

The Problem of European Security

Charalambos Papasotiriou

Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union has created a power vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe similar to the vacuum in the same area of the interwar years. This threatens to result (i) in a spread of local conflicts like Yugoslavia's, and (ii) in a general destabilisation of Europe with renewed great power competition for influence and control over Central and Eastern Europe.

General, all-inclusive collective security arrangements such as the UN and the OSCE have proved impotent in regard to the local conflicts that have broken out already in the formerly Communist parts of Europe, and are as unlikely in themselves to prevent major destabilisation as the League of Nations in the 1930s. For example, one can hardly expect the UN or the OSCE to be able to prevent or reverse some hypothetical Russian invasion of Ukraine or the Baltic Republics. Valuable as such collective institutions are for low-intensity, peace-keeping or human rights problems, they are unfit to provide collective security in the Wilsonian sense.

The only institutions in Europe that have the capability to cover the power vacuum so as to prevent major destabilisation are the EU and NATO. The policy recommendations in this paper are:

- a) A firm policy of EU and NATO enlargement, on the basis of a flexible and open process that takes into account primarily the internal requirements of these two Western institutions, rather than Russia's reactions.
- b) A recognition of Russian primacy in other parts of the former Soviet domain (Central Asia, Caucasus), as partial compensation for Russia's waning influence in Europe.
- c) A long-term policy of equilibrium between Russia, China and Japan in the Far East, both to prevent future destabilisation of that increasingly central region of world politics, and as an inducement - positive or negative - for Russian cooperation in Europe.

1. The new European security architecture

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet coalition have brought to an end the danger of a world war with Europe as its centre. The present international climate provides more security for the peoples of the West than at any other international juncture in the past four decades.

At the same time, however, the collapse of the Warsaw Pact brought about a condition of instability in Central and Eastern Europe. The governments of the West quickly recognised the new dangers that threaten European security, which are radically different from the preceding Soviet threat. As early as 31 December 1989 President Mitterand wondered, in his New Year's message: "Are existing frontiers untouchable or not? How far should the rebirth of nationalities go? . . . Either the tendencies to dissolution and fragmentation will increase and we shall find ourselves back in the Europe of 1919 - and we know what happened after that - or Europe will grow together" 1. Similarly the Director of the CIA, Robert Gates, warned the Congress in December 1991 that the collapse of the Soviet Union might lead to chaos and bloodshed 2.

Even if western Europe is not threatened presently by invasion or nuclear disaster now the Cold War has ended, it is in danger of becoming an island of security and prosperity surrounded by insecurity and conflict at its periphery. Such a development could bear considerable dangers for the West. First, clashes at the periphery could have serious social and economic repercussions in the West, either by disrupting economic transactions or by creating waves of westbound refugees. Second, a division of Europe into the stable and affluent West and an unstable and economically ruined periphery may in the future lead once more to the rise to power in the former Soviet block of governments hostile to the West 3.

In the longer run, the power vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe since the end of the Cold War threatens potentially to destabilise Europe in two ways:

- (i) It might draw Russia and the West in a competition for influence and control that could escalate through a series of major crises. Similar power vacuums in Central and Eastern Europe in the interwar years, as well as in East Asia after the collapse of Japan in 1945, resulted in crisis escalations that led to major warfare 4 (WWII, Korean War, Sino-Soviet border clashes).
- (ii) It might lead to a multiplication of local conflicts such as those that already have ruined much of former Yugoslavia and large parts of the southern periphery of the former Soviet Union.

Efforts to create a new architecture of European security, to prevent some future pan-European destabilization and to cope with regional instability, have focused on four institutions.

A. NATO. The Atlantic Alliance remains the main foundation of western European security. This was recognised by the European leaders at the European Council of Maastricht and confirmed by the members of the WEU (West European Union) 5. The hope expressed in the Treaty of European Union (Maastricht) that the WEU should in the future form the defence arm of the EU 6 does not mean that it will form a substitute for the existing security which is

provided by NATO and the American presence in Europe. On the contrary, the WEU is seen as the European pillar of NATO.

The importance of NATO for European security was confirmed by its military intervention in Bosnia, acting on behalf of the Security Council. In the Bosnian case the EU and the WEU took a secondary role. But NATO became involved in security tasks beyond its original mission, which was the defense of the member states from outside attack, only after a slow and gradual redefinition of its purpose in the new post-Cold War environment.

For the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, which were liberated from Soviet hegemony but at the same time lost the defensive protection of the Warsaw Pact, accession to NATO is the first priority regarding their national security in the future. NATO was slow in responding.

In Rome in November 1991 the leaders of NATO decided to form the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), which included the member states of NATO, the countries of Central Europe, and twelve former Soviet Republics 7. NACC grants political consultation and military cooperation with the West to the Central and Eastern European countries. It is not, however, sufficient to guarantee their security. In the summit meeting of Rome, NATO leaders decided also to change the orientation of the military power of NATO. From being a clearly defensive alliance, NATO decided to assume a broader "out-of-area" military role for the promotion of European security.

In that direction, the leaders of NATO decided in June 1992 that NATO could undertake peace-keeping - but not peace-making - military operations on behalf of the CSCE (since 1994 re-named OSCE) 8. Even this decision of NATO did not suffice to cover the security needs of the East European countries, since the OSCE has proven to be of limited value, as we shall see below.

In the second half of 1992 NATO began to act as a military instrument on behalf of the Security Council, becoming gradually involved in the Bosnian crisis. NATO's involvement began with monitoring the no-flight zone in Bosnia, then enforcing it, next enforcing the arms embargo in the Adriatic, and finally intervening militarily to force an end to the Bosnian conflict.

NATO's most significant step was its enlargement decision, at the Madrid Summit in July 1997, which constituted the culmination of a long decision-making process. As early as the autumn of 1993, Germany supported the quickest possible accession of the Visegrad countries to NATO, aiming to develop a security belt against a possible swing towards nationalism and expansionism in Russia. "The Visegrad countries . . . must be given a reasonable prospect of integration as full members of the Euro-Atlantic institutions and processes", the German Minister of Defence Volker Ruehe wrote in the Wall Street Journal on 9 September 1993, adding: "Those countries that satisfy the requirements for security integration, but have not yet developed far enough for economic integration, should not be excluded from NATO membership". Apparently, Germany, in view of her experience with German unification, hoped to avoid the immense economic cost of a speedy accession of the Visegrad countries to the EU and considered their accession to NATO as a more accessible option.

At that time, the United States took a different view, believing that the accession of the Visegrad countries to NATO would in effect be perceived as a threat by Russia. For the United States, which have less immediately involved interests in Central Europe than does Germany, the support of stability in Russia was more important at that time. Under internal pressure after the electoral success of the nationalists in the Russian parliamentary elections of 1993, President Yeltsin warned the United States that an expansion of NATO would cause "political and military instability" 9.

The American position prevailed at the NATO summit meeting of January 1994. Instead of a full accession to NATO, the states of the former Warsaw Pact (including the former Soviet Republics) were granted the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. This American proposal is flexible enough to allow Central and Eastern European countries to pursue a rapid strengthening of their military ties with NATO, if they so desire 10.

The rejection in early 1994 of a clear timetable for accession to NATO disappointed the Visegrad countries. The President of Poland Lech Walesa stated, that "I won't be satisfied if fifty years from now they say I was right. We kept crying and shouting in 1939, but they only believed us when the war reached Paris and London. The situation is very similar today" 11. The General Secretary of NATO Manfred Woerner protested that "this kind of discussion knows only two extremes - a security guarantee or a security vacuum. That is not realistic. There's a lot more shadows on the whole scale in between" 12. The reality, however, remained that the policy of NATO, even if justified in view of potential instability in Russia, was a very poor contribution to the security of nations that were formerly under Soviet hegemony.

In the autumn of 1994 the United States moved their policy closer to that of Germany's in 1993. Under American pressure, NATO decided in November 1994 to undertake a study that would determine the accession prospects and criteria for the states of Central Europe. Predictably, Russia saw this as a threat to her long-term security. President Yeltsin postponed signing a PfP agreement with NATO in December 1994 (it was signed in May 1995), and warned of a cooling of relations with the West, should NATO enlargement take place.

In spite of Russian objections, NATO proceeded with its enlargement decision in 1997. The first round of enlargement will be confined to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, much to the disappointment of Romania, which had been the first to sign into PfP and strongly desires to attain the security of NATO membership. In the interests of NATO's southern flank, including Greece, it is to be hoped that Romania, and perhaps Bulgaria as well, will be able to accede to NATO in the not-too-distant future.

B. The European Union. Taken as a whole, the EU is the greatest economic power in the world. After its revitalisation with the Single European Act (1985/1987) and the Treaty of European Union (1991/1993) the EU has moved decisively towards integration. Responsibility and competence in internal matters has passed more and more from the member states to the European level, as one can see from the rising strength of the European Court of Justice (the most "federal" institution of the European Union) 13.

Foreign policy is the weak point of European integration. As the fifteen member states of the European Union have differing national interests, they are reluctant to yield sovereignty to supra-national institutions in the field of foreign affairs, an area which is central to their status as sovereign states 14.

The Treaty of European Union progressed towards common foreign and defence policies but in such a way that does not interfere with the sovereign rights of the member-states. The treaty allows for the creation of a common foreign policy but only under the condition of unanimous consent. This allows each member state to maintain a different policy and exercise the power of veto if its national interests differ from those of the other member states. Moreover, the articles of the treaty which concern foreign policy have the distinct status of an intergovernmental agreement, and do not form a legal commitment to the EU. In other words the agreement of the member states depends on voluntary decisions and cannot be imposed upon them by the European Court (which is not competent in this matter). 15

Apart from the substantial restrictions of unanimity and voluntary commitment in foreign policy, the European Union does not have the means to function as an effective mechanism for the security of the whole of Europe (from the Atlantic to the Urals). The sole weapons at the disposal of the EU are the conclusion of economic agreements and the prospect of accession of non EU states. Beyond that, the powers of the EU in handling crises such as the Yugoslav Crisis are very limited. As Mr. Delors noted in 1991, the EU had just three means to influence developments in the Yugoslav crisis: public opinion, diplomatic recognition, and economic sanctions 16. Such means are proving to be insufficient in situations of escalating nationalism and explosions of peripheral violence. The main shortcoming of the EU is in the military sector, which concerns the WEU.

C. The West European Union. The Treaty of European Union refers those decisions of the EU which concern security policy to the WEU, incorporating it for the first time in the institutional structure of the EU (with the limitation, however, that the foreign and security policies of the EU do not form a part of the legal structure of the EU). The Treaty of European Union declares that the upgrading of the WEU does not constitute an attempt to substitute NATO.

Any attempt to create an independent European security presence without the United States would face a short term and a long term problem. In the short term, the WEU lacks a common command structure. It is not a completed, common military organisation, but an alliance of ten separate armed forces. Any military operation the WEU might undertake will confront the problem of command and control of the armies from the beginning, which renders it an exceptionally inflexible organisation. A mobilisation of the WEU in case of crisis will suffer from the delays which the negotiations for the appointment of a common command will occasion (concerning, for example, problems such as which member state will be charged with the command, how the duties of each of the member states will be allocated, how communications between the units will be coordinated). Without a permanent military command the WEU is not in a position to prepare in advance for such practical operational problems. 17

The long term problem is the relative military weakness of the EU compared with the United States. According to the RAND Corporation, the countries of the EU would have to commit 7% of their GDP to defence expenditure for a decade before they could create collective defence capabilities equal to those of the United States. At present the defence expenditures of most member states range between 1.5% and 2% of their GDPs, Greece constitutes the only significant exception 18. Thus Europe will remain dependent on the United States for many years, in view, at least, of a possible resurgence of serious threats, as may emerge, for example, from the rise to power of a nationalist government in Moscow.

Meanwhile the WEU could play a greater role for European security provided the member states promote the development of a common strategic culture. The creation of a mixed army corps by France, Germany and Belgium was a small step in this direction, but it suffered ridicule from the beginning, after the Belgians demanded that it operate with three languages (ie. that Flemish be added to French and German). If even the smallest step towards military integration falls victim to such domestic political traps, the creation of common armed forces will be unfeasible in the foreseeable future. In conclusion, NATO will continue in the foreseeable future to constitute the sole military organisation in a position to play an important role in European security.

D. The Organisation for the Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Compared with the other three European institutions that were examined, the OSCE has the advantage of including almost every country in Europe and North America. It forms, then, the widest forum for European security concerns.

This advantage is at the same time the Achilles' heel of the OSCE. Created during the Cold War, the CSCE (as it was called before 1994) was powerless in security matters from the time it was established. Neither of the two blocks was prepared to risk important interests in the procedures of an organisation that included the other block. During the Cold War, all the decisions of the CSCE had to be taken unanimously, which essentially rendered the body useless in regard to security problems. It must be granted, though, that the CSCE did contribute by its human rights efforts to the delegitimisation of the Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe 19.

After the Cold War, unanimity was replaced by unanimity minus one in security issues 20. This small concession of the member states at the expense of their sovereign rights is of very limited value. Unanimity minus one in the OSCE is a very rare phenomenon. If, for example, the OSCE was in effect in 1939, Hitler could have blocked a decision negative to himself with the vote of Mussolini. The OSCE does not constitute a guarantee for the security of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Beyond the problem of unanimity minus one in an organisation that includes such heterogeneous powers and national interests, the OSCE lacks the means to exercise pressure. It does not have military forces, except for those that NATO might put at its disposal. It cannot use economic power. As a means of influencing international public opinion it is overshadowed by other organisations like the EU. Even as a forum for discussions between the countries of NATO and those of the former Warsaw Pact, it is in danger of being substituted by the North Atlantic Council for Cooperation (NACC), which is attracting the interest of the East European countries because of the weight of the authority of NATO. 21

In conclusion, Europe has not developed security mechanisms, after the end of the Cold War, that can cover the countries of the former Warsaw Pact. The eastern periphery of Europe remains in effect a source of instability and, potentially, of military clashes. At present the security of this region is founded on ad hoc decisions and not on powerful institutional guarantees.

2. The Russian Factor

Though economically prostrate, Russia remains militarily formidable. Apart from her nuclear capabilities which are second only to those of the United States, Russia - or rather the Russian Ministry of Defence - is apparently also planning for a conventional ground army almost as strong as that of the United States 22. The Russian army's debacles in Chechnya were probably a misleading indicator of its overall capabilities, since the Chechnya operations were undertaken by inferior conscript units. On the other hand, the Russian Parliament has been reluctant to grant to the Russian military establishment the budget appropriations it requests.

Politically, the Yeltsin government is undeniably cooperative in its relations with the West. Domestic pressures, particularly after the parliamentary elections in December 1993 that led to a rise in the nationalist forces, have constrained the Yeltsin government to be more assertive on traditional Russian geopolitical interests. President Yeltsin has declared that the old ideological competition has been replaced by "a struggle for geopolitical spheres of influence" 23. But such rhetoric should not be taken to mean a return to antagonistic relations between Russia and the West.

Nonetheless, the persistence of the power vacuum between Russia and Western Europe might induce antagonisms, even if the Russian government remains fundamentally cooperative towards the West. From the Russian point of view, the end of the Cold War has entailed a drastic contraction in Russian power and influence, quite apart from the fate of the irrevocably buried Communist ideology. Naturally, most Russians wish to reverse this contraction to some extent, without being fundamentally hostile to the West. The potential for geopolitical friction with the West will increase, should a less cooperative leadership emerge in Moscow.

A brief comparison of Russia today and Germany in the interwar years might be a useful path to an assessment of the Russian factor in regard to European security at the turn of the millenium. There are similarities between these two cases, but also crucial differences.

The following are the main similarities:

(i) Russia today, like Germany in the 1920s, experiences national humiliation without having suffered total defeat. Just as many Germans ascribed the German defeat in WWI to internal betrayal or political failure of nerve, rather than defeat on the battlefield, so many Russians today blame the Soviet collapse on the "sell-out" of Gorbachev and/or Yeltsin to the West. The implication is, that a firmer leadership may recover lost power and influence. (Note, that this does not imply in Russia's case, nor did it imply in interwar Germany, any significant movement for a return to the old and discredited political system.)

(ii) Economic instability and widespread hardship was added in both cases to national humiliation. This made it more difficult in the German case for the moderate democratic leadership to assert its authority in the face of demagogic opposition pushing for stronger and more authoritarian government. The electoral setback of the moderate and reformist political forces in the parliamentary elections of December 1993 suggests some similarity in the Russian case, though Yeltsin's reelection has postponed the danger of a nationalistic regime.

(iii) The lack of a significant democratic tradition is another factor present in both cases, which in the German case facilitated the rise of demagogic, authoritarian forces to power.

(iv) In both cases, retreat from empire left behind a security vacuum, which provided an obvious territorial locus for a reassertion of expanding power and influence. Germany in the 1930s moved primarily against the Central and Eastern European states that emerged from the collapse of the two Germanic and the Russian Empires. (After the Anschluss of Austria in 1938, it became particularly natural for Germany to pursue the territorial legacy of the Austrian as well as her

own former Empire.) Russia today is asserting her primacy in the "near abroad", i.e. the states that emerged out of the former Soviet Union.

The crucial differences between the German case of the interwar years and the Russian case today must also be emphasized:

a) Germany after 1918 remained the most formidable industrial economy of the Eastern Hemisphere, able later to sustain a massive rearmament and war effort. By way of contrast, Russia today has a far weaker industrial base than the United States, Western Europe, or Japan. As a consequence, it is extremely unlikely in the foreseeable future that even some different and radical Russian leadership would dare directly to challenge the West in any way remotely resembling Hitler's expansionist policies.

b) The United States today continue to maintain a strong military presence in Europe and other parts of the periphery of Eurasia, in stark contrast to their isolationism in the interwar years. This factor is vital in the light of the continued Russian military superiority - at least in nuclear, biological and chemical armaments - over Western Europe and Japan.

c) Western policy towards the Soviet Union under Gorbachev, and towards Russia subsequently, has been the opposite of the punitive Versailles Treaty. The decline and collapse of Communism was followed not by imposed reparations, but by massive western aid to Russia. President Bush opposed the disintegration of the Soviet Union until it had become a fait accompli by internal Soviet developments. Russia continues to enjoy a formal great power status, and is not excluded from the deliberations of the international community - unlike Germany in the immediate post-WWI years. There is thus less legitimate cause for Russian anti-Western resentment than in the German case.

d) In terms of long-term structural trends in the international distribution of power, the potential for geopolitical friction between Russia and the West in Europe is likely to become less acute after some two decades. The sustained economic growth of China is likely to result in a formidable Chinese challenge to Russia's national interests in East Asia. This in turn is likely to divert Russian security efforts away from Europe, thus opening the way for a decline of Europe as the locus of major great-power antagonisms. If this structural assessment is correct, the problem of European security will remain acute only for the next two decades or so.

To conclude, Russia is likely to follow a path of assertion of its international power and influence in the regions in her proximity. A policy of global interests, as followed by Stalin's Soviet successors, is extremely unlikely. But closer to the Russian homeland, though not in all the regions that Stalin coveted, Russia will seek to be a major, if not the primary source of influence and control. Nonetheless, Russia's ability directly to oppose Western policy in Central and Eastern Europe is severely constrained by Russian structural weakness in the international distribution of power.

3. Policy Proposals

A. Firm policy on EU and NATO enlargement. The European Union committed itself to a policy of enlargement in Central Europe at the Copenhagen European Council in June 1993, and formalised this commitment at the General Affairs Council of 30-31 October 1994 24. In the first round of further enlargement, the EU is formally considering Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia, as well as Cyprus, while another five states, including Romania and Bulgaria, are under consideration for a second round. NATO also committed itself to an eastward enlargement, though so far this applies only to three states, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic 25.

In part, the enlargement criteria are the same for both the EU and NATO. New members must be stable Western democracies with free-market economies. Moreover, they must guarantee minority rights and enjoy pacific and cooperative relations with their neighbours. In short, they must have sufficiently evolved towards the West to be able formally to integrate into the Western community.

Beyond these common criteria, the enlargements of the EU and NATO pose very different problems. For the EU, enlargement means a general overhaul of its institutional and budgetary arrangements. An EU with 21 members would be virtually unworkable under the present decision-making procedures. It would also, under present policies involving transfer payments (CAP, structural policies), involve an explosion in the EU's budget. These problems were not addressed at the EU's Inter-Governmental Conference of 1996-7. Upon the success of reforms concerning these aspects of the EU is predicated not only the enlargement policy, but the very future of the EU as an integrated block itself. 26

From the perspective of the EU's prospective members, accession means difficult economic and legal adjustments to the Single Market. Only economies far advanced in the transition from the communist to the free-market system of production will be able to undertake these adjustments.

NATO enlargement leads to the problem of substantively extending the security guarantee to the new members. If this is to take place in a manner that secures credible deterrence, without a massive increase in West European and US defence spending, the new members will have to contribute to the common military security apparatus (ie to be security producers, as well as consumers). This will require a radical restructuring of the military establishments of the prospective members, to make them NATO-compatible. The PfP programme provides a method to facilitate such restructuring with Western cooperation 27.

Ideally, EU and NATO expansion ought to proceed simultaneously. This would provide an integrated approach, whereby a prospective member would be admitted once it met the political, economic and military requirements and would thus be comprehensively fit formally to join the Western community. 28

Unfortunately, this approach would be detrimental to the peculiar problems and needs of NATO's Southern Flank. On the one hand, the former communist states in the Balkans are economically more backward than their Visegrad counterparts, and thus likely to see their accession to the EU delayed (the reference here is to Romania and Bulgaria, since no other Balkan state has so far been formally included in the EU enlargement process). On the other hand, integration of Romania and Bulgaria in the West would contribute decisively to the stabilisation of the Balkans. Balkan instability is of vital concern to Southern Flank states, and likely if unchecked to affect all Europe.

It is worth stressing, that Romania and Bulgaria have resolutely steered clear of the Balkan crises that attended the collapse of Yugoslavia. Indeed, they suffered grievous economic damage, at a critical stage in their economic transition, to uphold the UN economic sanctions against Serbia. They should be encouraged to proceed rapidly towards integration in the West. This can only be achieved, if the prospect is opened to them of acceding to NATO - subject to meeting its political and military criteria - before they are able to meet the economic criteria for accession to the EU. There are precedents for this differentiation in the cases of Portugal and Greece, who joined the EEC some three decades after their accession to NATO.

The process of EU and NATO enlargement should not be linked to Russian policy. Russia lacks the structural capabilities to engage in a new confrontation with the West. After the disastrous experience of Soviet over-extension, the Russian leadership is well aware that its top priority cannot but be economic development. Yet any renewed confrontation with the West is likely to undermine the prospect of economic reform, and will act as a constraint even upon a possibly more nationalistic future Russian government.

The real danger concerning Russia is, that the West will not clearly circumscribe the limits of acceptable Russian reassertiveness in the former Soviet sphere of influence. The earlier and the firmer the West makes clear that the road to NATO accession is open to any Central and Eastern European country that demonstrates the will and capacity to join the Western community, the less likely a European destabilisation becomes.

b) Compensation and reassurance of Russia. To compensate Russia at least partially for EU and NATO enlargement, the West ought to accept and support Russian primacy in Central Asia and the Caucasus (the US already have formally accepted Russian "peace-keeping" involvement in Georgia 29). In those areas, Western and Russian interests largely coincide. For historical reasons, Russia is likely to help stabilise this volatile region, and to prevent it from being swept by Islamic fundamentalism. Russia is also best placed, and most directly interested in arresting nuclear, biological and chemical weapons proliferation via outflows of former Soviet weaponry from those regions.

While Russian primacy in Central Asia and the Caucasus cannot but be a very meagre psychological compensation for the loss of the former Soviet control of Central and Eastern Europe, it is in correspondence with the new distribution of power, as well as with the new political realities (the will of the former Soviet satellites to join the West is unambiguous). Moreover, an active reassertion of Russian leadership in Central Asia and the Caucasus is likely to absorb the bulk of Russia's limited energies - as her Chechnya debacle seems to suggest - and thus reduce her willingness seriously to resist NATO's enlargement.

A substantive Western recognition and support of Russian primacy in the southern periphery of the former Soviet Union might also facilitate a reassurance of Russia, that EU and NATO enlargement is not designed and intended as an anti-Russian policy.

In the grey area between the likely outer limits of prospective NATO and EU enlargement on the one hand, and the Caucasus on the other, lie the former Soviet republics of Ukraine and Belarus. The latter is moving away from the West. No consensus has yet formed within Ukraine concerning its future geopolitical orientation. It is not inconceivable that she will evolve in the direction of Poland's and Romania's Western geopolitical orientation, but it seems unlikely at present. On the other hand, the perceptible pro-Russian backlash in Ukraine does not mean that she is prepared to renounce her independence and join Russia in a federal union. In the light of this uncertainty, the West should pursue an open policy that supports her internal reforms but refrains from guiding her external orientation. Such a careful stance is likely additionally to reassure Russia, that EU and NATO enlargement is not guided by an anti-Russian objective.

c) The equilibrium of East Asia. The economic rise of Japan, which can easily be converted to a military ascendancy (just as with the US in 1917-8 and, more permanently, after 1940), and the rise of China, which now combines a significant military arsenal with one fifth of the earth's population and persistently high economic growth rates, are altering the global equilibrium. In addition to Japan and China, a number of smaller East Asian states also rose rapidly, prior to the 1997-98 crisis. If recent differential growth rates return, the Pacific will soon become the core region in the international distribution of power.

Managing the East Asian equilibrium, and preventing one power from gaining hegemony over East Asia's rising industrial bases, is likely in the future to become almost as central a problem in world politics as the management of the European equilibrium has been over the past four centuries.

The emerging problem of the East Asian equilibrium is likely to help solve the waning problem of the European equilibrium. The combined industrial resources of all Europe up to the Urals are likely in two decades to be overtaken

by the resources of East Asia. Thus, European integration - including Central and Eastern Europe - no longer threatens to destabilise international politics. The emerging threat to Russian interests is from the East, not the West.

The sooner Russia becomes aware of these trends in the global equilibrium, and of the potentially profoundly destabilising developments in East Asia, the sooner she will seek good relations with the West in Europe and even Western support to maintain her position in the Far East. Conversely, for the Western powers Russia might in the future come to be seen as a valuable factor in managing the East Asian equilibrium.

This potential long-term convergence between Western and Russian interests in the management of the East Asian equilibrium might, in the hands of far-sighted statesmanship, be utilised to promote the security and stabilisation of Europe now. The sooner the power vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe is replaced by stable arrangements, the less likely will new West-Russian antagonisms become, and the more likely will the West and Russia be able to work together in the Far East. But given current geopolitical and political reality, this power vacuum can only be effectively replaced by EU and NATO enlargement.

Russia has no longer the structural capabilities to successfully resist EU and NATO enlargement. But should she fail to adjust to this reality, should she engage in a futile effort of resistance, she stands to lose much more both in her economic effort and in her East Asian position, and to decline from the ranks of the great powers as fast as late seventeenth century Spain. In light of the emerging needs of maintaining the East Asian equilibrium, this would not be in the Western interest. Diverting Russia's geopolitical orientation to the East, and settling Europe on Western terms, is under the emerging global circumstances in the best interest of both sides.

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28. This argument has been put forth, for example, by Senator S. Nunn, "The Future of NATO in an Uncertain World", speech to the SACLANT Seminar 95, Norfolk, Virginia, 22 June 1995.
29. Gallis, P.E, "Partnership for Peace", Congressional Research Service, Report for Congress, 9 August 1994, p. 6.