
BEYOND COLLECTIVE SECURITY: THE CASE FOR A DEMOCRATIC SECURITY SYSTEM IN EUROPE

— DAVID J. KARL —

With the end of the Cold War, the European security environment has become more uncertain and volatile. The major response of the European Community to this change has been through institutions such as the CSCE. David J. Karl argues that such institutional inclusion will be ineffective unless it includes the development of shared values.

"Many interpret this as the beginning of chaos, as irreparable catastrophe. Nonetheless, it is essentially the birth of an entirely new organism."¹

For the third time in this century, the international community is confronted with the task of consolidating the peace in Europe following the conclusion of a protracted Great Power conflict. While the Cold War's sudden and unexpectedly pacific outcome elicited an initial wave of euphoria, the passage of time has reminded statesmen that the problems of creating peace are almost as herculean as those of waging war. Although this has been true of virtually every historical attempt at rebuilding international peace, it is all the more so now given that the Cold War ended with more fanfare than sense of finality. Its outcome is in many ways unnatural. Unlike the situation after the Second World War in which the Axis powers were vanquished and occupied outright, the West did not so much defeat the Soviet Union as accept its capitulation. As a result, several years after the Cold War's conclusion, the European security environment still remains fluid, with little certainty of stabilization anytime soon. Moreover, in the absence of an outright Soviet military defeat, the West has been denied the option of constructing a European order by recreating, more or less by fiat, the internal structures of its enemies as the occupying regimes at the end of the last global war were able to do.² Indeed, the turmoil that has erupted

1. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev on a state visit to Spain in October 1990. Quoted in Kevin Klose, "Bearing Witness in a New Europe," *Washington Post*, 25 November 1990, C1.

2. As one commentator notes, "... it is already clear that the post-communist transition in the former [Soviet Union] will be more difficult and much more prolonged than the democratic reconstruction of either Germany or Japan after 1945." Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Cold War And Its

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throughout Central and Eastern Europe over the last two years is more reminiscent of the outcome of the First World War, where the victors confronted (ultimately unsuccessfully) the task of integrating into the world community a group of newly democratic but economically distressed states set adrift amidst the tumult of nationalistic rivalry and disputed borders. With this unhappy memory, the West turns to the present challenge of ensuring Europe's security in the post-Cold War era.

The purpose of this article is two-fold. The first is to evaluate the various proposals for constructing a post-Cold War system of international relations in Europe on the basis of a general collective security regime. Should these proposals be translated into substantive policy, they risk being ineffectual at best and tragic at worst. In their stead, this article suggests an alternative strategy for consolidating the post-Cold War peace in Europe; one that avoids the manifold pitfalls of collective security. The strategy articulated here rests on the contention that adequate political structures are already in place for establishing a "democratic security system" in which countries once separated by ideological divisions and hostile military alliances are brought together into one overarching political community.

Collective Security in Europe: Problems and Prospects

The most commonly articulated approach to securing the peace in post-Cold War Europe focuses on the establishment of a regional system of collective security. Proposals for a collective security system based on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process were a staple of Soviet diplomacy in the Gorbachev era and, in the run up to German unification, gained the support of many Eastern European governments and the sympathy of some Western European governments. Outside the circles of government, ambitious plans for the development of European-wide security institutions have also been advanced, many of which center on giving the CSCE an institutional identity and endowing it with substantive security responsibilities.³ Although these proposals differ in terms of scope and detail, they are all

Aftermath," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.71, No.4 (Fall 1992), 47.

3. See, for example, Carnegie Endowment National Commission, *Changing Our Ways: America and the New World* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1992), especially 68-69; Daniel N. Nelson, "Security in a Post-Hegemonic World," *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Vol.15, No.2 (Summer 1991), 27-37; Charles A. Kupchan and Clifford A. Kupchan, "Concerts, Collective Security, and the Future of Europe," *International Security*, Vol.16, No.1 (Summer 1991), 114-161; Richard Ullman, *Securing Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Gregory Flynn and David J. Sheffer, "Limited Collective Security," *Foreign Policy*, No. 80 (Fall 1990), 77-101; Malcolm Chalmers, "Beyond the Alliance System: The Case for a European Security Organization," *World Policy Journal*, Vol.7, No.2 (Spring 1990), 215-250; James E. Goodby, "A New European Concert," and Harald Mueller, "A United Nations of Europe and North America," *Arms Control Today*, Vol.21, No.1 (January/February 1991), 3-8; and Jane M. O. Sharp and Gerhard Wachter, *Looking Beyond the Blocs: European Security in 2020*, Peace Paper / Common Security Series Paper No.16 (Cambridge, MA.: Institute for Peace and International Security, June 1988).

premised on the belief that collective security should be the unifying concept which defines European security in the future.

To a limited degree, European governments over the last several years have moved in the direction of these proposals. New diplomatic and security roles have been developed for the CSCE, which hitherto functioned more as a discursive and transient series of negotiating fora than a cohesive mechanism for the management of European security.⁴ When the leaders of the CSCE member states assembled to celebrate the end of the Cold War at a summit meeting in Paris in November 1990, they began a process of transforming it from a loosely-structured diplomatic process into an operational entity in the security arena. This process has resulted in a wide array of mechanisms for crisis management and conflict resolution.⁵

As both the proliferation of proposals for restructuring Europe's security architecture and the moves to expand the CSCE's roles illustrate, the concept of collective security is in revival. That collective security — in effect the extension into the international arena of the principle of "all for one and one for all" — has captured the imagination of statesmen and foreign policy commentators alike stems less from ignorance of the problems of collective security than from the perception that no adequate or palatable alternative exists in a post-Cold War Europe. The inclusiveness and mutuality of collective security seem appropriate at a time when the Cold War's losers are eagerly welcomed by the victors back into the community of states. As one proponent puts it, the establishment of a security system based on the principle of inclusion would "symbolize and seal the unity of the continent" after the divisions of the Cold War.⁶

But is collective security a realistic mechanism for preserving peace and security? And can it become the operative principle of a stable post-Cold War system of international relations in Europe? Conceptually, the principle is plagued by a number of serious shortcomings.⁷ The automatic and universal

4. For an overview of the CSCE's origins and activities prior to 1990, see John J. Maresca, *To Helsinki: The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1973-1975* (Durham, NC.: Duke University Press, 1985); *The Helsinki Process and East-West Relations: Progress in Perspective* (Washington, D.C.: Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1985); and Karl E. Birnbaum and Ingo Peters, "The CSCE: a Reassessment of its Role in the 1980s," *Review of International Studies*, Vol.16, No.4 (October 1990), 305-319.

5. For background on the CSCE's institutional development since the Paris summit, see "The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: An Overview of the CSCE Process, Recent Meetings and Institutional Development," (Washington, D.C.: Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, February 1992) [Hereafter referred to as "Helsinki Commission"]; "Information Document on the Helsinki Process," in *European Security and the CSCE: Proceedings of a Special North Atlantic Assembly Interparliamentary Conference* (Brussels: North Atlantic Assembly, April 1992), 119-137; and Vojtech Mastny, *The Helsinki Process and the Reintegration of Europe, 1986-1991* (New York: New York University Press, 1992).

6. Chalmers, "Beyond the Alliance System," 228.

7. The classic critique is Inis L. Claude, Jr., *Swords Into Plowshares: Problems and Progress of International Organization* (New York: Random House, 1956), Ch.12; and *idem*, *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1962), Chs. 4-5. Recent critiques include Josef Joffe, "Collective Security and the Future of Europe: Failed Dreams and Dead Ends," *Survival*, Vol.34, No.1 (Spring 1992), 36-50; and Richard K. Betts, "Systems for Peace or Causes of War? Collective Security, Arms Control, and the New Europe," *International Security*, Vol.17, No.1 (Summer

response that is to be made against an aggressor under a collective security scheme can be attenuated by geography and the difficult coordination problems involved in multilateral decisionmaking. Geographic distance, for instance, may not only impede the efficacy of concerted opposition against an aggressor, but it may also induce states to behave indifferently to the fate of a distant victim. Differences in the proximity to aggression will affect how actionable interests are defined, undermining the putatively high congruence of generalized concern states have in coming to the aid of another under actual attack or threat of aggression.

The ideal of universality also creates well-known problems of collective action. The provision of common goods by large collectives invariably involves "free rider" and moral hazard problems, and is liable to breakdown whenever conflicts of interests emerge among participants in terms of defining when, how, or against whom the collective action mechanism should be activated. Conversely, the universal ideal may lead states to involve themselves in conflicts from which they would have abstained under other circumstances, thereby enlarging an otherwise localized war. Unlike the other difficulties with collective security, the problem raised here is that states will actually make good on their mutual obligation to uphold the common peace, to the general detriment of the international system.

Although no real collective security entity exists in Europe today, many of these conceptual problems have been borne out in the difficulties evident in arranging a common response to the continent's first post-Cold War crisis: the Yugoslav civil war. Collective action with regard to the Yugoslav conflict has continually been thwarted by the divergence of interests among the CSCE countries. As the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the possibility of civil war grew increasingly likely throughout mid-1991, no consensus could be reached on which of the parties to the conflict bore the heaviest responsibility for its outbreak, or on how to deal with the situation. Germany, Austria, and Hungary assumed a policy in support of Slovenian and Croatian secession in direct conflict with American, British, French, and Greek preferences for the preservation of the Yugoslav federation. While Germany managed in late 1991 to persuade the rest of the European Community (EC) to extend diplomatic recognition to the breakaway republics, the Germans succeeded more through the threat to proceed on their own than by fashioning a genuine consensus on the issue. Additionally, as the conflict escalated in intensity and geographic scope, the initial support some in the EC exhibited for taking military measures to restore peace has all but evaporated.⁸

Surprisingly, CSCE, the one institution observers would have expected to

1992), 5-43.

8. For good discussions of the divergence of interests over the Yugoslav conflict among CSCE governments and of the efforts of the international community to deal it, see John Zametica, "The Yugoslav Conflict", *Adelphi Paper No.270* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Summer 1992), 46-74; Michael J. Brenner, "The EC In Yugoslavia: A Debut Performance," *Security Studies*, Vol.1, No.4 (Summer 1992), 586-608; and John Newhouse, "The Diplomatic Round," *The New Yorker*, 24 August 1992, 60-71.

assume the burden of dealing with Yugoslav situation given the rhetoric at the 1990 Paris summit, has been all but silent. Although divergent interests among CSCE states is a key factor in explaining their inaction, the CSCE's own cumbersome decisionmaking process is a substantial reason for its passivity. In particular, its customary rule that decisive action must meet the unanimous agreement of all member states — a number that presently stands at 52 — enabled Yugoslavia to block membership status for Slovenia and Croatia despite international recognition of these states, and allowed Belgrade and others to repeatedly impede CSCE action throughout 1991.⁹ Although efforts have been taken recently to streamline CSCE decisionmaking,¹⁰ the fact remains that the organization is all but impotent in taking meaningful action against the wishes of any of its members.¹¹

The CSCE's traditional consensual approach to decisionmaking also discourages its larger members from taking the organization seriously. As one observer notes, "the great powers will not accept the discipline of an institution which gives Malta the same weight as the United States."¹² As was the case with regard to the Yugoslav conflict, the diminution of their control over decisionmaking can cause the major states to look elsewhere for vehicles by which to engage important foreign policy issues. This, in turn, causes those states whose security interests would presumably be promoted the most from a strong CSCE (those in eastern Europe in particular) to devalue the body and to cast their lot with other fora.¹³

An additional factor for the CSCE's minimal profile in Yugoslavia resided in the great reluctance of the United States to involve itself in the civil war. Wary of becoming entangled in a convoluted ethnic conflict and persuaded, in the absence of the Cold War's geopolitical competition, that the Balkans hold no intrinsic value to the West, the Bush Administration concluded, in the words of one critic, that the war was "far away, Americans don't care about it and it's too politically risky to get involved in."¹⁴ Yet, however one judges the former

9. James E. Goodby, "Peacekeeping in the New Europe," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol.15, No.2 (Spring 1992), 154, 167-168.

10. See Annette Makino, "CSCE Prepares For Helsinki Summit," *BASIC Report No.23* (Washington, D.C.: British American Security Information Council), 26 June 1992; and David Shorr, "Plenty of Work Ahead For a Beefed-Up CSCE," *Christian Science Monitor*, 14 July 1992, 18.

11. An extreme example of the power of one state to frustrate the CSCE's work through its veto prerogative was provided in the fall of 1990 when Liechtenstein blocked (albeit temporarily) the establishment in Prague of the CSCE Secretariat because of a bilateral dispute with Czechoslovakia. See Richard Weitz, "The CSCE's New Look," *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol.1, No.6 (7 February 1992), 29.

12. See the remarks in Michael Bryans, *The CSCE and Future Security in Europe*, Working Paper No.40 (Ottawa: Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, March 1992).

13. On a related point, see Goodby, "Peacekeeping in the New Europe," 166.

14. Quoted in Eric Schmitt, "U.S. Aide Who Quit Calls Yugoslav Policy Ineffective," *New York Times*, 27 August 1992, A7. In September 1992, the Acting U.S. Secretary of State observed that the Yugoslav conflict "is not something that can be settled from outside.... Until the Bosnians, Serbs and Croats decide to stop killing each other, there is nothing the outside world can do about it." Quoted in David Binder, "U.S. May Loosen Yugoslav Embargo," *New York Times*, 1 October 1992, A3.

administration's stance, the past two years illustrate that it differed little from the views of the majority of European governments.

Indeed, the general disinterest exhibited by other states with regard to the Yugoslav crisis raises two fundamental questions about the feasibility of a European collective security system. On the one hand, the historical record over the past century of Western actions toward eastern Europe fosters severe doubts as to whether a necessary precondition for the successful operation of collective security, a generalized concern for the indivisibility of peace, is at all present in today's Europe. The current inaction in the Balkans only continues the pattern of Western policy toward Eastern Europe of the interwar and Cold War years into the post-Cold War era. In justifying his country's reluctance sixty years ago to be drawn into the region's affairs, a British prime minister remarked to his French counterpart that the "British people were not very much interested in what happens on the eastern frontier of Germany ... [They] felt that the populations in that quarter of Europe were unstable and excitable, they might start fighting at any time, and the rights and wrongs of the dispute might be very hard to disentangle."¹⁵ Given the events of the recent past, one does not need too much imagination to see in these remarks a stark reflection of the attitudes guiding present Western policy in the Balkans or of those likely to shape future policy toward the whole of eastern Europe. As a former U.S. policymaker responsible for European affairs notes in this connection, "a promise of engagement in eastern Europe or the former Soviet Union ... is meaningless unless leaders create an environment in which their people will spend treasure, or even blood, to sustain their commitments."¹⁶

The response toward the Yugoslav civil war also raises serious doubts over the relevance of collective security arrangements to the security dynamics most likely to be operative in a post-Cold War Europe. As a prescription for peace, collective security is geared toward the deterrence of and, if necessary, the armed opposition to interstate aggression. Yet the possibility of violent conflict in Europe at present stems as much, if not more so, from tensions within states as between them. Given the aversion of Western states to intervene in the harrowing ethnic problems of eastern Europe, collective security may very well be anachronistic to the region's evolving security environment. Indeed, the precept of nonintervention in the internal affairs of states which is central to the very concept of collective security (not to mention the CSCE itself) is hard to reconcile with desires to deal with ethnic conflicts. Moreover, the CSCE's dispute settlement mechanisms are designed solely in reference to interstate tensions, and then only in cases that do not concern issues of territorial integrity, national defense, or claims to sovereignty or jurisdiction over territory — a judgment that in any case is to be made by the parties involved in the conflict.¹⁷

15. Quoted in R.A.C. Parker, *Europe, 1919-45*, (New York: Delcorte Press, 1970), 60.

16. Philip Zelikow, "The New Concert of Europe," *Survival*, Vol.34, No.2 (Summer 1992), 13-14.

17. Helsinki Commission, 11. Additionally, the provision on the inviolability of borders contained in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act may be read as prohibiting the secession of national minorities except through the mutual consent of the minority involved and the state from which it wishes

To be sure, the problems of application in cases of internal strife are recognized by many proponents of collective security schemes. Yet, even if the distinction between internal and external wars is granted and the application of collective security mechanisms reserved solely for the latter (and an important caveat thus attached to the functions of a pan-European security entity), that collective security schemes would be anymore pertinent to the looming security problems of eastern Europe is doubtful. The *de jure* transformation of the Yugoslav conflict into an international war when Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia were granted UN membership in early 1992, for example, did little to prompt greater external involvement in the conflict.¹⁸

Beyond operational problems, the concept of collective security is plagued by the dubious presumption that peace is the consequence of collective security rather than its cause. Yet states will not act in opposition to threats to the general peace if no common satisfaction exists with the broad features of that peace or if varied levels of satisfaction lead to divergent judgments on the legitimacy of the actions of others. However one wishes to join in their hopes, advocates of collective security have yet to explain why the current peace in Europe will perforce continue into the future.¹⁹ To argue this is not necessarily to be unduly pessimistic or to assume that the prospects of interstate conflict can only increase with the passage of time. Rather, it is to ask whether an alternative model for peace exists, one not liable to the historical and conceptual problems of collective security.

An Alternative Prescription

One security system not subject to these problems is the present system of international relations among the Western democratic states. The robust condition of peace existing between and among democracies has long been a subject of scholarly interest.²⁰ Although differences of opinion abound in accounting for

to secede. On this point, see Mueller, "A United Nations of Europe and North America," 7.

18. Indeed, by raising the stakes of the conflict and hardening the positions of the parties involved, the fallout from international recognition of the Yugoslav republics may have made others in Europe more chary of involvement. Fearing the conflict's escalation, Bosnian and Macedonian leaders tried in vain to persuade other governments to withhold recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. See Newhouse, "The Diplomatic Round," 63.

19. For a discussion of this point, see Joffe, "Collective Security and the Future of Europe," 44; and Betts, "Systems for Peace or Causes of War?" 23-25.

20. The "democratic peace" hypothesis has been articulated most prominently in a series of articles by Michael W. Doyle. See Doyle, "An International Liberal Community," in Graham Allison and Gregory F. Treverton, eds., *Rethinking America's Security: Beyond Cold War to New World Order* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company for the American Assembly, 1992), 307-333; *idem*, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review*, Vol.80, No.4 (December 1986), 151-169; and *idem*, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol.12, No.3 (June 1983), 205-235 (Part 1) and No.4 (October 1983), 323-353 (Part 2). Also see, Randall L. Schweller, "Domestic Structure and Preventive War: Are Democracies More Pacific?" *World Politics*, Vol.44, No.2 (January 1992), 235-269; David A. Lake, "Powerful Pacifists: Democratic States and War," *American Political Science Review*, Vol.86, No.1 (March 1992), 24-37; Carol P. Ember, Melvin Ember and Bruce Russett, "Peace between Participatory Polities: A Cross-Cul-

this phenomenon, a substantial body of evidence supports the idea that democracies are fundamentally adverse to making war upon each other and instead seek to settle disputes and bargain through peaceful means. Indeed, one scholar contends that "the absence of war between democracies comes as close as anything we have to an empirical law in international relations," while another claims the phenomenon offers "what appears to be the single best hope for the growth of a stable, just and secure international order."²¹ Given these findings, that policymakers have not directed greater attention to this phenomenon as they ponder the future organization of European security is surprising. This is not to say that statesmen have not been quick to celebrate the wave of democratic aspiration that recently swept through eastern Europe or to rhetorically enlist its spirit to the cause of peace. But few have given serious thought to how the current Western system of democratic peace could be extended eastward and whether such an undertaking would obviate the need for the construction of more formalized security structures.²²

The present system of international relations among Western states relies upon the reciprocal accommodation and sense of community engendered by shared democratic values to provide for peace within the system and for the security of its constituent members. Because democracy as a political ideology is both inherently inclusive and pluralistic, relations between democratic states are marked by mutual affinity, solidarity, and by a reciprocal respect for one other's legitimacy and autonomy. Although ideological similarity is a common factor in the formation of international alliances, it is generally not a sufficient cause to keep such agreements from breaking down following the withdrawal of the *casus foederis*. But what is distinct about a community of democratic states is the qualitative dimension of its solidarity. The general propensity of democracies is to align with one another in international politics precisely because of their political affinity, and to do so especially in times of danger.²³ Moreover, the pluralistic and diffused nature of democracy effectively rules out the sort of ideologically-driven hostility that developed in the communist world in the 1960s and 1970s.²⁴

The emergence of a democratic community of peace points to a basic change

tural Test of the 'Democracies Rarely Fight Each Other' Hypothesis," *World Politics*, Vol.44, No.4 (July 1992), 573-599. A brief critique is offered in John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe After the Cold War," in Sean M. Lynn-Jones, ed., *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991), 184-187.

21. Jack Levy, "Domestic Politics and War," *Journal of International History*, Vol.18, No.4 (Spring 1988), 662; and Doyle, "An International Liberal Community," 308.

22. As one analyst notes, "The lesson of history ... is that the surest way to security in Eastern Europe is the complete democratization of Eastern Europe." See Samuel P. Huntington, "Democratization and Security in Eastern Europe," in Peter Volten, ed., *Uncertain Futures: Eastern Europe and Democracy* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1990), 49.

23. See, especially, Randolph Siverson and Juliann Emmons, "Birds of a Feather: Democratic Political Systems and Alliance Choices," in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.35, No.2, (June 1991), 285-306.

24. For a discussion of democracy as a "unifying ideology" and of the relationship between transnational penetration and alliance formation, see Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 35-37; 46-49.

in the international politics among Western states. Because resorting to violence within the system is normatively proscribed, the traditional uncertainty regarding intentions and likely actions of other states has been resolved.²⁵ The mutual expectation that interactions among democratic states will remain peaceful means that democracies do not fear one other in the way that is true when *realpolitik* considerations dominate the security calculus of states.²⁶ Moreover, confidence in this expectation is enhanced because democratic processes allow for the transparency and permeability of the domestic decisionmaking system.

It is a mistake to see the Western community of peace primarily as a function of post-World War II American hegemony or of the exigencies of the Cold War. Even with the sense of unity forged by the Soviet threat, the path toward economic integration undertaken by West European countries in the postwar era, a process in which states progressively relinquished portions of their sovereignty, would not have occurred in the absence of a feeling of democratic community.²⁷ Similarly, that the post-Cold War reconfigurations of European politics will do anything to diminish this feeling is unlikely. Trust in the benign intentions of a democratically-transformed Germany undoubtedly played a substantial role in the support its neighbors gave to German unification at the Cold War's end, despite memories of the country's militaristic past and the fact that a single German state would once again mark that country's ascendancy in Europe.²⁸ Likewise, both Britain and the United States are willing to countenance the possibility of European political unification, even under German leadership, despite their historical commitments to act against the domination of the continent by a single hegemonic power. Moreover, if the peace among democratic states is simply an artifact of the Cold War, one would neither expect nor be able to account for the withdrawal of French military forces from a unified Germany and the continuing American confidence that British and French nuclear weapons are not directed against the United States.²⁹

Two basic differences can be noted between the Western system of states and the type of collective security system currently being proposed for Europe. The first is that the impulse toward solidarity and mutual assistance is normatively-generated rather than legalistically-driven. In contrast to the open-ended and abstract mutual assistance commitments imposed on states under collective security, the interest of states in the well-being of their neighbors is more

25. While this does not necessarily mean that democracies in general are more peaceful than non-democratic states, some scholars have found that democracies historically "have not initiated war against non-liberal Great Powers and their overall posture toward such states is essentially defensive." See Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The International Sources of Soviet Change," *International Security*, Vol.16, No.3 (Winter 1991/92), 85.

26. See the discussion in Emanuel Adler, "Europe's New Security Order: A Pluralistic Security Community," in Beverly Crawford, ed., *The Future of European Security* (Berkeley: International and Area Studies, 1992), 287-326.

27. On this point, see Robert Jervis, "The Future of World Politics: Will It Resemble the Past?" *International Security*, Vol.16, No.3 (Winter 1991/92), 51, 53-55.

28. Even the Soviet Union seems to have been persuaded of the benignancy of a democratic Germany. See Deudney and Ikenberry, "The International Sources of Soviet Change," 84, 90.

29. Jervis, "The Future of World Politics," 47.

securely established in a democratic security system. The second is the implicit and unorganized nature of the democratic security system which stands in stark contrast to proposals for a collective security system, which by its nature calls for explicit rules and a high degree of institutionalization.³⁰ All of the Western security institutions, including most prominently the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, are collective defense arrangements operating on the premise that aggression will occur from without rather than from within.³¹

Because of this outward focus, there is no fully institutionalized mechanism for keeping or enforcing the peace within the democratic system. NATO, it is true, provided in its early years a convenient mechanism for controlling German military strength — “keeping the Germans down” in the words of Lord Ismay, the alliance’s first secretary-general. In addition, Germany’s entry into NATO in the mid-1950s did come about only after it assumed discriminatory disarmament obligations, and the Western European Union (WEU) was created as a means of monitoring German adherence to its obligations. But these controls have long been substantially relaxed just as the WEU itself has been (until recently) all but moribund.³² The norms of openness and domestic political pluralism embedded in democratic processes serve as a sort of informal equivalent for the confidence-building and transparency measures negotiated between East and West during the Cold War. Moreover, deviance from the system’s implicit norms of conduct for states in foreign and military policy is dissuaded or checked by the power of moral sanction, which, because of democracy’s integrative nature and the networks of transnational linkages it fosters, has proven an effective instrument of democracies influencing one another’s behavior.³³

Two principal counter-arguments may be raised against the utility of constructing a democratic security system in Europe. The first concerns the uncertain prospects for genuine democratic transformation in central and eastern Europe, an area lacking in robust democratic traditions. The problem is not that liberal political institutions have to be built *de novo*, but that in the absence of domestic political reconstruction by a foreign occupier acting with a free hand, this task must be accomplished amid the vestiges of residual authoritarian structures. As the exuberance with the first taste of political freedom has faded,

30. An argument, along different lines, for a *laissez faire* security system in Europe is presented in Betts, “Systems for Peace or Causes of War?” 28-30.

31. Although these arrangements have appropriated collective security’s rhetoric, the organizing principles on which they are based are quite different. See Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1962), Chapter 12.

32. The task of policing German compliance was carried out through a branch of the WEU known as the Armaments Control Agency. In 1984 the WEU pronounced “the control functions originally assigned to the ACA” to be “superfluous” and relieved Germany from all residual controls on its conventional forces. See Ullman, *Securing Europe*, 53.

33. For an argument that the approval of public and elite opinion in fellow democracies plays an important role in the domestic legitimization of foreign policy actions by democratic states, see Thomas Risse-Kappen, “Cooperation Among Democracies: Norms, Transnational Relations, and the European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy,” unpublished manuscript, University of Wyoming, December 1991.

these remnants have gathered strength as popular appeal for the old order grows. Baleful economic conditions and regional instabilities caused by the collapse of Soviet hegemony also make the task of democratic reformation all the more problematic. So why, then, go about incorporating these regions into the international democratic community when the possibilities for success are so uncertain?³⁴ A second objection follows from this. If the establishment of democratic states, in what is readily acknowledged as an inhospitable climate, is really the key to the management of European security relations, what effect can the incorporation of these states into the international democratic community have on a task that can only be accomplished internally?

A strategy of democratic institution-building (or, more accurately in this case, institution-broadening) addresses both objections. As is evident in the debate over the provision of economic assistance to the newly post-communist countries, and particularly those of the former Soviet Union, the sharp limits of the Western capacity to directly intervene or assist in their domestic reconstruction are widely understood. Yet to frame the matter so narrowly is to obscure the importance of an alternative mechanism of influence, one in which Western power to act is as substantial as its effects on the external behavior and (to a lesser extent) internal dynamics of these new states. This mechanism is the international environment in which these states now find themselves. The external settings of states exert a powerful impact on behavior by creating incentives for certain actions and disincentives for others. And while this influence bears most strongly on foreign policy behavior, its effect on inducing or facilitating domestic developments is significant as well.

The pacific nature of relations between democracies furnishes states with a sense of external security they would not otherwise have.³⁵ Assured of the lack of aggressiveness of their democratic neighbors, states no longer feel compelled to threaten or commit aggression in order to ease their security problems. This point in itself removes a major cause of war and in turn, through the attenuation of security dilemmas, allows for the emergence of a foreign policy based on cooperation and accommodation. Additionally, a benign security environment strengthens the prospects for domestic liberalization and could provide a decisive impetus for the survival of a democratic regime during its birthing process. Resource priorities and domestic political institutions previously justified in the interests of national security (as in the communist era) become more difficult to sustain given the permissiveness of the external setting. By undercutting the

34. A useful overview of the obstacles to a post-communist transition in the region is presented in Charles Gati, "From Sarajevo to Sarajevo," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.71, No.4 (Fall 1992), 64-78. For arguments that the prospects for the embryonic democracies in Eastern Europe are stronger than what many seem to assume, see Stephen Van Evera, "Primed for Peace: Europe After the Cold War," in Lynn-Jones, *The Cold War and After*, 212-215; and Valerie Bunce, "Eastern Europe as a Destabilizing Force in the New Europe: A Critical Evaluation," in Crawford, ed., *The Future of European Security*, 263-286.

35. As Andrei Kozyrev, Russia's Foreign Minister notes, democratic regimes "are under the control of legal public institutions, and this practically rules out the pursuance of an aggressive foreign policy. In the system of Western states ... the problem of war has essentially been removed." Quoted in Deudney and Ikenberry, "The International Sources of Soviet Change," 89, n.47.

influence and arguments of societal groups favoring the pursuit of chauvinistic foreign policies and strengthening those of contending groups, propitious international circumstances can help shift the balance of domestic power and shape internal political outcomes.³⁶ Since the domestic political configurations of the Eastern states are inchoate and may not stabilize for years to come, a Western strategy of enhancing this mechanism of influence may lead to significant future payoffs.³⁷

Bringing the East in from the Cold

How might the West go about expanding its democratic security system into the East? Undoubtedly, a major part of the effort would consist of incorporating the Eastern states into Western economic bodies. But a strategy that relies entirely on economic relations with these countries to forge a foundation for peaceful European order is fraught with risk. Unless economic bonds are durable, turbulence in the international economy (a prolonged global recession, for instance) may cause their disruption. The effect would then be doubly negative in the East: the loss of economic incentive to pursue cooperative foreign policies and the collapse of nascent democratic regimes that counted on the benefits of participation in the world economy to maintain their domestic political power.³⁸ Moreover, given the magnitude of the East's economic problems and the severe constraints on the availability of capital in the West, it is altogether questionable whether the West by itself has the wherewithal to adequately implement such a strategy, which by its nature calls for a reliable and long term commitment of resources.

An alternative approach to the building of a new European security architecture (which could nonetheless be employed in tandem with the economic relations approach) focuses on integrating the Eastern states into the Western security system, something which is already being undertaken by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.³⁹ Over the past several years, NATO has attempted to recast its role and relationship with the countries of central and eastern Europe. In mid-1990 the Western alliance decided to enter into a general

36. See *Ibid.*, 96-97; Jack Snyder, "Averting Anarchy in the New Europe," in Lynn-Jones, ed., *The Cold War and After*, esp. 127-131; and *idem*, "International Leverage on Soviet Domestic Change," *World Politics*, Vol.40, No.1 (October 1989), 1-30.

37. One scholar notes that the political and intellectual elite in the European regions of the former Soviet Union eagerly seek Western moral approbation in order to feel once more part of Europe's political culture. See Ted Hopf, "Managing Soviet Disintegration: A Demand for Behavioral Regimes," *International Security*, Vol.17, No.1 (Summer 1992), 66. Stephen Van Evera argues that this yearning for inclusion means "the threat of chastisement and exclusion by the West is a sanction that carries real weight." See "Managing the Eastern Crisis: Preventing War in the Former Soviet Empire," *Security Studies*, Vol.1, No.3 (Spring 1992), 369.

38. This point is spelled out in Snyder, "Averting Anarchy in the New Europe," 128-129.

39. A similar approach is articulated in Steven Weber, "Does NATO Have A Future," in Crawford, ed., *The Future of European Security*, 360-395.

dialogue with the member states of the Warsaw Pact, an act that soon led to the proliferation of political and military contacts between the two alliances.⁴⁰ These liaison arrangements were institutionalized in late 1991 with the creation of the "North Atlantic Cooperation Council" as a high-level forum for consultation and cooperation on foreign and security policy issues among former Cold War adversaries.

NATO has two central aims in developing these new institutional ties. The first is to facilitate, with the least instability and disorder, the post-communist transition to democracy and market economies. Toward this end, NATO is furnishing practical advice on the remodeling of political and military institutions and on the problems of economic stabilization and defense conversion. A second, larger objective is to build "a Euro-Atlantic Community of security, partnership and cooperation" by serving as a presence for stability and reassurance in order that the Eastern states may be free from threat or intimidation to concentrate on tasks of internal reconstruction.⁴¹ In this regard, NATO has sought to promote the security interests of these countries through new regional arms control efforts, demonstrations of Western interest in their fate, and by creating networks of cooperation and commitments to basic standards of conduct. While the parameters of the envisioned "Euro-Atlantic Community" have not been revealed, the alliance's Secretary-General sees NATO as the core of a new, pan-European security system.⁴²

The North Atlantic Cooperation Council's inaugural meeting in December 1991 occurred at the foreign ministerial level and featured the dramatic announcement by the Soviet representative that Russia sought membership in NATO as a "long-term political aim" — thereby laying to rest arguments that NATO's continued existence, let alone the extension of its political activities into eastern Europe, would inevitably antagonize Moscow. Agreement was reached that the council would meet annually at the ministerial level and bi-monthly at the ambassadorial level, and would concentrate on such issues as the orientation of military planning along defensive lines, conceptual approaches to arms control, democratic concepts of civilian-military relations and military professionalism, and efforts at defense conversion.⁴³ Steps were launched to bring the Eastern states into regularized contact with the alliance's senior political and military bureaucracies, and an informal "High Level Working Group" was

40. See "The London Declaration on a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance," July 6, 1990, reprinted in *Survival* (September/October 1990), 469-472.

41. The quotation is in Gebhardt von Moltke, "NATO Takes Up Its New Agenda," *NATO Review*, Vol.40, No.1 (February 1992), 7. Also see Manfred Woerner, "NATO Transformed: the Significance of the Rome Summit," *NATO Review*, Vol.39, No.6 (December 1991), 3-8.

42. See Stephen J. Flanagan, "NATO and Central and Eastern Europe: From Liaison to Security Partnership," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol.15, No.2 (Spring 1992), 142. Elsewhere, Woerner has denied NATO intends to become a rival to the CSCE. See Woerner, "NATO Transformed," 8.

43. See "Rome Declaration on Peace and Cooperation," reprinted in *NATO Review*, Vol.39, No.6 (December 1991), 19-21; and Thomas L. Friedman, "Yeltsin Says Russia Seeks to Join NATO," *New York Times*, 21 December 1991, 5.

formed to discuss the ratification and implementation problems of the 1990 "Conventional Armed Forces in Europe" (CFE) treaty in light of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Finally, although NATO has refused to extend outright military guarantees to these states or to incorporate them into the alliance, as many of them plainly desire, the meeting's communique affirmed that:

[European] security is indivisible and the security of each of our countries is inextricably linked to that of all states participating in the CSCE. The consolidation and preservation throughout the continent of democratic societies and their freedom from any form of coercion or intimidation therefore concern us all.⁴⁴

The council's ministerial meeting in March 1992 saw the expansion of its membership to include all of the former Soviet republics (with the exception of Georgia)⁴⁵ and the promulgation of a plan for intensified consultations involving political and security-related matters, defense planning issues, and military strategy.⁴⁶ Three weeks later, NATO defense ministers collectively met their central and eastern European counterparts for the first time, and established a "Group on Defense Matters" to help organize cooperative activities in defense-related issues.⁴⁷ In June the council again convened at the ministerial level to sign an agreement on troop ceilings in Europe that is designed as a follow-on to the CFE treaty.⁴⁸

Although there is no indication that NATO is ready to formally incorporate its former adversaries into the alliance's structures, it is important to recognize that the strategy of institution-broadening articulated in this essay is not dependent on such incorporation. Rather, what is necessary to this strategy are the steps NATO has already started to undertake: providing for the limited participation by the Eastern states in the Western security system as a means of, first, reinforcing expectations of peaceful relations with the West and of the benign character of the post-Cold War security environment in Europe and, second, of

44. "North Atlantic Cooperation Council Statement on Dialogue, Partnership and Cooperation," 20 December 20, 1991, reprinted in *NATO Review*, Vol.40, No.1 (February 1992), 29. Also see Thomas Friedman, "NATO Tries to Ease Security Concerns in Eastern Europe," *New York Times*, 7 June 1992, 1. During the abortive coup against the Gorbachev government in August 1991, NATO declared that the security of the central and eastern European countries was "of direct and material concern" to the alliance, which considered their security "inseparably linked" to its own. See "Statement on the Situation in the Soviet Union," 21 August 1991, reprinted in *NATO Review*, Vol.39, No.4 (August 1991), 8.

45. The Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are founding members of the council and participated in its inaugural session in December 1991.

46. See "Work Plan for Dialogue, Partnership and Cooperation," 10 March 1992, reprinted in *NATO Review*, Vol.40, No.2 (April 1992), 34-35.

47. See "Statement Issued at the Meeting of Defense Ministers," 1 April 1992, reprinted in *Ibid*, 31-33.

48. See Craig R. Whitney, "East and West Europe Agree to Honor Old Blocs' Arms Pact," *New York Times*, 6 June 1992, 4; and "Statement issued at the Meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council," 5 June 1992, reprinted in *NATO Review*, Vol.40, No.3 (June 1992), 32-34.

inculcating the norms of foreign policy and domestic behavior that are the criteria for full-fledged entry by these states into the Western political order. This approach promises to maximize Western influence on the domestic political evolutions in eastern Europe and — in light of the region's fluid security situation — provide a framework for stabilizing relations among the Eastern states, particularly those in the European part of the former Soviet Union. This effect is all the more desirable given that the major security problems in the region are unlikely to spring from traditional interstate disputes but from states acting in defense of aggrieved ethnic constituencies residing in other states.⁴⁹ This approach also helps to foster compliance with the arms control accords that will be needed to police the dispersion of nuclear and conventional weapons that occurred in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse.

Additionally, a strategy of institution broadening offers a distinct advantage over the behavioral regimes some have urged the West to "impose" upon the Soviet successor states.⁵⁰ Although the dispensing of economic rewards and punishments to these states depending upon their compliance with or deviance from certain standards of conduct may be necessary in the short term, such strategy furnishes an inadequate basis on which to build stable, long-term political relationships. Rather, if a behavioral regime is operated too explicitly or for too long a period of time, and is the only vehicle the West uses to engage these states, it risks the estrangement of those governments which at present seek entry into the international democratic community. Moreover, nothing in an institution-broadening strategy runs counter to the further development of the CSCE process, which will undoubtedly prove useful in codifying and implementing the norms of permissible behavior that underpin a democratic community of states.

While this strategy represents a marked departure from more grandiose schemes for collective security, it is not without coherence in terms of its organizing principles. The approach is based above all on the conviction that European security will depend, in large measure, on the degree of internal stability achieved in eastern Europe. Detailed plans for organizing Europe's security will only run afoul of the turbulence caused as the Eastern states adjust to the new geopolitical and domestic conditions brought about by the Cold War's tumultuous end. A strategy of establishing the normative basis for an expanded democratic security system without the aid of precise blueprints or vision of the system's final shape may make little sense to the new Europe's would-be security draftsmen. But programmatic actions to provide for the security of states will always follow from the aspiration to act.⁵¹ The challenge

49. For instance, the fate of 25 million Russians now relegated to the status of ethnic minorities in former Soviet states is a major foreign policy concern of the new Russian government and provides fertile soil for the growth of extreme nationalism in Russian domestic politics.

50. See, in particular, Hopf, "Managing Soviet Disintegration."

51. As one scholar contends, "[i]n a time of rapid change, when old structures are creaking but the shape of distant ones cannot be discerned, process becomes more important than structure.

and task presently at hand in Europe is to ensure that the international politics in the continent's eastern half evolve according to the norms of the Western security system. The way to do this is to expand extant institutions, rather than constructing new structures from scratch.

Indeed, if we look after the processes in international politics, the structures will look after themselves." Ken Booth, "Steps Towards Stable Peace in Europe: a Theory and Practice of Coexistence," *International Affairs*, Vol.66, No.1 (January 1990), 32.

