reflects both the reductions in forward deployed forces and sensitivity to German sovereignty. The traditional high concentration and visibility of American and allied forces in Germany with all of their associated, obtrusive training and overflight activities must change if a domestic political backlash is to be avoided. The most probable solution to these and related problems is the creation of multinational formations that are more widely dispersed within the NATO theater.

The concept of multinational forces in NATO has always been present in the sense that national forces were designated to fight under a common command at predesignated sectors of the old inter-German border. There has also been functional or specialized multinationality such as the crews aboard AWACS and the Allied Command Europe (ACE) Mobile Force which has the mission to move light forces rapidly in a crisis.

General Galvin favors the corps as the basic U.S. combat effective, operational force.<sup>18</sup> Corps have infinite flexibility for the creation of multinational units in that they may be built from divisions, brigades, or combinations of the two. Multinational corps in NATO would reduce the costs of U.S. presence by streamlining command structures and spreading support requirements among allies. Washington, however, may insist that its post-CFE forces remain in a single corps, reinforced by units of other allies. Dispersing limited U.S. resources would make strategic planning and out-of-theater operations more difficult.

A multinational corps structure for NATO need not be controversial or rigid. Its design should accommodate the mobilization and reinforcement capabilities of individual allies. During the transition from crisis to war, NATO could, for example, be reinforced by a quick reaction U.S. Corps, or preplanned brigade packages from several allies could merge in predesignated European assembly areas. In war, a detailed mix of national, binational, and multinational corps could quickly be brought to bear against any conceivable force.

The Gulf crisis demonstrated the potency of the multinational corps concept when, with little prior planning, the British First Armored Division fought under the command of the U.S. Seventh Corps, and, astonishingly to many, the French Sixth Light Armored Division fought under the U.S. Eighteenth Airborne Corps. The Gulf experience and its decisive allied military victory will be studied carefully, and may serve as a model for building future NATO multinational command and corps structures.

**The Strategic Significance of Longer Warning Time.** The old NATO strategy that called for reinforcing the European theater with ten U.S. divisions in 10 days is giving way to a more traditional, but slower mobilization—power projection and reinforcement strategy. Greater reliance on the mobilization of reserves both in the United States and Europe to reinforce smaller standing armies is directly related to probable warning and response times in cases of future aggression.

It is unlikely under present conditions that the Soviet leadership would contemplate a deliberate attack on NATO. It is equally improbable that they could achieve either strategic or tactical surprise.<sup>19</sup> Launching a surprise offensive would require extensive military preparations and large-scale movements of forces within CFE regulated military zones and from east of the Ural Mountains. These activities would provide unambiguous warning and allow for both crisis management activities and military preparations. Neither a bolt from the blue nor a bolt from the grey is likely in the future.

The precise amount of additional warning time is scenario dependent. Nevertheless, a reasonable planning assumption against a Soviet theater strategic offensive can now be measured at the very least in terms of several months.<sup>20</sup> Longer warning scenarios will be possible after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the retreat of the Soviet forward echelons along with their entire command, control, and logistical infrastructure from Eastern Europe. The Soviet General Staff must now consider how and where to erect a new first echelon. Their task is further complicated by the terms of a restrictive CFE Treaty, open rebellion in union republics that want greater autonomy, and a protracted debate in Moscow over the correct balance between defensive and offensive military doctrine.<sup>21</sup>

Any attempt to bypass restrictions by covertly altering the balance of conventional forces established under the terms of the CFE Treaty is virtually impossible thanks to the web of overlapping methods of verification, confidence-building measures, and national technical means to monitor Soviet military activities. At no time in history has any nation's military infrastructure become so transparent to those whose security it might put at risk.

The CFE Treaty also provides both legitimacy and incentives for NATO crisis management activities when confronted with Soviet violations, especially those that came during East-West crises and signal strategic warning of possible aggressive intent. The structural key to NATO crisis management lies in maintaining specific and adequate forces designed for: (1) immediate contingencies; (2) early reinforcement; (3) follow-on reinforcement; and (4) total

mobilization. These allied force generation capabilities are essential for prompt decisionmaking, deterrence, and defeat of a determined adversary. They were dramatically demonstrated during the Gulf crisis when nearly 600,000 troops, airmen, and sailors from NATO countries were moved into the theater of operations.

Parallels between the successful Gulf War and the NATO theater should not be overdrawn. Nevertheless, for planning purposes it is instructive to compare the phases of the coalition buildup, prior to the initiation of the 100-hour land campaign on February 24. *Immediate contingency forces* (land, sea, and air) were dispatched to establish a deterrent force in defense of Saudi Arabia. The first contingent of U.S. ground forces from the 82d Airborne Division landed within 30 hours of their alert on August 8. Within 3 weeks the first armored units arrived as part of the *early reinforcement* stage that included all services to consolidate the defensive phase of the war. Offensive air operations began on January 17, but *follow-on reinforcements* (U.S. Seventh Corps from Germany) continued to flow into the theater. By February 24, when the land campaign began, the transition to the offensive was complete—a transition that included several massive intratheater deployments which, combined with large-scale amphibious deception operations, deprived the Iraqis of tactical warning.

The massive deployment of forces and overpowering display of firepower and maneuver by all services between early August and February parallel the escalatory phases and force structures that would provide NATO with credible deterrence. There is, however, no consensus in NATO councils on what force structure may be ideal or affordable.<sup>22</sup>

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The transition from a cold war strategy to a new strategy more appropriate for a diminished Soviet threat against a larger European Community will be slow and potentially divisive. As American and European planners undertake the specifics of military planning they should reflect on NATO's historic center of gravity—its political cohesion. Unity and consensus building have provided both the military and political foundations for

credible deterrence in Europe. Preserving that unity is more important than the final outcome of any single element of the new strategy described above.

The most difficult challenge to NATO unity may be matching a specific force structure to new strategic concepts. Force structure remains the life's blood of the alliance. Shaping it in a manner that preserves consensus, yet leaves a capability for achieving strategic objectives across the NATO operational continuum (See Figure 1) requires general measures of effectiveness against which NATO decisions can be evaluated. Measures of effectiveness include:

- Demonstrability (forward presence, exercises, deployment in a crisis)
- Flexibility (force structure that has light to heavy combat power tailored to the level of threat)
- Mobility (strategic lift to, within, and out of the European Theater)
- Lethality (lethal munitions, deep strike, high accuracy, smaller force structure required)
- Command and Control (consolidated command structures; air/space assets as force multipliers)
- Sustainability (lift, logistics, burden sharing, prepositioning)
- Affordability (cost-effective combat capabilities based on optimal mix of high- to mid-level technology in weapons platforms and munitions)

These generic measures of effectiveness are insufficient for detailed operational planning, but they are useful tools for building a general level of consensus within the alliance.

For the United States, the most significant changes are the reductions in forward deployed forces, greater requirements for strategic mobility and a greater dependence on allies—both

formal and *ad hoc*—to share not only the military burden, but also the increasingly salient political and fiscal responsibilities as well. The United States is unique in the degree to which the burden-sharing elements of strategy are vital to its future role in NATO, particularly now that it confronts the post-cold war world with domestic problems that will, in spite of the dramatic victory in the Persian Gulf, reduce the resources available for defense.

If it is true in this regard, that scarcity is the midwife of good strategy, Washington is entering a golden age of strategic thinking. The domestic pressures on resources are the result of a historic convergence of four deficits: (1) the budget deficit and the political requirements to reduce federal spending; (2) the trade deficit and attendant requirements to make U.S. industry competitive on the world market; (3) the social deficit visible in every congressional district in the form of local demands for resources in education, law enforcement, housing, public works (roads and bridges), health care, and environmental protection and restoration; and (4) the threat deficit which competes with the surge in domestic demands on resources—we won the cold war and the Soviet threat to Europe and to the Third World has retreated in geopolitical and philosophical defeat.

"Threat deficit" accurately describes the changes in our relationship with the Soviet Union. Yet, as this threat recedes, the Third World grows more unstable and volatile, threatening U.S. and NATO interests with diffuse challenges at constantly shifting points on the map. The threat deficit may, in fact, prove to be a shift from a centralized threat of global war to a highly decentralized threat of diverse regional conflicts that in the aggregate will require a more versatile and flexible NATO capability.

The end of the cold war does not mean the end of political, ideological, diplomatic, economic, technological, and military rivalries. Neither is it likely to produce an end to the global struggle for power and influence. Until the "new world order" is established, the old and familiar NATO Alliance is a prudent safety net against the twin dangers of international threats and free-falling defense budgets in capitals, including Washington,

that may be pressed by domestic politics to reduce their commitments to collective defense.

## ENDNOTES

1. The first broad outlines of the new strategy appeared in the London Declaration issued by the heads of state participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council on July 5-6, 1990, and in several speeches by Supreme Allied Commander, General John R. Galvin. See, for example, Transcript of SACEUR's Remarks with the Carnegie Endowment For International Peace, Washington, DC, January 8, 1991.

2. Victor Kremenyuk, "Five Years of Perestroika," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Washington, DC, April 13, 1990. The author is an economist at the Institute for the Study of the United States and Canada in Moscow.

3. Robert Leavitt, "Next Steps for European Arms Reductions," *Arms Control Today*, Vol. 21, Number 1, January/February 1991, p. 13.

4. Thomas Graham, Jr., "The CFE Story: Tales From the Negotiating Table," *Arms Control Today*, Vol. 21, Number 1, January/February 1991, p. 10.

5. The brainstorming sessions took place within the North Atlantic Council (NAC). These produced guidance to the Strategy Review Group (SRG) chaired by Michael Legge. The SRG produced the draft political-military strategy which will become the guidance for the NATO Military Committee (MC) as it develops specific military strategies. The process was described by Michael Legge in a speech before a SHAPE Plans and Policy Conference at SHAPE Headquarters, December 13, 1990.

6. Rochelle L. Stanfield, "Under Europe's Umbrella," *National Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 14, April 7, 1990, pp. 826-831.

7. George Wilson, "NATO Commander Envisions 'Fire Brigade' Role," *The Washington Post*, December 5, 1990, p. 29.

8. *Izvestia* commentary quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*, March 4, 1991, p. A5.

9. These issues are detailed in Douglas T. Stuart's, *Can NATO Transcend Its European Borders?*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, February 21, 1991.

10. Galvin speech, p. 13.

11. The London Declaration, mimeographed copy, July 6, 1990, pp. 5-6.

12. This was the conclusion of a Department of Defense study chaired by Fred Ikle and Albert Wohlstetter, *Discriminate Deterrence*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, January 1988, pp. 2, 8, 30, 33-35.

13. Discussed by Catherine M. Kelleher in "Short-Range Nuclear Weapons: What Future in Europe?" *Arms Control Today*, Vol. 21, No. 1, January/February 1991, pp. 17-21.

14. Philip A. Karber, "Conventional Arms Control, or Why Nunn is Better Than None," in Uwe Nerlich and James A. Thompson, eds., *Conventional Arms Control and The Security of Europe*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988, p. 174.

15. This theme was stressed in many of Ogarkov's publications in the early 1980s. See, for example, "Reliable Defense to Peace," *Red Star*, September 23, 1983, p. 2, and "The Defense of Socialism: the Experience of History and the Present," *Red Star*, March 9, 1984, p. 3.

16. Airland Battle envisions mobile forces able to use quick maneuvers and decentralized execution of offensive missions to put enemy forces on the defensive. Airland Battle incorporates a deep reconnaissance-strike system as one component in a comprehensive doctrine that also includes military operations at the front or points of attack and in rear areas where enemy forces may have penetrated. Airland Battle stresses the need to plan for an integrated battlefield—deep, front, and rear. This is a sharp contrast to its doctrinal predecessor that was exclusively preoccupied with the direct battle at the front.

17. Kelleher, p. 19.

18. Galvin speech, p. 13.

19. Strategic warning includes notifications or indicators that hostilities may be imminent. Warnings may be short, in the form of mobilization or the massing of troops, or long in the case of a hostile state building a large war industry and army. Tactical warnings are those that provide clues as to the precise time and place of an armed attack.

20. Fred Ikle, former Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Reagan Administration, suggests warning time could be measured in years—the amount of time that it would take to re-Stalinize Eastern Europe. Ironically, NATO flanks may now be more vulnerable than NATO's old "Central front." However, aggression here would allow more time for counterdeployments and reinforcements than a sudden, massive assault against the heart of Europe. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney commented on the



relationship between reduced forward deployment and warning time. "[We will] rely on Reserves that could be called up and have a few months to get ready." See *Defense Issues*, Vol. 5, No. 25, Reprint of Press Conference, Brussels, May 23, 1990, p. 2.

21. For a detailed analysis of the Soviet options in developing a new military strategy, see David Glantz, "Soviet Military Strategy in the 1990's: In Search of a More Rational Approach," paper presented at the Second Annual Strategy Conference, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, February 8, 1991.

22. In Washington, the Gulf crisis resulted in a major reevaluation of force structure and mobilization policy that will affect NATO contingencies. For example, of the more than 200,000 reserves called to active duty, the vast majority served in combat support roles such as transportation, logistics, and medical services. Active-duty forces deployed during the early reinforcement phase could not have operated without them. However, the three, high profile Army National Guard combat brigades that were designated for NATO contingencies in which they were to rapidly reinforce ("Round-out") active duty brigades to form whole divisions were never deployed. Their state of combat readiness precluded deployment as either early or follow-on reinforcements. According to Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, "It was unrealistic to expect part-time soldiers to maintain readiness rates as high as their active-duty counterparts.... Instead of using guard combat brigades in future wars as integral parts of fast-deploying divisions, they might better be organized into their own divisions that would be expected to train 90 to 120 days before being sent into battle." See, Barton Gellman, "Cheney Says Guard Units May Need Reorganizing," *The Washington Post*, March 15, 1991, p. 34. Without increased warning time in the European theater, Secretary Cheney's radical departure from long-standing mobilization policies would be inconceivable. However, with both increased warning time and fewer active forces, reliance on reserves is credible for both NATO and global contingencies provided that active duty forces are adequate for immediate contingencies, early reinforcement (with reserve combat service and support), and backed by reserve divisions that are designated as follow-on reinforcements, but with 90 to 120 days training available between mobilization and deployment.

**U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE**

**Major General Paul G. Cerjan  
Commandant**

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**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE**

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