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NATO EXPANSION: CONCEPT AND STRATEGY

Organizing Principle: The goal is to achieve NATO expansion in a manner which maintains NATO cohesion and effectiveness, and is not destabilizing, as part of a broader process of the evolution of Europe's security structure.

- o Need to accommodate Allied concerns, build public and parliamentary support.
- o Need to decide what requirements aspirants must meet to gain consensus among Allies.
- o Need to deal with effect of a larger NATO on broader security relationships in Europe, develop rationale and meet concerns of those far down the line for membership.

OVERVIEW

Keys to a successful process:

- o Develop a sense of inevitability of expansion, over time, building the acceptance level.
- o Broaden the context, so NATO expansion is not seen as the core issue of future European security.
- o In so doing, build on the example of German unification within NATO: For those opposed, the costs of obstructing the inevitable will be too high, therefore the task becomes one of making the objectionable palatable.
- o Avoid talk of "compensation." This sends all the wrong signals and will engender negotiation over terms. Create a context which opponents can eventually utilize when they conclude it is in their interest to do so: That the goal of expansion is stability which benefits all, and that those excluded have other serious options for participation in the new architecture.
- o This argues for development of a rationale for expansion which diverts the argument that it is aimed at certain targets or threats. Stick to the rationale, making it part of the "new European security architecture" discussion.

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- o De-link expansion from events in Russia. Keep attention focused on the goal: Building stability in Central Europe, and overcoming the legacy of instability which has plagued this century.
- o Avoid discussion of time lines, a priori decisions. Work PFP, build consensus within the Alliance on key issues, let the particulars of "who" and "when" emerge over time.

Maintaining the Alliance

- o Most Allies have also probably shifted to more positive views of expansion over the past year. But expansion must not entail a diminution of NATO's ability to decide, act and exercise its role in Europe.
- o To gain parliamentary approval, need to demonstrate that new members are "contributors" to european security, not simply recipients of security guarantees. Building the political culture and military capabilities necessary to come up to the internal standards of the Alliance will take time, a principal function of PFP.
- o Defining a set of criteria is not necessary, but probably inevitable. This should not be difficult. But we do need a political understanding among Allies on what the key factors will be in deciding on Poland and other aspirants. We should set reasonably challenging hurdles, and insist on not bringing territorial and ethnic disputes into NATO. If NATO membership is a serious prize, the cost should be serious.
- o This will be essential to sell membership to parliaments. Expansion must include a security guarantee, including nuclear, and cannot be taken lightly. When the time comes, each Allied government will have to address its willingness to come to the new member's defense.
- o It is essential that NATO's security guarantee not be eroded. This is the tie that binds, that prevents the nationalization of defense. If NATO is seen as not serious, the outcome will be a splintering of European defense efforts, and ultimately a strong impulse for Germany, France and the UK to adopt their own nuclear policies. A European defense structure will not be strong enough for the foreseeable future to prevent this.

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Avoiding Instability

- o Timing will be a key question.
- o We must not allow inevitable concern about NATO expansion (which will come from various quarters, not just Russia) to degenerate into a destabilizing drive by those on the "outside" to compensate. We need them "inside" a broader process, and a general approach which can be differentiated to address the concerns of the Baltics, the Central Europeans not likely to enter soon, Russia, and Ukraine.
- o Ukraine is an especially difficult proposition. Expansion will leave it wedged between an Alliance it can probably never enter, and Russia. Need to avoid giving Ukraine a pretext for keeping nuclear weapons, and thus need to consider the impact of momentum of the expansion discussion on Ukraine's progress on nuclear weapons dismantlement, and NPT.
- o Broadening the context of the expansion discussion will be crucial. We must address expansion in a context of building stability and integration simultaneously, so that Europeans excluded from NATO will not be excluded from the evolving European security structure.
- o To do so, be straightforward about the huge progress made over the past year in building bridges and a security dialogue: PFP, the special Russia/NATO relationship, CSCE, G-7, the Contact Group and the bilateral links we and others have forged.
- o PFP will be crucial. While a training and proving ground for membership, it must also be the means of building strong ties between NATO and those not on for early membership. Imperative that we maintain and even increase the energy in PFP as the expansion discussion goes ahead.
- o Ditto with the embryonic Russia-NATO relationship. This needs to be developed as an important component of the evolving structure. We will need eventually to consider what sort of NATO/Russia agreement is desirable to seal a partnership between Russia and an expanded NATO.
- o Use the CSCE summit to draw a line under the first phase of the Post-Cold-War transition, lay the groundwork for a comprehensive partnership in building a "common European security space" in which all have a voice. We are willing to meet Russian concerns by exploring

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concepts of "coordination" via CSCE which do not involve "direction." Russia will have to deal with Western concerns about international oversight of military operations in the FSU.

- o Build on the high-profile "G-8 political" sessions and fresh Russia/NATO Ministerial contacts to build both the symbolism and reality of Russian involvement at the big power table. Similarly, keep using the Contact Group to the same end, and to build habits of cooperation, consultation.

DEVELOPING THE RATIONALE

We should not be deterred by whether a rationale for expansion can be sold to the Russians or others. They won't buy it now under any circumstances, and will try to block or delay. The goal is to give them something we can use, and which they can work with, when the time comes. Build on the following elements:

-- Essential role of NATO for future stability in Europe: Keeps U.S. in, integrates German and other national defense efforts, and provides Russia with a security partner.

-- Progress over the past year in updating Europe's security architecture creates the basis for future steps: Continued evolution of European security structures will eventually include NATO expansion, as well as increasing efforts to integrate NATO's partners via PFP, evolution of the CSCE.

-- Stability in Central Europe is essential to stability of all of Europe, and NATO can play a central role. The region will never be stable until the security aspirations of individual states are accounted for, and past rivalries overcome. In some cases this will mean NATO membership.

-- In other cases, it will mean strengthening the ties of integration, and building the common European security space. NATO decisions on expansion will be taken not in response to a new threat, or to point at a target. They will be taken in light of a new member's ability to contribute via NATO to shared goals, and with the goal of reducing instability.

-- We are convinced that in the long term, NATO expansion will benefit all the countries of Europe because it will extend stability and confidence in Central Europe, overcoming the legacies of conflicts that have torn Europe over the past century.

This in turn will strengthen the ability of all Europeans to cooperate on the new challenges to security which confront all of us in our common space.

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Next Steps on NATO Expansion: Hard Questions

In line with the President's recent statements, we need to prepare a gameplan for developing a USG position on expansion as well as an approach to alliance consultations. The following "hard questions" raise some of the issues which we need to address:

- the effect of expansion on our security interests in Europe;
- the ramifications of membership for NATO as an institution, including cohesion, military effectiveness, etc;
- the military resources required for NATO expansion, both in terms of budgets and the US military presence in Europe;
- an approach for consultations with the Hill.

The informal discussion on expansion called for by the President should begin with informal NATO discussion in the Fall, probably in a NAC "brainstorming" format. Depending on the results of those discussions, we may wish to consider a formal tasking of NATO political and military committees at the December 1994 or Spring 1995 ministerial to respond to key questions similar to those enumerated below.

I. Is it useful to establish criteria for NATO expansion?

- Need to focus alliance thinking on the conditions necessary for NATO expansion.
- New members should be considered on the basis of their shared values with NATO allies: stable democracy, free market economies, commitment to peace and stability and responsible security policies.
- However, criteria based on the attributes of an aspiring member are only one preliminary element in the wider political process of expansion.
- The only formal requirement in the Washington Treaty is Article X, which stipulates that prospective NATO members "further the principles" of the treaty and "contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area."

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-- Ultimately, the key criterion will be whether a new member, politically and militarily, will contribute to the building of security in Europe as a NATO ally.

II. Should we establish a timetable for NATO membership?

-- The January 1994 Summit established that NATO was prepared to consider new members. In his public remarks at the Brandenburg Gate July 12, President Clinton indicated that "NATO members themselves will have to get together and begin to discuss what the time line (for taking new members into NATO) and what the criteria for membership ought to be."

*as well
Reichstag
press
conference*

-- It is probably advisable to allow a timeline to emerge from Alliance discussions as they evolve, and avoid a priori decisions.

-- Establishing a timeline will represent a first step in differentiating among PFP members in terms of their developing relationship with NATO.

-- We need to consider whether a timeline would be a continuum of steps bringing some countries closer to membership, or whether NATO would announce at the outset that certain countries, or groups of countries, would be singled out for eventual full membership. The former seems preferable.

-- We need to determine the possible points along a timeline, e.g.: joining the Partnership for Peace; active participation in its activities; a designation as a PFP primus inter pares based on progress in political and economic criteria, and a state's ability to contribute to the alliance; and finally, full membership.

-- Steps related to a deepened relationship over a specified (or unspecified) period of time could include the stationing of reps at subordinate commands; participation in military exercises reserved for a designated group of "fast track" countries; a deepened force planning relationship with alliance military authorities; more regularized political consultation and attendance at NATO committee meetings.

-- We need to assess the US view of NATO expansion as a function of integration into European institutions (WEU, NATO, etc.).

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III. Are the United States and the other 15 allies prepared to extend a full-fledged NATO security guarantee to new members?

-- We will need to ensure that in extending a security guarantee to new members that deterrence is not undermined and European stability is enhanced.

-- By the same token, NATO's integrated military structure must remain intact and the alliance's military effectiveness maintained.

-- We will need to consider how to deal with the whole complex of membership issues with the Russians: responding to their concerns that NATO expansion is a threat to their interests, discussing with them the defense arrangements to be established eventually between new member states and the alliance, including the possible long-term or temporary basing of allied forces on the territory of Russian neighbors.

-- We will need to determine if we are willing to permit NATO to evolve from a security treaty arrangement to a collective security organization, relying on political agreements (rather than military strength) to respond to threats to NATO member interests.

IV. Will current resources be sufficient to maintain the military effectiveness of an expanded alliance?

-- If the self-defense (Article V) commitment of the Washington Treaty is to be extended to new members, NATO allies need to take a fresh look at the alliance's strategic concept and begin to project required force structures and resources, against a background of rapidly falling U.S. and Allied defense spending.

-- Political consultations among allies should take a hard look at matching resources with the requirements posed by the intake of new members.

-- The East Europeans would have little to bring the table but territory and NATO would be obliged to assume significantly increased defense responsibilities for new members without significant resource contributions from them.

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-- Over an extended period, we need to determine whether NATO allies will agree to use a decreasing pool of infrastructure funds to build up military infrastructure in the new states.

-- We will need to determine the extent to which the Congress will be willing to maintain, or even increase, our spending for our European security commitments.

V. Is the US prepared to extend its nuclear guarantee to new members? Would a revision of NATO strategy be needed? Against whom would NATO formulate its defense planning?

-- Part and parcel of the US (and British) Article V commitment is a pledge to use nuclear weapons in the event of an attack on a NATO ally.

-- The risks and burdens of NATO membership are shared through the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of NATO allies.

-- We will have to decide whether new members would be accorded a full nuclear guarantee or something that falls short of that commitment; in the latter case, we would need to consider whether a differentiated nuclear guarantee would dissipate the alliance's nuclear consensus at 16.

-- The alliance would have to consider whether changes in alliance nuclear policy (the strategic concept) would be required should new members eventually be accorded Article V guarantees.

-- We would have to determine whether extension of the nuclear guarantee to states on Russia's eastern border would be conducive to both maintaining Russian cooperation on European issues and reassuring them that NATO is not seeking to expand at Russian expense.

VI. How would NATO expansion enhance European security?

-- Satisfying the anxieties born of the perceived "security vacuum" in many Eastern Europe states could be important to the peaceful economic and social development of these states and to preventing the development of antagonistic national defense policies.

-- But their principal "deficit" is in the economic area.

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-- How will NATO handle differences between new members (on ethnic issues?) with their non-NATO neighbors.

-- How can NATO expansion be handled to prevent it from becoming potentially destabilizing?

--What are the implications of a less-than-credible defense of NATO members on Alliance deterrence and cohesion?

-- How will NATO expansion affect the stability of countries who might not make NATO's first cut -- possibly Romania, Albania, Slovakia, Bulgaria and the Baltics?

--Will placing the Baltic countries on the "other side" of NATO expansion send the wrong signal to Moscow, and what are the security implications for Ukraine of NATO expansion?

VII. How would bringing in new members affect the cohesion of the NATO alliance?

-- The NATO alliance is based on shared ideas, traditions, and experience borne of forty years of joint decisionmaking during the Cold War. Because decisions are taken on the basis of consensus, countries with different perspectives or sharp differences (witness Greece and Turkey) can make the search for common ground more difficult.

-- With a more varied membership, the North Atlantic Council at its best might achieve only hortatory decisions without clear action taskings to military and political authorities.

-- An expanded NATO where consensus represented a lower common denominator might be less critical to increasingly nationalized defense policies of some current European members.

-- Southern region members, traditionally concerned that their security concerns are not adequately addressed and for years the recipients of military subsidies through the infrastructure fund and US cooperation agreements, could challenge any initiative to transfer resources toward those (new CEE) states most in need of assistance.

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-- Keeping NATO "coherent" will not necessarily suffice if the alliance becomes irrelevant to European security.

VI. Would NATO expansion affect Russia's perceived geo-strategic position?

-- Expansion could influence the balance between Russian reformers and the forces interested in reassertion of Russian national influence in the "near abroad."

-- Without conceding a Russian "droit de regard" over NATO decisions, NATO has taken initial steps with Moscow to develop a political and military relationship both within and outside the Partnership for Peace.

-- Despite this rapprochement, any near-term move to bring former Warsaw Pact states into the alliance likely will be perceived as a threat to Russian interests, particularly if it includes the forward basing of NATO troops (and aircraft) in Eastern Europe.

-- NATO might have to consider a more formalized relationship with Russia (and the Ukraine) to balance the effects of expansion. NATO might wish to deepen relations with Russia and Ukraine both through the PFP, and in the case of nuclear issues, directly with the relevant NATO bodies.

-- The United States would have to consider whether the intake of CEE states would require a deepening of the "strategic relationship" with Moscow to assuage its concerns.

-- Politically, the Russians might well feel they are being further isolated from the West, thereby strengthening the arguments of conservative elements within the government who warn against encirclement. The Russians' historical preoccupation with the presence of the Germans on their eastern border could resurface.

-- The Ukraine would not welcome a buffer role between an expanding NATO and Russia and could place in question ~~their~~ its decision to become a non-nuclear power.

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VII. Will the allies agree to NATO expansion in the near-term?

-- The expansion debate that took place in the runup to the NATO Summit revealed a considerable spectrum of positions:

-- The French are [adamantly] opposed to taking in new members.

-- The British are extremely hesitant in light of resource restraints and their unwillingness to permit changes to the integrated military structure.

-- Many of the allies, including the British, see NATO expansion from the perspective of a wider integration of European states beginning with former neutral, EFTA countries, who are first in line for EU membership. Ostensibly, those countries would be followed by the Visegrad states into NATO via adherence to the Maastricht Treaty (including CFSP) and full WEU ~~EU~~ membership.

-- Although Chancellor Kohl has indicated that he would prefer to move cautiously on NATO expansion, the Germans likely would support expansion to countries to their east-- particularly the Visegrads-- who progressively are coming under their economic and political influence.

-- The southern tier countries (Greece, Turkey, Spain, Portugal) likely would be only lukewarm to an expansion that would move NATO's centerpoint toward the east and shift resources previously destined to reinforcing their military capabilities.

-- Strong American leadership, including a commitment to commit the required resources, would be required to bring the other fifteen allies along.

VIII. How would NATO governments sell expansion to their parliaments and publics?

-- Virtually all NATO members will be required to seek the consent of their parliaments for any change to the Washington Treaty.

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- Currently, no potential member would garner consensus support.
- We need to be certain that we could successfully bring a new member into the alliance before they applied.
- In the US case, a two-thirds majority of the Senate would be required to approve new NATO members. Although both houses of Congress have shown themselves to be enthusiastic backers of NATO expansion to include the Visegrad states, few representatives have focused on the resource (or nuclear) ramifications that Article V commitments to new members would require.
- Some might be receptive to the argument that extending NATO's security guarantee to at least some CEE states would make NATO relevant to current realities, but few would be willing to support the required reinforcement of NATO funding that would be required.
- The hesitancy of publics and parliaments to become militarily involved in the Balkans is an indication of the opposition that could materialize in an expansion debate.
- Requests for further commitments of US resources could have the effect of diminishing support for NATO in its present form.
- The Congress likely would argue that it should fall to the Europeans to make up any shortfall in funding the necessary resources required to bring new members into the alliance.
- A massive selling job would be required to win ratification, including in the United States.
- The possibility exists that another NATO member parliament might not approve membership for one or more applicants, or that absent a full court diplomatic press, parliamentary decisions on expansion could take a number of years.

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