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**POLISH FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY:
DILEMMAS OF MULTI-NATIONAL INTEGRATION AND
ALLIANCE COHESION, 1989-2005**

by

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June 2005

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COHESION, 1989-2005**

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ABSTRACT

In the post-9/11 era, US and European security interests have diverged. During the lead-up to the war in Iraq, this became unmistakable when the Europeans, Germany and France especially, suddenly began to question the nature of the terrorist threat and the militaristic US approach to it. Despite this fact, and its impending EU membership, Poland sided with the United States. While it was the subject of extensive criticism from its future EU patrons, the Polish government appeared oblivious to the potential that its long-held desire to enjoy the benefits of its ties with both Europe and the United States was now jeopardized by the rift between the two. In an uncertain world and among the new threats post-9/11, the Republic of Poland found itself confronted with the prospect of having to choose for the first time between its close relationship with the United States and its European ties. Despite Poland's participation in the war in Iraq and its initial steadfast opposition to the EU constitution, the apparent atlanticist foundation of Poland's security policy is only a temporary necessity. Poland will eventually fully return to Europe, where its economic and political interests already lie, and its security will be.

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I. INTRODUCTION¹

In the post-9/11 era, US and European security interests have diverged. Though this situation was not immediately apparent in the aftermath of the attacks of 11 September 2001, during the lead-up to the war in Iraq, the truth of the matter became unmistakable when the Europeans, led by Germany and France, suddenly began to question the nature of the terrorist threat and the militaristic approach advocated by the United States. Despite this difference of opinion among its allies, and its own impending European Union (EU) membership, Poland sided with the United States. While Poland was the subject of extensive criticism from its future European Union patrons, its government appeared oblivious to the potential that its long-held desire to enjoy the benefits of its ties with both Europe and the United States was now jeopardized by the rift between the two. In an uncertain world and among the new threats post-9/11, the Republic of Poland found itself confronted with the prospect of having to choose for the first time between its close relationship with the United States and its European ties.²

While Poland struggled with the fallout of its decision to support the United States and the war in Iraq against the recommendations of France and Germany, it exacerbated the problem through its relations with the European Union. By early December 2003, when the Heads of State and Government of the European Union met in Brussels to adopt the EU constitution, Poland again chose to take up a position in opposition to that of France and Germany. Despite the fact that it was still not a member of the European Union, Poland remained firm in its opposition to the constitution presented to the summit.

A. ARGUMENT

An initial assessment of these situations would lead one to believe that Poland had chosen the United States over its European partners in both cases. One's first reaction is:

¹ The definitive source on Polish foreign policy after 1989 is *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered*, edited by Ilya Prizel and Andrew A. Michta. For information regarding current Polish foreign and security policy since September 11, 2001, Marcin Zaborowski's *Poland: A New Power in Transatlantic Security* provides an in-depth study. Polish history prior to the end of the communist era is covered in depth by Norman Davies in his two volumes entitled *God's Playground*.

² This thesis was written prior to the rejection of the EU Constitution by the French and Dutch populations on 29 May and 1 June 2005 respectively.

"Not only is Poland pro-United States, but it is also anti-European Union." This, however, is not the case. Poland is, in fact, pro-United States, but is also a strong supporter of the European Union. The actual explanation of this fact, however, is a trifle more complicated. In a world where the United States and Europe no longer share the same security interests, Poland finds itself in a precarious situation with regard to its own security. In Europe, more specifically the European Union, Poland finds an institution that shares many of its political and economic interests, but which lacks the capabilities to provide the security assurances that Poland requires. In the United States, Poland sees the capabilities necessary to provide the security guarantees it needs, but can never be sure that US interests will extend beyond rhetoric and inevitably result in the actual realization of these guarantees. This is the crux of Poland's security problem. When US and European security interests were in harmony, Poland could rely on the capabilities of the United States and the interests of Europe to credibly guarantee its security. When US and European security interests diverge, as they have now, Poland can no longer rely on the benefits offered by both and, ultimately, must choose either a relationship promising interests, but without capabilities or that promising capabilities, but without interests. Because interests without capabilities provide minimal benefit, and certainly no true guarantees, Poland must choose the capabilities offered by the United States, despite its concern about the reliability of US interests. Certainly this idea helps explain Poland's steadfast support of the United States in the war in Iraq and demonstrates the apparent atlanticist foundation of Polish security policy.

At the same time, however, this atlanticism is only a temporary condition. Poland's confrontational reputation within the European Union has been earned with the purpose of bolstering its ability to influence the pace and direction of European integration within the European Union. Instead of merely working to protect its national interests, Poland is also serving notice that its views must be taken into account. By voicing its concerns and its interests, Poland is announcing them to its other European partners and putting them on the table for consideration. Simultaneously, Poland is serving notice that it will influence the debate, that it will be a regional leader within the European Union, and that it will not allow its interests to be swept aside or, worse yet, ignored.

Poland is, in fact, biding its time and relying on the security guarantees of the United States until such time as Europe's defense capabilities mature and provide the necessary guarantees required by Poland. Given its physical ties on the continent, there can be little doubt that when Europe achieves the capabilities necessary to provide for Poland's defense and recognizes its threats Poland will no longer be compelled to rely on US security guarantees and, if obligated to choose between the United States or its continental allies, will find its security in Europe.

B. OVERVIEW

This thesis will provide evidence to support the assertion above. In Chapter III, Poland's activities as a relatively new member of both NATO and the European Union will be laid out for the reader. Immediately apparent will be the fact that without an existing European Union capability to provide for Poland's defense, Poland has relied on NATO, and more specifically the United States, to guarantee its security since 1989. Because the United States has minimal actual interests in Poland, however, the Polish government has continually made references to its solidarity with the alliance and demonstrated its reliability through troop deployments and other support in the hopes that this will ensure American reciprocation when necessary. Poland's actions within NATO are a symbol of Poland's concerns with US credibility. Poland is "whistling in the dark." By speaking loudly and often about the necessity for solidarity and reliability, Poland is focusing attention on its own concerns related to those concepts within the alliance.

At the same time, Poland is well aware that the European Union does not currently have an existing reliable defense capability. Despite that fact, however, Poland acknowledges that its political and economic interests rest with those of the union. While Poland's initial motivation in 1989 for joining the union was driven by economic interests, as the union has evolved, so too have Poland's objectives. As a middle power, conscious of its rightful place in Europe, Poland has sought a leading role within the European Union. To that end, Poland has determined that only by making its interests known can it influence events within the union and ensure that its concerns are not stifled by those of the European Union's larger members. While its support of the European Security and Defense Policy was originally intended to support the improvement of European capabilities within NATO, Poland has come to realize that these capabilities

will also play an important role in the defense of Europe. Without an acknowledgement of the security concerns of its Eastern and Central European partners, however, these capabilities will not offer any more credibility than Poland received in September 1939 when Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union invaded.

Chapter IV of this thesis will provide evidence even more indicative of the nature of Polish foreign and security policy and its motivation within NATO and the European Union through its discussion of the case studies of Poland's support of the United States in the war in Iraq and the tough negotiating position taken by Poland in the debates on the EU constitution. Each of these cases provides further evidence of Polish security interests and the direction in which Polish security policy is being led. Polish support of the war in Iraq is all about the solidarity that Poland's support represents. It is a tangible demonstration of Poland's willingness to honor its commitments. At the same time, there is the hope that, when Poland requires assistance, the United States will remember Poland's support in Iraq and honor its own commitments to Poland.

The debate on the EU constitution represents Poland's insistence that its interests be considered. In order to influence the European Union and ensure that its voice is heard, Poland has demonstrated that it will defend its interests and will not subordinate them as a matter of course to those of other states. In the end, the Polish position maintained in the negotiations of the EU constitution revealed Poland's determination to play a central role in further EU integration and to represent the concerns of its less-powerful neighbors.

Finally, while many political scientists point to the importance of domestic politics in the shaping of foreign and security policies, this issue has been of little significance in the case of Poland. Chapter II will describe how, since 1989 and the work of Poland's first foreign minister, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, a consensus has been at work among all political parties. Across the spectrum and including the government and the responsible opposition, accord has reigned with regard to Poland's foreign and security policy objectives and how best to achieve them--there is no United States-Europe cleavage in Polish political circles. While the politicians worked to bring Poland into the West's political, economic, and security structures, the Polish public has largely remained

absorbed in its own economic well-being and has been satisfied to leave issues of foreign and security policy to its experts.

C. POLISH SECURITY POLICY IN HISTORY

In 1989, following the collapse of the Iron Curtain, Poland's initial foray into the newly-emerging international community dictated that Poland take stock of its foreign and security policy and begin the political debates to determine the direction it would take. Central to any political debate in Poland at this time concerning its foreign and security policy was Poland's history. Two themes have largely dominated Polish foreign and security policy—Poland's historic struggle to defend itself from the superpowers to its east and west, and the unreliability of Poland's European allies to defend it against these perceived threats.

1. Traditional Enemies

Writer Norman Davies refers to Poland as "God's Playground," an apt moniker when one considers Poland's history of subjugation and occupation. In the 18th Century, between 1772 and 1795, Poland was partitioned on three occasions by Russia, Prussia, and Austria and eventually ceased to exist as a state. Though Poland emerged as an independent state after the First World War, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact would result in the fourth partition of Poland with the invasions of Germany and the Soviet Union.

2. Unreliable Allies

An equally troubling trend in Poland's history is the unreliability of its European allies. Beginning with the partitions of Poland in the 18th Century, Europe appeared to give implicit support to the actions taken by Prussia, Russia, and Austria in eliminating Poland as a state. The rest of Europe seemed self-absorbed and generally unconcerned with the fate of Poland. During the Polish-Soviet War in 1920, Poland's allies were unwilling to make firm promises to defend Poland in the event Russia attacked. In fact, in several cases, British politicians were more suspicious of Poland's actions and motives than they were those of Russia. Another issue worrisome to Marshal Jozef Pilsudski and Poland was the Western European powers' reaction to the Rapallo Treaty signed by Russia and Germany in 1922.³ Ilya Prizel, in his book, *National Identity and Foreign*

³ The Treaty of Rapallo normalized diplomatic relations between Russia and Germany and signaled their renunciation of all territorial and financial claims from the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and the First World War.

Policy, describes a recommendation concerning France's relationship with Poland made by Marshal Foch during a visit to Warsaw in which he “suggested that Paris' military commitments to Poland should be modified in case of German aggression and should be inoperative regarding Russia.”⁴ This suggestion was met with great disdain by Polish politicians, as was the achievement of the Locarno Agreement in 1925, in which Poland still received no guarantees of their western border with Germany.⁵

Ultimately, however, the best example of Europe’s failure to defend Poland is the European reaction to Hitler’s expansionist policies. The policy of appeasement demonstrated by Chamberlain and Daladier at Munich in 1938 illustrated to Poland that Eastern Europe was nothing more than a “bargaining chip” that Western European states were more than willing to wager in order to prevent the possibility of war with Hitler. Though the British responded to Poland shortly thereafter with a promise of support, when Hitler invaded in September 1939, the promise was not kept (something that Hitler had expected all along) and Poland left to defend itself—in this case from threats in both the West and the East.

Given this history, it is understandable why, after nearly 50 years of Soviet domination, Poland would emerge with a unanimous foreign and security policy that was Western-oriented. While the government engaged in providing for the security of the Polish state, its people, solidly behind their politicians, turned to improving their lives. In the realm of domestic politics, the consensus achieved in Poland's first democratically-elected government continues today. At the same time, their people continue to pay little attention to those issues, especially in the international arena, that only minimally impact their daily lives.

⁴ Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 71.

⁵ The Locarno Treaties, signed on October 16, 1925, included seven agreements between Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Italy that served to guarantee Germany's western border and to move toward a normalization of relations in the region.

II. POLISH FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY: DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS?

Political scientists often point to domestic political constraints to explain the foreign policy positions of politicians and policymakers. Among policymakers, domestic politics often plays a central role in determining their particular stance on an issue. Choices regarding a particular foreign policy issue, available to a particular politician, are tools with which he can woo voters and attract support. In Poland, however, since 1989, there have been few domestic political constraints related to foreign and security policy issues. This chapter will demonstrate that this domestic political consensus has endured, even as the rift between the United States and Europe appeared, and continues today. Evidence of this is apparent, first, in the broad support of Poland's political parties for the government's policy decisions, and, ultimately, is quite visible in the general indifference of its public toward foreign policy issues.

Following the election of its first democratic government, a consensus emerged with regard to Poland's foreign and security policy priorities. After more than 50 years of Soviet subjugation, Poland needed to integrate into the economic, political, and security institutions of the West. Poland had to join the European Union and NATO. Equally important was the establishment of a close bilateral relationship with the United States. Beginning with Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski, the Polish government began its work toward achieving membership in the European Union and NATO. This consensus continued throughout the 1990s and still exists today. Ilya Prizel and Andrew Michta make this clear when they contend that "[f]oreign policy is the single issue on which Poland's fractious and divided political scene has managed to reach a lasting consensus."⁶

A. POLITICAL PARTIES

Since 1989, domestic politics has not significantly limited the formulation of a Polish foreign and security policy. Polish political parties, including the governing coalition and the responsible opposition have continued to agree on the general track of

⁶ Ilya Prizel and Andrew A. Michta, eds., *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 23.

this policy. While there has been some rhetorical criticism, this is largely for domestic consumption and is related to the way a decision is carried out more than about how. According to a US government official in Europe, the government's main opposition has continually referred to three issues in its disapproval of the current government--the poor way in which the Polish government has carried out the deployment of troops in support of the war in Iraq, the poor implementation of the offset agreements associated with the F-16 fighters purchased from the United States by the Polish government, and the ineffective negotiations carried out by the government to achieve a revocation of the US requirement of visas for Polish citizens. In each of these cases, there is no criticism of the government's general decision. Disagreement is related to the implementation of these decisions. Ultimately, even this criticism is only meant to serve to differentiate the stance of the opposition from that of the government. According to the American official, the opposition parties have reassured him continually that their criticism on the three issues above is merely a matter of "politics," rather than a substantive disagreement. In the end, the opposition is well aware that it would face the same obstacles and circumstances were it in power.

The government and the opposition have been ardent supporters of Poland's membership in the European Union and NATO, and its close relationship with the United States. All political parties supported the government's resolute stance in opposition to the EU constitution. When Prime Minister Leszek Miller first traveled to Brussels in December 2003, he did so with the support of all parties who agreed that Poland was best served in a European Union whose decisions were made according to the voting weights under the Nice Treaty. Following the Foreign Minister's policy address to the Sejm in January 2004, leader of the opposition party Law and Justice Jaroslaw Kaczynski "praised the government for the tough stance it presented at the Brussels summit."⁷ In Kaczynski's own words: "'You have served Poland well, gentlemen, and this is something worth saying even if one represents the staunch opposition.'"⁸ There was agreement that Polish interests required protection and that only by asserting itself would Poland be taken seriously and reckoned a political force on the European continent. All

⁷ Warsaw *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 22 January 2004. FBIS-EUP 20040123000014 (23 January 2004).

⁸ Ibid.

parties continue to understand the importance of EU membership and, while willing to fight for terms more advantageous to Poland, are unwilling to countenance the possibility of a Poland outside the European Union.⁹ There is widespread recognition that the European Union, through the Common Agricultural Policy and regional funds, will continue to benefit the Polish people. According to the European Commission's representative in Poland, Bruno Dethomas, "Warsaw should receive 6.5 to 7 billion euros in net Community payments up to the end of 2006."¹⁰ While some of the parties of the responsible opposition are somewhat euroskeptic, their objections are related to the extent of integration. The issue is a matter of degree vice integration itself. Of the parties that are completely opposed to EU membership--Samoobrona (SO) and the League of Polish Families (LPR)--their opposition is based on their populist ideas that champion the isolationism of Poland. Neither of these parties, however, represents responsible opposition parties since they criticize the policies of the government, without offering their own viable solutions. Samoobrona and the League of Polish Families oppose the government for the sake of opposition, rather than presenting other possible policies. In late 2004, for example, the LPR, which had been staunchly opposed to the EU constitution even after the government eventually agreed to sign, sought to try the Polish prime minister because he signed a constitution that violated the Polish constitution. Expressing his party's position, LPR leader Roman Giertych accused the prime minister of accepting a document that "'deprived Poland of even a shadow of influence on EU affairs, promoted libertarian ideas which have caused much harm in Europe, put Europe under the control of the French-German tandem and ran against the Polish constitution by putting EU jurisdiction above Polish laws."¹¹ Samoobrona, for its part, is not opposed to the European Union, but would seek to renegotiate the accession treaty. Andrzej Lepper, the charismatic leader of Samoobrona, spelled out his party's stance prior to Poland's ratification of the accession treaty in May 2003 during a visit to the European Parliament.

⁹ For a better understanding of party politics and Poland's progression toward EU membership, consider Grzegorz Pozarlik's chapter entitled "Polish Political Parties and a Discourse on Polish *Raison d'etat* on the Eve of EU Membership" in *Between Animosity and Utility: Political Parties and Their Matrix*, Hieronim Kubiak and Jerzy J. Wiatr, eds. (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, 2000)

¹⁰ Paris *La Tribune*, 6 June 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030606000156 (6 June 2003).

¹¹ Warsaw PAP, 29 October 2004. FBIS-EUP 20041030000034 (30 October 2004).

Lepper asserted that "if the conditions [of accession] do not change, the new government created by his party, will force its way out of the EU."¹² Although Samoobrona has never been a member of any ruling coalition in Poland, his statement reflects the sort of policy that he would strive to implement were Samoobrona afforded the opportunity.

The debate surrounding Poland's relationship with the United States illustrates the same political pattern. Beginning in 1989 with the Solidarity government of Lech Walesa, Polish political parties agreed that Poland should seek a close relationship with the United States. They each realized that the United States was largely responsible for the victory in the Cold War, and Poland's reemergence as an independent state. Early on this agreement was nearly unanimous, even among the Polish populace. Only after the government came out in support of the war in Iraq, was one able to sense a weakening of this popular support. In the post 9/11 era and the lead-up to the war in Iraq, there was widespread political support of the US position. Polish opposition parties understood the benefits to be gained and the obligations their participation would accomplish. Despite the fact that the decision was one taken by the executive leadership and not the Sejm, Poland's politicians accepted the risks involved and recognized the wisdom of the decision. Again the only steadfast and unequivocal opposition to a close relationship with the United States is presented by Samoobrona and the League of Polish Families. They are the only parties that have demanded the immediate withdrawal of Polish troops from Iraq and have been the most radical and vocal in their opposition of the government's decision to deploy troops in support of the United States. When the Sejm adopted the President's decision to deploy troops in support of the war in Iraq, the LPR deemed the act unconstitutional. In the minds of its members, the President and the government were obligated to seek the Sejm's authority before deploying troops. On 20 March 2003, the day after the government informed the Sejm of its decision, the LPR's leader, Roman Giertych charged that "if [Polish President] Aleksander Kwasniewski and [Prime Minister] Leszek Miller made such a decision on their own, they broke the basic law."¹³ Other parties in the opposition defended the government's actions. Further demonstrating the populist tendencies of the LPR was Giertych's call for a referendum on

¹² Brussels EUObserver, 9 May 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030509000045 (9 May 2003).

¹³ Warsaw *Zycie Warszawy*, 20 March 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030323000328 (20 March 2003).

the presence of Polish troops in Iraq in August 2004. Although there is no doubt that many Poles agree with the questions posed by the LPR and Samoobrona given the lack of popular support for the maintenance of Polish troops in Iraq, this sort of appeal demonstrates a general lack of understanding of the political implications of such a proposed withdrawal on the future of Polish foreign, as well as security, policy.

While the responsible opposition seeks to criticize the government's failure to properly implement its foreign and security policies, the LPR and Samoobrona continue to criticize issues, such as the terms of the accession treaty and Poland's involvement in Iraq, to peel voters away from the other parties. To some extent, they have been successful, but there is little doubt that, while they have nothing to lose in opposing the government, it is highly unlikely that they could afford to make a decision different from that taken by the current government. Poland's responsible opposition parties have avoided the positions adopted by the LPR and Samoobrona, realizing their lack of credibility.

B. THE PUBLIC

Though the government and the opposition continued to support close ties with the United States, to include deploying Polish troops in support of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the people were unwilling to support a relationship requiring them to possibly sacrifice their sons. Polls throughout 2003 and 2004 by TNS OBOP, the Polish international market research company, continued to reveal an overwhelming rejection of the government's deployment of Polish troops to Iraq. According to results published by the Polish Press Agency in September 2004, the lack of support for the mission in Iraq had grown to 71 percent of those polled, against only 23 percent that believed that the mission was a good idea.¹⁴ Though the polls expressed the popular discontent with the war, the Polish penchant for demonstrations was never evident in anywhere near the way it was in the early 1980s and the days of the Solidarity movement. Perhaps because of this fact, the government and the responsible opposition parties were never compelled to consider changing their stance. No change in position was apparent and most parties agreed that any attempt to withdraw their forces as Spain had done

¹⁴ Warsaw PAP, 22 September 2004. FBIS-EUP 20040922000235 (22 September 2004).

following the Madrid bombing could demonstrate weakness and put Poland at risk. The Foreign Broadcast Information Service reports the reaction of one Polish politician. According to Marek Jurek of the Law and Justice Party (PiS): "In the wake of the Madrid attacks, any sign of wavering is dangerous."¹⁵ He goes on to assert that "Poland's security 'depends on universal security,' therefore 'Poland should continue to support the United States.'" Had there been large, and possibly violent, protests, there is little doubt that politicians would have had to consider altering their position to protect national stability. Much like the American public, the Polish population is absorbed primarily by their economic well-being and that of the Polish state. Those Poles that are specifically impacted by foreign policy decisions have an interest in these policies, while those that do not--also like Americans--do not pay them much attention.

The Polish electorate is largely disinterested in politics. As Marjorie Castle and Ray Taras explain in *Democracy in Poland*, "With the exception of the June 1989 semi-free parliamentary elections—few people realized at the time that it would prove so historic—when 63 percent of voters cast ballots, successive parliamentary elections have generally drawn about one-half of the electorate to the polling stations."¹⁶ Though the Polish President is largely a figure-head and plays a limited role in advancing legislation, Poles also are more inclined to vote in presidential rather than parliamentary elections. Those Poles that are interested in politics are more attuned to domestic developments and much less interested in the foreign policy of their government or the foreign policy votes of their adopted party. Equally troublesome is Poland's high voter volatility and low party identification. According to Janina Paradowska and Jerzy Baczynski in their article, "Voters Without a Choice:" "Although parties try to appeal directly to the population, they are nevertheless generally weakly (sic) rooted in the field (only one percent of Poles surveyed reported that they belong to any sort of party)."¹⁷ Castle and Taras cite a study of the 1993 and 1997 Polish parliamentary elections that found that "58 percent of voters switched their support and only 23 percent cast ballots for the same

¹⁵ Polish Press Highlights, 22 March 2004. FBIS-EUP 20040322000278 (22 March 2004).

¹⁶ Marjorie Castle and Ray Taras, *Democracy in Poland* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002), 164. These swings have been attributable in the past to discontent with the economic program of the ruling party.

¹⁷ Warsaw *Polityka*, 24 April 2004. FBIS-EUP 20040424000312 (24 April 2004).

party or its successor.”¹⁸ Though Poland has a history, as in the Solidarity movement, of popular protests as a means of influencing politics, this phenomenon has declined since the days of Solidarity. From its height in 1993, when there were 7,443 strikes in Poland, encompassing 383,000 workers, strikes as a means of influencing politics have dropped considerably. “From 1995 on there were never more than 42 strikes in any given year and never more than 44,000 workers were involved.”¹⁹ This is attributable, in large part, to improving labor and economic conditions, as well as to the passage, in 1991, of arbitration and negotiations legislation. Those demonstrations that take place in Poland today are related to economic conditions or are a reaction to a particular government policy that has adversely affected a certain sector of the economy. In any case, the Polish electorate has generally withdrawn from politics and certainly continues to play an extremely minor role in Polish foreign policy decisions.

With a public that is uninterested in international politics, Poland's politicians have little to worry about in making foreign policy decisions. The Polish government's adoption of stances that have at one time been opposed by a large segment of the Polish population is demonstrative of this fact. Given the agreement among the government and its opposition regarding foreign and security policy decisions, there can be little doubt that neither group is willing to change its position simply to match that of the Polish public because they understand the potential consequences of such a decision.

There is agreement among the government and the opposition about the direction that Polish foreign and security policy should be moving and the position to be taken by Poland. This is certainly visible in the decision made, beginning in 1989, to apply for membership in both NATO and the European Union. At that time, Polish politicians understood the uncertain situation in which the state found itself. Recognizing the promise offered by Western institutions, Poland sought to achieve the benefits of political, economic, and defense integration.

¹⁸ Castle and Taras, 169.

¹⁹ Ibid, 178.

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III. THE EU AND NATO: POLISH SECURITY AIMS AND POLISH SECURITY OPTIONS

US scholar, Andrew Michta, asserts that with the end of the Cold War and following the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in July 1991, Poland was compelled “to come to grips with the historical problem of being a medium-sized and relatively weak nation facing stronger and potentially dangerous neighbors.”²⁰ To that end, Polish policymakers laid out four goals for Poland. The first two aimed to ensure Poland's independence and to wrench Poland loose of Russian hegemony. These objectives were pursued by supporting Russian democratization and decentralization, while at the same time settling relations with Germany and Poland's German minority. The final two goals--establishing “full sovereignty in the international arena” and “gradually realigning Poland with Western Europe”--would require integration with the West.²¹ Polish policymakers believed it important to assure Poland's long-term economic prosperity, an objective that could only be realized through Poland's integration into Western Europe, in this case, through membership in the European Union.²² Ultimately, however, Poland required a security guarantee to remove itself from its historical role as “the perennial weak leg of the Berlin--Warsaw--Moscow triangle.”²³ Achievement of this object, according to Polish officials, required Poland to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) at the earliest possible moment.

While Poland's desire to join these two multi-national organizations was certainly based on their ability to suit Poland's needs, Poland's assessment of this ability was largely created by their perceptions of these institutions' successful performances during the Cold War. The European Union and NATO were organizations created during the

²⁰ Andrew A. Michta, “Safeguarding the Third Republic: Security Policy and Military Reform,” in *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered*, Ilya Prizel and Andrew A. Michta, eds. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 74.

²¹ George Sanford, *Poland: The Conquest of History* (Singapore: Overseas Publishers Association, 1999), 82.

²² Prizel, 110.

²³ *Ibid.*

Cold War in response to specific needs on the European continent.²⁴ The European Union was established to promote improved trade and economic relations between the states of western and central Europe to promote stable political relations. The impetus that drove the process was a desire to put to rest once and for all the animosity between France and Germany that had characterized their relations since the middle of the 18th Century. NATO, on the other hand, was a security regime that united much of Western Europe in defense against the possibility of a communist attack. During the Cold War, these two organizations were mutually exclusive and served distinct purposes.²⁵ The European Union was a customs union that served to unite the economies of its members and provide for their economic prosperity. Despite the future development of the Western European Union as the defense and security arm of the European Union, security on the European continent was the exclusive realm of NATO. Within NATO, and within the non-communist areas of Europe, there was agreement concerning the overarching threat against which NATO's capabilities were to be directed--imperialism of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.

In light of the end of the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and the emergence of new threats in the post-9/11 era, Poland is discovering a political landscape in which the European Union and NATO are no longer mutually exclusive institutions, and the United States and Europe are no longer in agreement regarding the nature of today's threats or how best to meet them. As a member now of both the European Union and NATO, Poland is engaged in a new "balancing act," measuring its steps in both organizations in order to maintain productive relations with those states that occupy the leading positions in both the European Union and NATO. How does Poland view its security with respect to each of these organizations? A choice may now be facing Poland on which it must wager its security: Europe or the United States? The European Union or NATO?

²⁴ For the purposes of this paper, the EU will be used in lieu of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and European Economic Community (EEC), which will be understood in the given context of the time period.

²⁵ While both organizations focused on uniting, as much as possible, Europe, the EU and NATO went about it through different means--the EU was more concerned in bringing Europe together through economic ties, while NATO was more interested in uniting them defensively, through security ties.

While most Polish politicians would prefer not to choose between the European Union and NATO, the rift caused by the Iraq War has caused many experts to consider the possibility. At this point, however, there is not much of a choice. While the European Union's defense capabilities are still wanting and the organization's military will still largely lacking, NATO's capabilities remain dominant and on-call (largely because of the presence of the US military), though the organization's will to engage with its forces is waning. For the foreseeable future, Poland will continue to depend on the security guarantees of NATO. Until the European Union has a capable, willing force on which Poland can rely, Poland will continue to look to NATO and its promise of the United States. Poland will, however, continue to explore its options. Poland continues to demonstrate its trustworthiness and its solidarity with the United States in order to guarantee that, when the time comes, the United States will live up to its commitments to Poland as well. At the same time, Poland is working to play a central role in the development of the European Union's security and defense policy to ensure that the policy that emerges takes Poland's security concerns into account and provides the resources and capabilities to make Europe a meaningful contributor to NATO's missions.

A. JOINING NATO: POLAND'S SECURITY BLANKET

Even before the demise of the Warsaw Pact, Poland began exploring the possibility of NATO membership. For Poland, more than anything else, NATO meant security. Poland's desire for, and ultimately achievement of, NATO membership was based on the security guarantees inherent in the Washington Treaty. In short, the NATO of which Poland envisioned becoming a member was the "traditional" NATO of the Cold War era. Article 5 and its promise of collective defense, was, and remains, the critical component of Poland's national security. According to Christopher Bobinski, the publisher of *Unia and Polska*, a Polish magazine dedicated to European Union issues, "Poles wanted NATO membership first and foremost as a guarantee of security against a possible resurgence of Russian territorial ambitions. This explains why article 5 of the NATO treaty is sacrosanct for Poles. That they interpret article 5 as an automatic commitment by all NATO members to go to the armed defense of any member which is

attacked is clear.”²⁶ NATO membership, to a large extent, satisfies Poland's security concerns and allows Poland to focus more widely on its international relations. Robert Kupiecki, a representative in Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, believes that “NATO membership strengthens Poland's security and external position and widens its room of manoeuvre in international politics.”²⁷ The crucial issue here, however, is NATO's evolution since the end of the Cold War, its new commitment to “out-of-area” operations, and the emergence of new, often non-state threats that now occupy NATO's attention. Though Article 5 has diminished in importance, its promise of support, especially from the United States, ensures Poland that the United States will remain committed to Europe and will continue to influence events on the continent.

Polish politicians, in their discussions of NATO, emphasize the importance of American involvement on the European continent. Kupiecki identifies the importance of this issue, when he notes that “[a]llied relations with the US, including the American presence in Europe, remain the essential component of the security of Poland and the entire continent. Their institutional content is unchangeably best epitomized by NATO.”²⁸ American leadership provides the security that Poland desires. Journalist Elizabeth Pond elaborates on this idea in her assertion that

The final distinctive characteristic of the United States as leader of NATO is the reassurance that American dominance provides for new democracies in central Europe. Poland, the largest of the three freshman members admitted to the alliance two weeks before the war in Kosovo began, would have been leery of entrusting its security to an alliance led by Germany--and without tacit American oversight it would also have been reluctant to accept reconciliation and a beneficial special relationship with Germany in the early 1990's.²⁹

Further evidence of this position was presented in 1996 at a regional security conference by the then-Polish Foreign Minister, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, who “defined Poland's

²⁶ Christopher Bobinski, “Polish Illusions and Reality,” in *Ambivalent Neighbors*, Anatol Lieven and Dmitri Trenin, eds. (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), 240.

²⁷ Robert Kupiecki. “Poland's Interests In NATO,” *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy* (Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2003). <http://www.sprawymiedzynarodowe.pl/yearbook/2003/kupiecki.html> (Accessed 12 February 2005).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Elizabeth Pond, *The Rebirth of Europe*, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 205.

interest in NATO from a pan-European perspective: first and foremost, NATO guaranteed the continued political and military presence of the US in Europe--a fact that 'has enormous significance for the sense of stability [and] security of many European nations.'³⁰ American presence and influence in Europe is central to the Polish idea of European security.

Poland's concept of European security is also a concept of security achieved through a mutual agreement among states. American involvement in Europe and the existence of NATO is necessary to prevent the resurgence of individual national security policies, such as those that were largely responsible for the world wars of the 20th Century. Onyszkiewicz spelled out the importance of this consensus regarding European security policy when he announced: "And I need not say how enormous the significance of this process of the internationalization of security policy has been, [or] how negative the consequences of a reversal of this process and a return to individual [national] security policies would be."³¹ Though Onyszkiewicz fails to specifically address the issue, Europe's propensity for conflict, demonstrated perfectly in the prelude to the two world wars, requires a common security policy. NATO provides this requirement and promotes stability in Europe by serving as a multinational forum for resolving differences and reaching a consensus on issues of concern to alliance members.

In the early 1990's, there was little expectation that NATO would necessarily admit new members, least of all many of the former Warsaw Pact nations that found themselves trying to reform their militaries to make them more efficient and much less cumbersome and costly. Few would have considered that, by 1999, NATO would have three new members including Poland. Poland's quest to achieve the security guarantees it required would follow a winding road. The tenacity with which Poland pursued NATO membership effectively illustrates the tremendous importance Poland placed on "joining the club."

³⁰ Sarah Meiklejohn Terry, "Poland's Foreign Policy Since 1989: The Challenges of Independence," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33 (2000), 30.

³¹ Terry, 30.

1. Achieving the Objective

Support of NATO membership started at the very top of the Polish political system, most notably with Poland's first democratically elected president, Lech Walesa, and his foreign minister, Andrzej Olechowski. Among the reasons that served as the impetus for Poland's appeal for NATO membership, the most important was outlined during a December 1993 visit by Olechowski to Washington, D.C. In a speech to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Olechowski asserted that "Warsaw considers American engagement in NATO as well as Poland's eventual inclusion in the alliance a sine qua non of its continued independence."³² At the time, Olechowski considered only temporary the relative calm that prevailed in Eastern and Central Europe--it was merely the product of the protracted political conflict taking place in Russia, and Germany's preoccupation with domestic matters related to unification.

German unification presented its own set of unique problems to Polish security. Immediately following the Second World War, Poland had welcomed the separation of Germany between the two rival camps. Having been given possession of the "Recovered Territories," Poland was tied to the Soviet Union for protection against potential German aggression aimed at reconquest. In 1990, with Germany unified, Poland remained fearful that German revanchism would reemerge. To prevent this prospect, Poland was not only anxious for its own future membership in NATO, but was also privately cheering for NATO to quickly ratify German unification. As writer George Sanford explains: "Poland did not oppose German unification but wanted the new 79 million strong state and economic giant to be tied down to European security structures."³³

Poland's path to NATO membership was not a smooth one. The largest obstacle that served to detour Poland's path to NATO was Russia's objection. While the North Atlantic Council and the American Congress debated the costs and benefits of NATO enlargement, Lech Walesa achieved a seemingly major agreement with Russian president Boris Yeltsin in which Russia apparently assented to Polish membership in NATO. On August 25, 1993, according to the communiqué issued by the two heads-of-state, Walesa

³² Michta, 75.

³³ Sanford, 83.

and Yeltsin affirmed that “[i]n the long term, such a decision [to join NATO] taken by a sovereign Poland in the interests of overall European integration does not go against the interests of other states, including the interests of Russia.”³⁴ Surprisingly, despite Yeltsin's apparent consent, many US policymakers were not immediately willing to offer NATO membership. Instead, in January 1994, Poland, and many of the other former Warsaw Pact states, was offered membership in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program.³⁵ This was not the invitation Poland had been expecting. Ronald Asmus, a past aide to both Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Deputy Secretary Strobe Talbott, maintains that Poland and its Eastern and Central European neighbors were disappointed because PfP “looked more like a potential dead end than a first step toward NATO membership. It offered no commitment, plan, or roadmap for eventual NATO membership.”³⁶ Many Polish policymakers came to view the idea of PfP with hostility and as a “second Yalta.”³⁷ More than anything, PfP did not address Poland's security needs. In response to the offer of PfP membership, Poland and its American connections mounted a blitz to pressure the Clinton Administration into providing guarantees leading toward eventual NATO membership. Polish-Americans lobbied Congress; Zbigniew Brzezinski applied pressure to the National Security Advisor, Tony Lake; and, a former hero of the Polish Underground, Jan Nowak, made his case to the media for Polish membership in NATO.³⁸ Ultimately, Poland presented the United States with an ultimatum: if the Clinton Administration made it clear that PfP was a path to NATO membership, PfP would become Poland's number one priority. If not, Poland would offer no political support of the program. As Polish Foreign Minister, Andrzej Olechowski announced publicly when he returned to Warsaw from a visit to the United

³⁴ Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 37.

³⁵ Partnership for Peace was an initiative devised by former NATO Supreme Allied Commander-Europe, John Shalikashvili. The program was meant to operationalize the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC). It would allow Eastern and Central European countries to work closely with NATO, while still not offering NATO membership. *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁶ Asmus, 55.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

States in December 1993, 'Poland would not sign PFP if it was 'just a second Yalta.'"³⁹ In response, in January 1994, President Clinton announced at a meeting "with the four Visegrad heads of state that NATO enlargement was no longer a question of 'whether' but 'when' and 'how.'"⁴⁰

Beginning in 1994, however, Poland began to demonstrate its own lack of preparation for NATO membership. Principal among the issues facing Poland was its lack of effective civil-military relations, best exemplified by President Walesa's treatment of the military and his defense ministry. Walesa treated the Polish military as an interest group whose loyalties belonged to him. Throughout 1994 and 1995, Walesa replaced no fewer than four defense ministers and demonstrated an unwillingness to subordinate the military to a civilian defense minister. In the fall of 1994, in what came to be known as the Drawsko-Pomorskie Affair, Walesa met with a host of the military's most senior generals and his Defense Minister, Admiral Piotr Kolodziejczyk, at the Drawsko military training ground. At a dinner in which all of the participants listed above were present, Walesa proceeded to poll the generals regarding the competence of the Defense Minister. All of the generals were critical of Kolodziejczyk's performance.⁴¹ The result betrayed the remarkable rift between the military and its defense ministry leadership and provided further evidence of Walesa's attempt to maintain control of the military within the office of the Polish President. Despite several other setbacks over the course of the next three years, the Polish Sejm and Walesa's successor, Aleksander Kwasniewski, committed the state to civil-military reforms and brought about several changes that would finally place the state firmly on the road to NATO membership. By July 1997, and NATO's Madrid Summit, Poland joined Hungary and the Czech Republic in being invited to become members of NATO's first round of enlargement.

³⁹ Ibid. James M. Goldgeier goes much further in his description of Poland's unhappiness with the PFP offer in recounting the meeting at which Madeleine Albright and General Shalikashvili presented the PFP invitation to Polish diplomats. According to Goldgeier, due to the immense Polish dissatisfaction with the offer, the meeting deteriorated into a "shouting match." James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether But When* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 53.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 59. The Visegrad countries include Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. The partnership was founded on February 15, 1991 at a summit in Visegrad, Hungary as the "Visegrad Troika," and included Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The group became the Visegrad Four in 1993 following the split of the Czech and Slovak Republics.

⁴¹ Jeffrey Simon, *Poland and NATO* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 37

2. The Benefits of Solidarity

In addition to the security guarantees that NATO membership garnered, Poland also benefited from the substantial funding provided by NATO to upgrade its facilities and infrastructure. According to Jeffrey Simon, senior fellow at the National Defense University's Institute for National Strategic Studies, upon joining NATO in 1999, "Poland would be able to share in the NATO Security Investment Program (NSIP), which in 1998 was \$688 million (of NATO's total annual budget of \$1.5 billion)."⁴² Even more significant was Poland's cut of those expenditures. As Simon contends: "Between 1999 and 2008, NATO will spend roughly \$650 million in Poland, while Poland's contributions would amount to roughly \$200 million. As a result of these NATO funds, Poland will spend twice as much on infrastructure than before."⁴³ Equally important is the access to technology afforded to Poland by its relationship with NATO and the increasing significance of interoperability and cooperation. Poland's arms and ammunition manufacturers have found new partners in the NATO states and new markets in which to compete. At the same time, Poland's military has gained access to the newest technologies in order to facilitate its interoperability with its NATO partners.

Finally, Poland's quest for membership in NATO provided the crucial impetus necessary to reform its Cold War-era military. Under the criteria required of prospective alliance members by the North Atlantic Council, Poland was prodded to radically reform its military. According to NATO's website, future members must provide evidence of five requirements. For Poland, the most important were the final two, which focused on a state's "ability and willingness to make a military contribution to the Alliance and to achieve interoperability with other members' forces;" and its commitment "to democratic civil-military relations and institutional structures."⁴⁴ While supporting NATO's operations and exercises, Poland has benefited from the military reforms that were spurred by their membership in the alliance. Thanks in large part to the guarantees of the

⁴² Ibid, 97. The NATO Security Investment Program is one which finances the installation and facilities necessary to support the roles of NATO's Strategic Commands deemed to exceed the requirements of individual member countries. *NATO Handbook* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001), 206.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ http://www.nato.int/issues/enlargement/in_practice.htm (Accessed 21 May 2005).

treaty's Article 5, Poland has been able to significantly reduce its massive legacy forces of the Cold War days. Instead of having to station countless forces along its borders for territorial defense, Poland has been able to reduce its numbers of homeland defense soldiers and has been able to focus on projecting its forces in operations in support of the alliance. Poland has continued to move in the direction of creating a largely professional military. Jeffrey Simon notes that “[a]t the end of 2003, Polish armed forces are to total 150,000 soldiers (25,000 officers and 50,000 NCOs), of which 50 percent will be professional.”⁴⁵ This is a stark contrast, considering that, in 1989, the Land Forces alone totaled 310,000.⁴⁶ Though Poland's military reforms are by no means complete, Poland continues to serve as an example of NATO membership's ability to successfully generate military and political reforms within a candidate state.⁴⁷

As a member of NATO, Poland has demonstrated a strong willingness to support NATO operations and has established a reputation as a reliable team player. Poland believes that in order to rely on the promised support of allies, one must demonstrate one's own reliability. Even before joining the Alliance, Poland deployed troops in support of NATO's Implementation and Stabilization Forces in Bosnia following the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995.⁴⁸ Just two weeks after Poland had joined NATO, it was asked to support NATO's Operation Allied Force in Kosovo. Though incapable of providing any direct tangible support for the bombing campaign that began in March 1999, Poland supported the mission politically. In the days leading up to NATO's decision to use force to prevent further Serbian aggression in Kosovo, Poland demonstrated that it would support the use of force even without a United Nations resolution authorizing it. According to a statement issued by Polish Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek on the intervention in Kosovo:

⁴⁵ Simon, 139.

⁴⁶ Andrew A. Michta, “Modernizing the Polish Military,” in *Poland: A New Power in Transatlantic Security*, eds. Marcin Zaborowski and David H. Dunn (Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), 40.

⁴⁷ Another remarkable source that lays out the “balance sheet” of Poland's membership in NATO is Andrew Michta's *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999).

⁴⁸ Jeffrey Simon, “The IFOR/SFOR Experience: Lessons Learned by PFP Partners,” *Strategic Forum*, no. 120 (July 1997).

[T]he best way to do it is when a mandate for such missions is issued by the Security Council on behalf of the United Nations. At the same time, however (...) given the entire veto technology in the Security Council, one must make NATO's moves contingent on the votes of either Russia or China, or both, and that NATO's missions going beyond Article 5 in emergencies may be pursued by NATO when they are consistent with the principles of the United Nations Charter and are in the service of the values enshrined therein.⁴⁹

In the aftermath of Operation Allied Force, Poland demonstrated its readiness to be a dependable ally. In June 1999, Poland deployed nearly 800 troops to serve as its initial contingent in NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR). At the same time, Poland deployed 140 troops for the Albanian Force (AFOR).⁵⁰ Each of these commitments was not cheap, costing the Defense Ministry Z40 million and Z3 million, respectively. While neither of these deployments enjoyed a majority of popular support, the government deemed them necessary demonstrations of Poland's commitment to its membership in NATO. Even more indicative of Poland's recognition of its responsibilities were the changes to Poland's constitution that were required to permit the deployment of troops to Kosovo.

In the post-9/11 era, Poland has continued to establish its credibility as a trusted member of the Alliance. After NATO's announcement that it was invoking Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, Poland "pledged 300 troops to the US-led 'war on terrorism' in Afghanistan, a total that included special forces, chemical and biological warfare specialists and sappers."⁵¹ Polish support continues in the war in Iraq. While Poland only provided several hundred of their special forces of the *Grupa Reagowania Operacyjno Mobilnego* (GROM) in the initial invasion, the state continues to provide nearly 2,400 troops to Operation Iraqi Freedom. In fact, Poland's commitment to the operation led to the decision to place Poland in charge of the Multinational Force (Central South)--a multinational contingent that includes forces from 16 other countries. Thus far, Poland has executed four rotations of its forces. Ultimately, since its accession as a

⁴⁹ Marcin Zaborowski and David H. Dunn, eds., *Poland: A New Power in Transatlantic Security* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), 31.

⁵⁰ AFOR was a NATO force deployed in support of a humanitarian mission to provide aid to Kosovar Albanian refugees driven from war-torn Kosovo into Albania.
<http://www.afsouth.nato.int/operations/harbour/#background> (Accessed 21 May 2005).

⁵¹ Zaborowski and Dunn., 67.

member of NATO, Poland has proven itself one of the most, if not *the* most reliable partner in the alliance. The Polish Ambassador to the United States, Przemyslaw Grudzinski asserts that “Poland has tried to utilise in the best way possible every opportunity to get closer to the alliance, to prove it could contribute to the strengthening of NATO's potential...to convince the alliance that we will be a provider, and not just a consumer, of stability and security both now and in the future.”⁵²

The most important product of Poland's membership has been its treatment as an equal within the alliance. While none would argue that some voices are not louder than others, Poland enjoys the same single vote that all other member states have. As an organization that requires unanimity, Poland's vote is as important as that of the United States, the United Kingdom, etc. Equal treatment is critical to Poland's idea of its own security. As Olaf Osica asserts in his chapter, “In Search of a New Role: Poland in Euro-Atlantic Relations:” “[B]eing treated on a par with the old allies largely predetermines the sense of stability and hence security of Poland. It was for this reason that, when Poland was applying for membership, so much emphasis was placed on making sure that there would be no 'second class' membership for the new allies.”⁵³ An equal voice in the Alliance guarantees that Poland's security concerns will be heard and will be considered in any agreement to be reached among the allies.

B. JOINING THE EU: BACK IN EUROPE

While Poland embraced the security guarantees offered by the West under the auspices of NATO, there was also a strong motivation within the populace and the political leadership to move the state closer to the political and economic structures of its European neighbors and to “rejoin” Europe. Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, when Poland and the rest of Central and Eastern Europe continued to decline economically under communism, the European Coal and Steel Community had become the European Community and continued to prosper, expanding its borders on three occasions to include the majority of the rest of Western Europe. With the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Olaf Osica, “In Search of a New Role: Poland in Euro-Atlantic Relations,” in *Poland: A New Power in Transatlantic Security*, eds. Marcin Zaborowski and David H. Dunn (Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), 29.

development of an independent Polish foreign policy, Poland looked to reunite with the rest of Europe and become a member of its dominant economic institution.

Beginning in 1991, Poland applied for “association status” with what had recently become the European Union. As with NATO initially, Poland was not immediately offered membership in the European Union. Because of the European Union's experience in admitting Spain, Portugal, and Greece, there was little support within the EU member states for immediate enlargement to include the former Warsaw Pact states. As Peter A. Poole explains in *Europe Unites: The EU's Eastern Enlargement*: “The addition in the 1980's of Spain, Portugal, and Greece had taught EU leaders that adding countries with weak political and economic systems was expensive and difficult.”⁵⁴ There was also no consensus among the EU member states as to which Eastern and Central European states should eventually be offered membership. Each of the members had its own candidate whose membership it promoted, usually based on historical ties. In this regard, Poland's candidacy was most strongly supported by Germany whose sponsorship arose from basic German security issues. As a state whose eastern border was also that of the union, Germany would certainly benefit from any extension of that border. At the same time, while sharing a border with Poland, it most certainly was important to German politicians that its eastern neighbor remain politically stable and its young democracy reinforced and protected--this would best be achieved by tying Poland to the institutions of the European Union.

Even before Germany had made public its support of Polish membership, Polish leaders had already begun to express the indispensability of German support to Poland's goal of Western integration. As early as 1990, Solidarity's weekly, *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, was advocating rapprochement with Germany toward this end. According to one of its articles, “Poland, if she wants to meet the challenge of crossing the threshold of civilization, which is possible only through integration with Western Europe, must open itself to wide cooperation and involvement with Germany.”⁵⁵ Any European sponsor, however, was not sufficient--German support would provide the best prospect

⁵⁴ Peter A. Poole, *Europe Unites: The EU's Eastern Enlargement* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 33.

⁵⁵ Prizel, 117.

for Polish integration in Europe. Joshua Spero, in his book, *Bridging the European Divide*, contends that “Warsaw discerned that no other state other than Germany could assist its European reintegration as effectively.”⁵⁶ When Poland and Germany signed the Treaty on Good Neighborly Relations and Friendly Cooperation on June 17, 1991, Poland finally achieved the settlement that Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski had envisioned in 1989 to anchor Poland to the West.

1. EU Membership: Financial Gains and a Seat at the Table

While EU membership is considered an important route to “rejoining” Europe, the substantial financial benefits associated with the European Union played the major role in Poland's quest for membership. Membership in the union would provide a much wider market for relatively inexpensive Polish goods and would offer Polish firms the same preferential trade relations provided to all union members. The European Union also provided considerable subsidies to its member states. In the 1980's under the Commission Presidency of Jacques Delors, the European Union began a program to redistribute wealth from the rich states to its poorer neighbors. These “structural funds,” as they are collectively known, “were created to help the poor countries and regions.”⁵⁷ Principal among these was the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The CAP was adopted by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and designed to protect the struggling agricultural sectors of the European Coal and Steel Community states. Peter Poole asserts that the major aims of the CAP laid out in the treaty were: “to raise agricultural productivity, ensure that farmers made a decent living, stabilize markets for farm produce, guarantee adequate food supplies, and ensure that the prices consumers paid for food were reasonable.”⁵⁸ Over the years, the CAP has provided considerable money to the European Union's farmers and many of the EU states have grown accustomed to these finances. With a large agricultural sector, Polish politicians expected that their poor farmers would benefit greatly from union accession, and the money these subsidies infused into the Polish economy would promote growth. Poland's assessment of CAP was largely its view of EU membership. Polish politicians understood that Poland's

⁵⁶ Joshua Spero, *Bridging the European Divide: Middle Power Politics and Regional Security Dilemmas* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 127.

⁵⁷ Poole, 116.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 111.

struggling economy would benefit from the favorable terms and vast market offered by membership in the European Union and that Poland's weak economy would only achieve the dramatic growth necessary to approach the level of Europe's more successful economies by joining the European Union.

Equally important to Polish politicians were the regional funds that would undoubtedly be distributed to Poland, due to its low standard of living. To better understand Poland's place among its EU neighbors, consider the data provided by Konrad Szymanski, a Polish politician, in his article, "Nice Properly Counted." According to Szymanski:

Of the 116 million citizens inhabiting regions in candidate countries in which the GDP is less than 75 percent of the EU-wide average (the threshold below which EU assistance is provided), as many as 60 percent are living in Poland. As many as 10 of the 13 poorest regions are in Poland, including Lublin Voivodship and the Subcarpathians, where the GDP is only 30 percent of the EU-wide average.⁵⁹

A widespread expectation of EU aid in support of Polish economic prosperity was the principal motivating factor behind Poland's pursuit of EU membership.

Finally, Poland was also motivated to join Europe and the European Union by a desire to play a greater role on the European continent. Among many Polish politicians there is a sense of Poland's historical importance to Europe. As Judy Batt explains in her chapter entitled, "European Identity and National Identity in Central Europe:"

The ambivalence of Polish intellectuals to the idea of 'central Europe' reflects not only the stronger conviction of Poland's historical and geopolitical importance to Europe, coupled with a more full-blooded romantic messianism, but also a lingering sense of Poland's other 'national mission' to the east, towards its neighbors which were once part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.⁶⁰

Poland is interested in playing a role in the future of Europe. As an insider and member of the European Union, Poland participates in the political debates that take place regarding the direction to be taken by the European Union and the decisions to be made.

⁵⁹ Warsaw Rzeczpospolita, 8 January 2004. FBIS-EUP 20040108000287 (8 January 2004).

⁶⁰ Judy Batt, "European Identity and National Identity in Central Europe," in *Interlocking Dimensions of European Integration*, ed. Helen Wallace, (New York: Palgrave Publishers, 2001), 253.

As a member of the Visegrad Four⁶¹, Poland has attempted to play the role of regional leader, in large part to protect the interests of its fellow Visegrad states and, more generally, the smaller member states of the European Union. In fact, Poland's President, Aleksandr Kwasniewski, played a central role with the European Union's own Javier Solana in the diplomatic efforts undertaken in Ukraine to nullify the falsified presidential elections of 2005 and demand a new round.

2. Poland's EU Membership: Making Its Presence Felt

Poland's experience, first as an associate member, then as a full member of the European Union has been dominated by hard-fought diplomacy and a balancing of “national interests” with the conditions of EU accession. Though Poland eagerly anticipated many of the economic benefits that would accompany membership, the accession negotiations proved a bitter disappointment. By the time Poland became a full member of the European Union, promises of substantial union financial assistance were largely unfulfilled as a result of the terms of the accession agreement.

While Poland would receive assistance through the CAP, it would not receive nearly as much as the existing members of the European Union and the traditional recipients of this aid. In fact, the ten countries that joined the European Union in May 2004 were limited to 25 percent of those funds distributed as a maximum to the EU-15. The ten new members of the European Union will not be eligible for the full amount of possible CAP subsidies until 2013. In Poland's case, only through painstaking negotiations was its EU Minister, Danuta Huebner, able to win for the country the right to subsidize its farmers over and above the level of aid received from the European Union's CAP in order to make Poland's farmers as competitive as their long-time EU counterparts. In the end, however, these funds would only be allowed to rise incrementally and would remain substantially less than those received by the rest of the European Union. According to the terms of Poland's accession agreement, Poland is only

⁶¹ The Visegrad Four is an association formed by Poland and the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia.

permitted to “add additional funds from its own budget to bring the totals to 55% of the EU amount in 2004, 60% in 2005 and 65% in 2006.”⁶²

Equally troublesome are the immigration limitations imposed by the European Union on Poland and the other new members. Out of fear for its individual states' labor forces, the European Union has limited the migration of its newest members' peoples, and is not allowing these states to join the Schengen Agreement which allows the free movement of people, goods, and services throughout the union. Heather Grabbe describes this apparent double standard when she says that “some of the rules [of the European Union] are more equal than others. Thus there has to be free movement of goods, services, and capital in central and eastern Europe, but the EU is not going to allow free movement of people from east to west immediately (even though free movement of workers is one of the four freedoms of the Single Market.”⁶³ At the same time, Poland now finds itself on the border of the European Union and must now demand visas of its long-time trading partners in Ukraine and Belarus. These are just two examples of the apparent one-sided nature of negotiations with the European Union. Poland and its fellow newest members of the European Union have not entered the union as equals. As Anatol Lieven asserts, “it seems likely that for a very long time after accession, the new members of the EU from eastern Europe will in fact be second-class members, visibly inferior to western Europeans not only in wealth, but in formal status within certain EU institutions.”⁶⁴

Closely related to this sense of inequality is the important fact that many issues determined by the European Commission no longer require unanimity. As a result of the European Union's adoption of qualified majority voting, members no longer retain a veto over most policy issues. In light of this fact, many apparent blocs have developed within the union. There is also a sense that the larger states are determined to set the union agenda. Poland, for one, is concerned that the Franco-German alliance is dictating the

⁶² “Poland Nails Down Key EU Enlargement Concessions, Even Though Few New Funds Are on Offer,” *Poland Business Review*, December 16, 2002.

⁶³ Heather Grabbe, “Challenges of EU Enlargement,” in *Ambivalent Neighbors*, eds. Anatol Lieven and Dmitri Lieven (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), 79.

⁶⁴ Anatol Lieven and Dmitri Trenin, eds., *Ambivalent Neighbors* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), 304.

European Union's political debate, largely without regard for the concerns and interests of its smaller fellow members. In those cases where unanimity is required, as in the adoption of the union's draft constitution, disagreement or a perceived unwillingness to yield threaten to incur political isolation or economic sanctions. In any event, there is a sense that the European Union is unable to speak with "one voice." Given this inability and the willingness of larger states of the European Union to speak for smaller ones, Poland is concerned that its interests will be subordinated. Poland's obstinate response is then apparently not considered to be the result of a friendly disagreement, but is rather an intentional slight.

3. Contributing to the European Union's Security and Defense Pillar

In this context, given Poland's general disappointment with the economic benefits it had expected to receive from the European Union, one would expect even less enthusiasm toward the European Union's proposal for a "European Security and Defense Policy"--an issue that never provided the basis for the European Union. As expected, the European Union, and its nascent institutions to forge a common European security and defense policy, is not a widely accepted source of Polish security. In fact, initially many Polish policymakers believed that the concept of a common European policy would cause problems in Euro-Atlantic relations. Poles were skeptical when the European Union announced in 1999 its Helsinki Headline Goal to achieve a standing European rapid reaction force of some 60,000 troops by 2003. Instead of focusing on creating its own capabilities, Poland believed that NATO already provided the required organization and the proper forum in which Europe could develop its defense capabilities. Olaf Osica, a former research fellow at Poland's Center for International Relations contends that "Polish politicians believed that the best place to develop European capabilities in defence policy was within NATO and more specifically, within the context of the alliance's European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI) that had been developing since the mid-1990s."⁶⁵ Reliance on existing structures within NATO would prevent the European Union from seeking to compete with NATO and putting transatlantic relations at risk. Equally problematic for Poland was the possible confusion that could result from the redundancy inherent in the activities of the European Union and NATO. According

⁶⁵ Osica, 33.

to David H. Dunn, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Birmingham in Great Britain, “for Warsaw the main concern is the creation of institutional ambiguity as to who would be responsible for a crisis in the Baltics, Kaliningrad, or over Belarus or Ukraine... [M]isunderstandings may result and decisions may be prolonged or postponed to the detriment of Polish security.”⁶⁶ Though the call for using NATO's institutions for building European defense capabilities went unheeded, Polish policymakers began to believe, nonetheless, that improved capabilities would make European states better contributors to NATO and “a better partner for the United States.”⁶⁷ Polish support for the European Union's European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) was based on an improved capability to support the United States--an assessment precipitated by Europe's apparent weakness in the 1990's in dealing with the Balkans diplomatically, at first, and then militarily as part of Operation Allied Force in Kosovo. Marek Siwiec, the Polish Secretary of State and Head of the National Security Bureau, explains that Polish support of NATO's ESDI and the European Union's ESDP were predicated on the eventual benefit to European capabilities that these concepts would have. As he asserts:

Poland has supported the ESDI process since its inception, within the framework of NATO and, then, the Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP) of the European Union. This is because we perceive this process as the best means of strengthening the Europeans' practical operational capabilities and, consequently, for strengthening the crisis prevention and response capabilities of the whole Euro-Atlantic community.⁶⁸

Ultimately, however, Poles feared that ESDP would not amount to anything. Osica contends that “Poland suspected that CESDP would remain 'a paper tiger', which would only substantially complicate relations within NATO and hence between Europe and the USA.”⁶⁹

⁶⁶ David H. Dunn, “Poland: America's New Model Ally,” in *Poland: A New Power in Transatlantic Security*, eds. Marcin Zaborowski and David H. Dunn (Portland, OR: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), 77.

⁶⁷ “European Union: New Members Focus on Regional Concerns,” *OxResearch*, August 30, 2004, 1.

⁶⁸ Marek Siwiec, “Poland's Security at the Outset of the 21st Century,” *Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy*, Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2001. http://www.sprawymiedzynarodowe.pl/yearbook/2001/marek_siwiec_polands_security.html (Accessed 15 March 2005).

⁶⁹ Osica, 34.

At the same time, however, the fear exists in Poland that Europe's security and defense policy will develop into something contrary to Poland's expectations. In the past, Germany and France have fostered close, personal bilateral relationships with Russia instead of seeking to develop a cohesive consensual one among its EU partners. In the days prior to the start of the war in Iraq, the French, German, and Russian leaders met to discuss their common opposition to the American-led invasion. From Poland's point of view this sort of meeting represents a potentially sinister version of the Weimar triangle⁷⁰--only in this case, Russia has replaced Poland as the third leg in the triangle. Without considering the concerns of Poland and the Eastern and Central European states that were satellites of the Soviet Union during the Cold War, Germany and France demonstrate an insensitivity to their concerns that threatens the development of a European security and defense policy. Bartłomiej Sienkiewicz of Poland's Center for Eastern Studies maintains in an article for the Polish newspaper, *Rzeczpospolita*, that "[t]his poses 'a potential threat to the cohesion of EU foreign policy,' and new EU member states will be 'the first to suffer.'"⁷¹

C. CONCLUSIONS

Poland joined NATO and the European Union expecting the same complementary institutions that they had viewed since their days as a satellite of the Soviet Union. Poland wagered its security on its membership in NATO, while the European Union would provide the economic and political association that would establish Poland's European credentials and help revive its flagging economy.

In the end, however, due to the end of the Cold War and changing perceptions, Poland now finds itself as a member of a European Union engaged in deeper integration and desiring its own defense capability. At the same time, Poland belongs to a NATO where the guarantees of collective defense fail to carry the same promises they did during the Cold War. While Poland continues to consider that its security is guaranteed only through NATO, it finds itself more and more compelled to demonstrate its loyalty, not only to NATO, but also to the European Union. Polish foreign policy decisions have

⁷⁰ The Weimar Triangle is an association formed by Germany, France and Poland that was originally established to assist Poland's integration back into Europe.

⁷¹ FBIS Report, 16 May 2005. FBIS-EUP 20050516096001 (16 May 2005).

been made within this framework and reflected these realities. Two of the more important policy decisions that best demonstrate this are Poland's decision to support the United States in Iraq and its firm, nearly immovable negotiating position on the EU constitution. These two decisions reflect the balance that Poland is striving to achieve in its alliances between its need for defense capabilities and common interests.

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IV. BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE: THE TENSION BETWEEN INTERESTS AND CAPABILITIES

Numerous decisions taken by the Polish government recently have served to emphasize Poland's unique stance regarding both the United States and its European neighbors. Principal among the events that best illustrate these positions are the Polish decision to participate in the coalition that intervened in Iraq in March 2003 and Poland's stubborn position in negotiating the EU draft constitution in December 2003 through June 2004. One might expect that the two decisions are inter-related and betray, in the end, a decidedly pro-United States and anti-European stance. Such is not the case. Poland is both pro-United States and pro-Europe. The decisions were not made reflecting a choice between Europe and the United States, but rather due to Polish interests related to its bilateral ties with Europe and the United States.

Poland's decision to support the United States in the war in Iraq was not an anti-European statement. Instead, it was based on Poland's reliance on the United States and its security guarantees. Polish politicians realized that in order to ensure the reliability of these guarantees, Poland was compelled to demonstrate its own reliability and its solidarity with the United States--a point that is remarkably apparent when the issues surrounding Poland's decision to support the United States are considered. The statements made by Polish politicians reflected their prevailing concern with ensuring Poland's security, rather than simply acting in opposition to the stated positions of France and Germany. Poland's decision regarding Iraq, however, was not without its potential consequences as Poland was compelled to weigh its decision to go to war against its overriding interest in completing its return to Europe through membership in the European Union.

While Poland's decision to support the United States in Iraq certainly compelled the state to consider its EU ties and future membership, Poland's intransigence in the European Union constitution negotiations did not involve any significant consideration of Poland's relationship with the United States. The stance maintained by Poland in the negotiations on the constitution underscored Poland's resolve to play an influential role in the future of the European Union and in determining the course of EU integration. The

stance reflected a consensus among Polish politicians that spanned the political spectrum from Poland's euroenthusiasts to its euroskeptics. Poland's tough negotiating position was maintained despite the pressure applied by the European Union's largest countries. Though ultimately agreeing to the terms of the constitution, Poland achieved its aim of forcing its future EU partners to seriously consider its position and its interests.

A. POLAND'S SUPPORT OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

Among the most important foreign policy decisions made by Poland since it freed itself from Soviet domination is certainly the decision undertaken by Poland's President and Prime Minister in early 2003 to provide political and material support to the US invasion of Iraq. While this sort of decision is indeed remarkable, it is even more so in light of the fact that Poland's view regarding the war departed from that of the leading members of the European Union--namely France and Germany. The case provides an interesting situation in which Poland's choice was more than a simple decision about whether or not to go to war. When the war began in March 2003, Poland had already signed the EU Accession Treaty the previous year, but its people had yet to vote for accession. Poland was also still 14 months from actual EU membership. The EU Parliament would vote on the Accession Treaty in April 2003 and the European Council made up of the current EU-15 would vote on accession shortly thereafter. In light of these circumstances, one is left to wonder at the questionable logic of the Polish President and the Polish government in acting contrary to the outspoken wishes of the recognized leaders of the European Union.

The decision made by President Kwasniewski and Prime Minister Miller to support the United States in opposition to their future EU partners tells us much about the significance Poland attaches to the concept of solidarity. Despite its pending EU membership, Poland had much to gain by joining with the United States and the "coalition of the willing." At the heart of its decision, however, the Polish government made public references more to its idealistic ties to the United States and NATO, rather than the tangible benefits to be gained from their participation in the coalition.

On 28 January 2003, US President George W. Bush delivered his State of the Union Address to the Congress. After describing the findings of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency regarding Iraq's possession and adherence to the

development of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, Bush announced America's position: "We will consult, but let there be no misunderstanding: If Saddam Hussein does not fully disarm, for the safety of our people and for the peace of the world, we will lead a coalition to disarm him."⁷²

On the other side of the Atlantic, there was considerable debate among members of the European Union and those that would soon be joining the union. France and Germany headed the group that opposed military action against the Hussein regime, endorsing instead further inspections. Among those that were more supportive of the hard-line American position that considered military intervention were Great Britain, Italy, and Spain. Joining these states in their endorsement of the American stance was Poland.

Poland's support of the US invasion of Iraq is linked with Poland's support of the United States in the aftermath of 9/11. Polish reaction to the reporting of the terrorist attack against the United States was almost immediate and reflected Poland's solidarity with the United States. In fact, on 12 September 2001, the head of Poland's National Security Bureau, Marek Siwiec announced that the 9/11 attack "was an attack on our ally, or an attack on us, and this is how we must react to it."⁷³ Polish politicians quickly expressed their outrage with regard to the attacks and their support of the United States. By 14 September, NATO had invoked Article 5. On 18 September, the Polish Sejm adopted a resolution that declared the 9/11 terrorist attack as "an act of aggression against all countries which advocate freedom and democracy."⁷⁴ In a radio broadcast on the same day, Poland's future Defense Minister, Jerzy Szmajdzinski, then a member of the Sejm, declared that Poland was ready to fulfill its obligations in support of NATO's declaration of Article 5.⁷⁵ Though Poland realized that its ability to support the United States was limited, it understood that what mattered most was being a reliable ally and providing whatever support it could muster. Even if that support was simply political

⁷² President Bush's State of the Union Address of 2003, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-19.html> (Accessed on 12 March 2005).

⁷³ "Polish Press Carries Reaction by Politicians, Experts to Attacks on US," FBIS-EUP 20010912000304 (12 September 2001).

⁷⁴ Warsaw Polish Radio 1, 18 September 2001. FBIS-EUP 20010918000245 (18 September 2001).

⁷⁵ Ibid.

support, the United States would understand that Poland was fulfilling its commitment as an ally. In fact, as the head of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Strategy and Policy Planning Department, Roman Kuzniar, asserted in October 2002: Poland “gave its unconditional support to the US military operation in Afghanistan and at the same time expressed its readiness to fulfill the provisions of Article Five of the Washington Treaty.”⁷⁶ By adhering to the spirit of Article 5 of the NATO treaty and providing whatever assistance it could muster, Poland was demonstrating the same dependability that it would expect of its fellow allies in the event that its security were threatened.

The same situation was apparent regarding Poland's support of the US stance toward the Hussein regime in Iraq. Poland separated its interest in European membership from its stance on armed intervention in Iraq. In opposition to France and Germany, the Polish government was one of the most outspoken advocates of America's hard-line posture. While Kuzniar was talking of Poland's support of the United States, Poland's President was proposing his own tough stance to bolster the American position. In an interview on 11 October 2002, Kwasniewski announced that “it is worthwhile to adopt a new, clear-cut, precise, and tough UN resolution to force Husayn to disarm himself, and specify consequences if that does not happen.”⁷⁷ The Polish President's request highlighted the importance of forcing Hussein to disarm. In the end, Kwasniewski believed that in order to avoid war, Hussein had to disarm. Poland's Foreign Minister, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz went one step further by noting that Poland could conceivably support the use of force even without the authority of a UN resolution. According to Cimoszewicz: “We cannot rule out a crisis situation, which we do not want to face and which we would like to avoid, but we cannot rule out the possibility that under particular circumstances Iraq would be disarmed without the UN resolution.”⁷⁸ This statement, as much as any other, reflected the differences between the Polish position and that of the Germans and French who insisted that any armed intervention must be authorized by the

⁷⁶ Roman Kuzniar, interview, Warsaw *Polska Zbrojna*, 13 October 2002. FBIS-EUP 20021010000281 (10 October 2002).

⁷⁷ Warsaw *Trybuna*, 12 October 2002. FBIS-EUP 20021014000250 (14 October 2002).

⁷⁸ Warsaw Polish Radio 1, 21 January 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030121000245 (21 January 2003).

UN. Fundamentally, this served to place Polish security interests at odds with Polish interests in EU membership.

Opposition within Europe to a possible attack by the United States, though somewhat apparent in 2002, was more significantly marked in January 2003, when Gerhard Schröder and Jacques Chirac met at Versailles. At the meeting, the two presumed to speak for Europe when they declared that they were in agreement on the Iraq crisis. The *Economist* notes that "Mr. Schröder had made it clear that Germany would not back a UN resolution calling for war."⁷⁹ There was no discussion of their positions either with the remaining 13 members of the European Union or the 10 that were preparing for membership.

The rift that has come to characterize transatlantic relations over the past two years erupted following President Bush's State of the Union address in January 2003. Setting forth his case for the Iraq crisis following the announcement of the opposing positions of the French and German governments, President Bush had little idea of the storm that was gathering. Just two days after the President's speech, on 30 January 2003, an op-ed article appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* in which the leaders of eight European states endorsed Bush's position and placed themselves directly at odds with Chirac and Schröder. What came to be known as the "Gang of Eight" letter was a call for Europe to remain united with the United States and a warning against the possible destruction of the transatlantic alliance by the Iraq crisis.⁸⁰ Among those signing the letter were the leaders of five EU member states--Great Britain, Denmark, Italy, Portugal, and Spain--and the leaders of three candidate states--Czechia, Hungary, and Poland. The letter was not welcomed in Paris or Berlin and was largely seen as a betrayal of EU unity. The brunt of the blame was, in fact, borne by the three candidate states, rather than the five current states.

Troublesome as well was the publication of the "Vilnius Declaration" on 7 February 2003, in which 10 Eastern European states announced their support of the information delivered by US Secretary of State Colin Powell to the UN and their support

⁷⁹ "Rendezvous in Versailles," *Economist.com/Global Agenda*, London: January 22, 2003, 1.

⁸⁰ Jose Maria Aznar, et.al., "United We Stand," *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 January 2003, A.14.

of toppling the Hussein regime. Included among these states were five candidate countries, two candidate countries whose accession was postponed, and three who did not even have candidate status.⁸¹ Given these two proclamations and their decidedly pro-United States stance, a remarkable divide opened between those that backed US intervention and those more in favor of a “wait-and-see” approach. For Poland, specifically, its signature among those of the “intervention camp” represented its decision to place greater emphasis on its security interests rather than Polish interests in the European Union.

In light of the “gang of eight” letter and the Vilnius declaration, the response by the Franco-German camp was best exemplified in their reaction to Turkey's eventual invocation of Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty in the days leading up to the war in Iraq.⁸² Though the issue of Article 4 was considered by the North Atlantic Council as early as mid-January 2003, it had been put off due to the objections of France, Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg that it was still too soon. Because the issue was initially floated by the United States within NATO, the issue was not finally brought to a head until Turkey requested consultations under the auspices of NATO's Article 4 on 10 February 2003. In response, France, Germany, and Belgium used their veto to prevent NATO from preparing military assistance for Turkey since they believed that NATO's actions would serve to lead to war, rather than prevent it.⁸³ The response, reported by Bartłomiej Sienkiewicz, a Polish foreign policy analyst, was that Poland would have to rethink its security relationship with Germany. As Sienkiewicz asserted:

For the past decade we assumed that the continental security interests of Poland and Germany were identical. We saw Germany as a guarantor of stability because it was deeply rooted in NATO, pursued a pro-US policy, and was the chief advocate of Poland's membership in the European Union. It now turns out this does not necessarily have to be the case. Our

⁸¹ The “Vilnius 10” included Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia (then EU -candidate countries); Bulgaria and Romania (EU candidacy postponed); and Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia (without any EU candidacy status).

⁸² Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty states that “The Parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the Parties is threatened.” *NATO Handbook* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 2001), 527.

⁸³ Paris AFP, 10 February 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030210000013 (10 February 2003).

two countries are on opposite sides of the barricade in the European-US rift as well as in the internal rift in Europe.⁸⁴

Poland had long considered that reconciliation with Germany, achieved in June 1991 with the signing of the Treaty on Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation, had represented an acceptance of their common interests. Instead, however, Poland was compelled to consider that it shared less with Germany than it had originally thought. At the same time that Polish politicians came to this realization, the veto by France, Germany, Belgium, and Luxembourg undermined Poland's confidence in the alliance's credibility to respond to its calls for assistance should the need arise.

In the end, to overcome the European rift, the European Union convened an emergency meeting on 17 February 2003 to discuss its stance on Iraq. While an agreement was reached in which the European Union would give UN weapons inspectors “the time and resources the UN Security Council believes they need,” it also included a strong statement that “added that ‘inspections cannot continue indefinitely.’”⁸⁵ Both sides of the Iraq debate in the European Union could claim victory after the meeting, given the statement that emerged. In actuality, however, the meeting solved nothing since the statement failed to set a time limit on the inspections. Though one would anticipate that the emergency meeting helped to avert a crisis, a statement made by Jacques Chirac later that evening at dinner served to open anew the rift within the European Union. According to the transcript of Chirac's comments, in response to a question about what he would tell the European Union's candidate countries on the following day regarding the so-called “mini-crisis” the European Union had just struggled through, Chirac answered:

Concerning, in any case, the candidate countries, I am not speaking of the countries that are not candidates, but the candidate countries, honestly I think their behavior was a bit ill-considered...If, on the first difficult issue that comes along, a country gives its opinion independently of the group it moreover wants to join, this is not a very responsible way to act. In any case, it is not very polite. I therefore think they missed a good opportunity

⁸⁴ Warsaw *Rzeczpospolita*, 14 February 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030214000409 (14 February 2003).

⁸⁵ “Europe: United in Theory, Divided in Practice; European Diplomacy Over Iraq,” *The Economist* (February 22, 2003), 41.

to keep quiet. I would add that beyond the slightly ridiculous or infantile side of their action, it is dangerous.⁸⁶

Instead of capitalizing on the sense of agreement that had emerged from the meeting, Chirac's comments served to fan the flames. The response of Poland's Deputy Foreign Minister, Adam Rotfeld, on the following day emphasized that "Poland and other states in our region also have the right to decide what is good for them and France should respect it and show an interest in why this position is different from its own."⁸⁷ The decision of whether or not to support the United States in Iraq was a sovereign one to be made by the Polish government. Despite this fact, Poland had to weigh the possible consequences of any decision it might make and the potential that supporting the United States would serve to politically alienate Poland on the European continent.

1. The Decision is Made

When the Polish government made the decision to support the United States in Iraq, the decision was not initiated by the Sejm, but was made among the President, Aleksandr Kwasniewski, the Prime Minister, Leszek Miller, and the Foreign Minister, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz. Well before the decision was made, however, the Polish President was visiting the United States and making statements that left little doubt regarding Poland's participation in the event of conflict. In a television interview in January 2003 after a meeting with President Bush, the Polish President let it be known that "potentially, our [Poland's] offer [of support in military action] already exists."⁸⁸ Kwasniewski stressed the importance of UN to disarm Hussein if possible, but emphasized "[I]f after all the discussions and actions, and the exploitation of various possibilities, it comes to stand and fight, then we will do this."⁸⁹ Poland's participation in the "gang-of-eight" letter was further evidence of Warsaw's unconditional support of the US position.

⁸⁶ Paris The Presidency of the Republic WWW, 17 February 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030219000545 (19 February 2003). Chirac saved his most harsh criticism for the three candidate countries that signed the Gang of Eight letter.

⁸⁷ Warsaw Polish Radio 3, 18 February 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030218000329 (18 February 2003).

⁸⁸ Warsaw TV Polonia, 14 January 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030114000505 (14 January 2003).

⁸⁹ Ibid.

On 18 March 2003, the Polish Foreign Minister announced that Iraq's failure to implement the conditions of UN Security Council Resolution 1441 would constitute legal grounds to the Polish government for armed intervention.⁹⁰ On the same day, President Kwasniewski delivered a speech that stressed Poland's readiness to go to war. In a reference to Poland's experience with and opposition to appeasement, Kwasniewski asserted that "We remember those who at the time did not want to die for Danzig, and we remember the consequences of their decision. Today, wiser owing to that experience, we appeal to the international community. Peace, yes, but not at the price of accepting crime, brute force, and terrorism. Peace, yes, if we can ensure it for all of us throughout the world."⁹¹ In the same article, the newspaper also noted an announcement by the Polish Defense Minister, Jerzy Szmajdzinski, that a Polish logistical ship and the nation's Operational-Maneuver Reaction Group unit were already stationed in the Persian Gulf, and that a chemical decontamination platoon would be dispatched there as well on 21 March. The actions of the Polish government demonstrated a stance that was decidedly more inclined to support the United States, even while supporting UN intervention and a UN solution.

Ultimately, when the decision was made, it was presented to the Sejm as a *fait accompli* and was presented to the Sejm formally only after the invasion of Iraq. Despite the fact that the decision was made by the President and the government, the decision had the widespread support of nearly all parties represented in the Sejm. Among those of the center-right, Poland's bonds with the United States were stressed, and a stand for democracy and against dictatorship was emphasized. Parties of the left were equally supportive. The only opposition that arose came from the far-right, largely populist, parties, including Self-Defense, the League of Polish Families, and the Polish Peasant Party. In each of these cases, the act was deemed illegal, since the Sejm had not been consulted before the action was taken. These parties were also extremely critical of the unilateral actions of the United States and the failure to receive UN endorsement for the intervention. In any event, the only major opposition was from parties that were not viable political alternatives to the ruling government coalition. These parties were

⁹⁰ Warsaw PAP, 18 March 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030318000285 (18 March 2003).

⁹¹ Warsaw *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 18 March 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030318000007 (18 March 2003).

merely interested in discrediting the government rather than offering any substantive disagreement to the government's policy.

In his address to the Sejm, Prime Minister Leszek Miller underscored the government's rationale for going to war. In the first place, the decision to support the United States militarily was one that served Poland's national interest. He listed three reasons to demonstrate this point. In the first place, the invasion would lead to a “safe, stable, and predictable world.”⁹² Ultimately, the war in Iraq would create a world in which, according to Miller, “Poland, too, will be able to feel more secure.”⁹³ Secondly, stability and predictability in Iraq would serve to solve many other problems in the Middle East. Finally, Poland's participation would “confirm the significance of Poland's alliance with the United States and of transatlantic cooperation for the cohesiveness of NATO and the strategic demands of our country's security.”⁹⁴ In addition to this reference to the transatlantic relationship, Miller also cited the issue of reliability and the fact that only through Poland's support of the United States could they reasonably expect the United States to offer assistance to Poland in its hour of need. The watchwords used time and again were the concepts of “solidarity” and reliability. Regardless of the statements, Poland's deployment of a force as small as 200 men was a significant event, especially considering that two other EU members--Portugal and Spain--did not send any troops in support of the US-led invasion.

2. Why Go to War?

Many of the reasons purporting to explain Poland's support of the United States in the war in Iraq are related to economic spoils to be shared by the members of the American coalition. There is little doubt that Poland expected to gain in stature in relation to the United States and that, as a reliable ally, it would receive some sort of tangible benefit from its allegiance. Among the profits to be made, Poland would be able to recover the nearly 700 million dollars loaned to the Hussein regime and would be closely involved in the reconstruction effort following the war and would most likely

⁹² Warsaw Sejm of the Polish Republic Internet Site, 27 March 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030327000193 (27 March 2003).

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

earn preferred status in contracts in Iraq's reconstruction. According to journalist Jerzy Marek Nowakowski, Polish contributions to this reconstruction could be "between \$2 billion and \$3 billion in the next few years."⁹⁵ At the same time, Poland had recently been able to purchase American F-16's that were accompanied by a nearly \$12 billion offset agreement. There was a sense among many studying Poland's overt support of the US position that Poland's allegiance was being purchased by the United States. According to many of its detractors, Poland's decision to purchase American-made F-16's vice British-Swedish Gripens or French Mirage 2000's was analogous to Poland's decision to support the US position regarding Iraq. In both cases, Poland sided with the United States instead of aligning itself with its Western European neighbors. Criticism of Poland's decision came from the European Commission's Enlargement Department head, Eneko Landaburu, as well as from the Commission President, Romano Prodi, himself. The French Foreign Minister was also outspoken in his disapproval of Poland's decision. According to French television, the foreign minister said that "France deplores Poland's decision to buy American F-16 fighter aircraft."⁹⁶ In each of these situations described above, condemnation of the fighter purchase was directly related to Poland's support of the US-led operation in Iraq.

Among the other reasons that Poland supported the United States was the added perk that, by taking its own stance in opposition to France and Germany, Poland would strengthen its position within the European Union. According to Jerzy Marek Nowakowski, a former chief advisor for international relations to Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek, instead of "kow-towing" to the supposed leadership of the European Union as many would recommend, Poland should not keep quiet because "Europe will not cope without the United States, and the role of an important US partner may strengthen our position in the European Union, even if this irritates Paris or Berlin."⁹⁷

Another more limited bonus received during Poland's participation in the coalition was the practical experience that would be gained by participating Polish units. In a plea

⁹⁵ Warsaw *Wprost*, 1 April 2003: 84-86. FBIS-EUP 20030410000275 (6 April 2003).

⁹⁶ Paris France-3 Television, 28 January 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030128000349 (28 January 2003).

⁹⁷ Warsaw *Wprost*, 01 April 2003: 84-86. FBIS-EUP 20030410000275 (06 April 2003).

uttered by former Polish Defense Minister, Janusz Onyszkiewicz, in January 2003, in the event that conflict could not be avoided, the Polish government was advised that “it would be good if our partners and Allies let us send at least several Polish officers as interns who could assist US, British, or French officers and gain invaluable experience in carrying out this type of operation.”⁹⁸ Given the eventual involvement of a Polish contingent of 2,400 troops in the stabilization portion of the intervention in Iraq, Polish troops have learned some useful information leading to a more professional military. According to Maria Wagrowska, a fellow at the Center for International Relations in Warsaw: “[T]he experiences gathered in the course of the Iraqi mission proved to be valuable hints for the organization and modernization of the national armed forces.”⁹⁹

In the end, however, security guarantees trumped all of the perquisites that would follow from Poland's support of the US position. Countless foreign policy experts and politicians have pointed to this fact. Poland's Foreign Minister pointed this out in his address to the Sejm on 26 March 2003. Cimoszewicz announced that the security of Poland “depends on the defence military credibility of the North Atlantic Alliance. And the defence credibility of the North Atlantic Alliance depends to the highest degree on whether the United States is going to be involved and will feel jointly responsible for the security of Europe.”¹⁰⁰ Speaking in 2003, then-Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Adam Rotfeld, stressed Poland's need to act in its own national interest and in the interest of its security. He asserted that “Poland supported the intervention in Iraq, taking into account new global threats demonstrated by the 11th of September as well as the fact, that its neighbors will not protect Polish interests, both in the context of the European Union, and in security issues.”¹⁰¹ Reliability within NATO and as a partner to the United States has been the principal purpose of Poland's intervention in Iraq. As one of the most vocal and most supportive allies relative to its role in the

⁹⁸ Warsaw *Rzeczpospolita*, 9 January 2003. FBIS-EUP 20030109000143 (9 January 2003).

⁹⁹ Maria Wagrowska, “Polish Participation in the Armed Intervention and Stabilization Mission in Iraq,” *Reports and Analyses* (Warsaw: Center for International Relations, August 2004), 27.

¹⁰⁰ Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (address in the Diet on the participation of a Polish military contingent in the international coalition to force Iraq's compliance with Resolution 1441 of the UN Security Council, 26 March 2003).

¹⁰¹ Wagrowska, 11.

international community, Poland has demonstrated the importance it places on a close relationship with the United States. In return, Poland expects the security guarantees that the United States represents to be there when Poland is again threatened.

3. Assessing the Actions of the Polish Government

The Polish government's decision to participate in the war in Iraq was largely based on Poland's relationship with the United States and the recognition that the United States is the best guarantor of Poland's security. Despite its impending membership in the European Union, the government decided that, regardless of the protestations of Germany and France, Poland would speak with its own voice and in the pursuit of its own national interests. This entails that Poland look to its own perceived tenuous security situation. In spite of the fact that most experts in Poland do not foresee a threat developing to the state's east, Poland must ensure that a credible guarantee of assistance exists in the event a threat does materialize. In this instance that guarantee is provided by the United States. An important way to ensure that this guarantee will be there when it is needed is for Poland to prove its own reliability and credibility as an ally. Supporting the United States in Iraq presented just such opportunity for Poland to demonstrate its dependability.

At the same time, many Poles believe that the European Union, led by France and Germany, are satisfied to subordinate Poland's own security concerns to its own economic and political interests. There is also a sense that much of the European Union does not recognize the same security threats that Poland and many of its Eastern and Central European neighbors do. Instead of trying to understand the support of the United States offered by Poland and the other EU candidate states in the region in the "gang of eight" letter and Vilnius Declarations, Jacques Chirac chose to denigrate the decision. Ultimately, Poland chose to support the United States because even while the European Union does not recognize the paramount threats perceived by Poland, the European Union's security and defense policy lacks the capabilities to provide a credible guarantee of its security.

In June 2003, the Polish public easily ratified the EU Accession Treaty and Poland's membership in the European Union. Despite the relief felt by many Polish politicians, who had feared a turn-out of less than the required 50% of Polish voters,

Poland's membership was not a “done deal.” Since the current member states had to ratify the new members' accession, Poland's membership could still be refused. Given this situation and in light of Poland's steadfast support and participation in the war in Iraq, it is difficult to understand the position adopted by the Polish government in addressing the EU draft constitution beginning in December 2003.

B. THE EUROPEAN UNION CONSTITUTIONAL DEBATE

On 17 and 18 June 2004, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union came together to reach an agreement on the EU constitutional treaty. As Polish Prime Minister, Marek Belka stated on the last day in Brussels: “I feel that Poland has achieved a great success, but Europe has achieved a success too...the adoption of the constitutional treaty is the joint success of all the European nations.”¹⁰² In late December 2003, however, agreement on the treaty had been considered inconceivable, since the Polish delegation, as well as those representing at least 13 other states had objected to the revisions found in the draft treaty. The first Brussels Summit had ended in failure. In fact, as late as April 7, 2004, the Polish government had remained opposed to any revision to the Nice Treaty which might reduce their strength in decision-making in the Council as a member of the European Union. Jan Truszczyński, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, laying out the government's position before the Sejm maintained that:

[W]hen it comes to the decision-making system in the Council of the EU, Poland has been guided by a fundamental guideline that there has to be a proper balance between major and minor countries of the EU. [T]he entry on the decision-making system in the Council of the EU that will be eventually included in the [Constitutional] Treaty should guarantee Poland with a position comparable to the one it has according to current regulations.¹⁰³

The current regulations cited above are those outlined in the Nice Treaty. Poland was not the only state opposed to the revision of the terms of the Nice Treaty; the other states of the Visegrad Four were also opposed to the potential reduction of state weights within the European Union, including Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. In fact, according to an article in *Warsaw Rzeczpospolita*, published on November 4, 2003:

¹⁰² Warsaw PAP 18 June 2004. FBIS-EUP 20040619000008 (19 June 2004).

¹⁰³ “European Debate,” *The Warsaw Voice*, April 7, 2004.

“Until recently, only Spain and Poland defended the Nice agreements with the support of the tiny Estonia and Malta. At least 11 more states back the Nice system at the moment. Austria, Finland, Sweden, Portugal, Lithuania, Latvia, Denmark, Ireland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia have stepped forth with a firm demand that Germany and France modify their stance.”¹⁰⁴ When the dust settled near the end of the second Brussels Summit, in June 2004, only Poland remained opposed to the EU draft constitution. To the end Poland was determined to plead their case and defend their views. More than just a difference of opinion, however, Poland's stance in the European Union constitutional debate demonstrates remarkably Poland's interest in ensuring that it will be taken seriously and its determination that it will be an influential member in the further integration and development of the European Union.

1. The Nice Treaty of 2001

The Nice Treaty, signed by the EU member states on 26 February 2001 and on which Poland's hopes for the draft constitution were pinned, was prompted by the need to consider revisions to the European Union's decision-making process prior to the addition of ten new members that was due to occur in 2004 or 2005. The issues that would later be settled in the Nice Treaty were initially discussed at the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) that met in February 2000. According to a statement from Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, and Michel Barnier, European Commissioner for Regional Policy and Institutional Reform, included in the preface to the European Union's “What Difference Will the Treaty of Nice Make?”: “The aim of this conference was to adapt the way in which the European institutions operate in order to make it possible for the European Union to take in new Member States.”¹⁰⁵ The Nice Treaty was thus more about procedural changes rather than structural ones.

Major decisions were taken up by the European Union's heads of state and government that would affect the future members of the European Union. Though the future states were unable to take part in the deliberations at Nice, they were invited to send representatives. Among the major issues that were discussed at Nice were: the

¹⁰⁴ Warsaw *Rzeczpospolita*, 4 November 2003. FBIS-EUP 20031104000246 (4 November 2003).

¹⁰⁵ “What Difference Will the Treaty of Nice Make?” (Luxembourg: European Communities, 2001), 1.

extension of qualified majority voting to other EU areas and provisions, a new allocation of weighted votes within the European Council, and the issue of one commissioner per state with a proposed ceiling of 27 commissioners making up the European Commission (a provision that would be effective in 2005). Once the Nice Treaty was signed and ratified, each country, including the 10 that joined the European Union in May 2004, would have a representative on the EU Commission. Within the EU Council, qualified majority voting was approved for decision-making, with each country weighted according to its relative size. Poland thus was allocated 27 votes, the same number as Spain--not many fewer than the 29 received by Britain, Germany, and France--and received its own commissioner. Though Poland had no vote in the approval of the Nice Treaty, it was an associate member of the European Union and, as a candidate country, closely followed the treaty negotiations and the eventual outcome of those negotiations. The Treaty of Nice entered into force on 1 February 2003. Despite this fact, even before its own ratification, the Treaty of Nice and its revised voting procedures were already under the scrutiny of the constitutional convention that was organized at the request of the European Council meeting in Laeken, Belgium.

2. The Constitutional Convention

The European Union's constitutional convention was an idea agreed upon at the European Council meeting held at Laeken, Belgium on 14 and 15 December 2001 and was chaired by a former French president, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. Member states were to be represented on the convention with one representative from each and two representatives from each of their national parliaments. Candidate member states would be represented in the same way, but would be “unable to prevent any consensus which may emerge among the Member States.”¹⁰⁶ In explaining the purpose of the convention, the Presidency Conclusions of the Laeken meeting announced that: “[I]t will be the task of that Convention to consider the key issues arising for the Union's future development and try to identify the various possible responses.”¹⁰⁷ Notably, there was no set agenda to be considered by the convention. While the Presidency Conclusions discussed enlargement and the need to inject “greater transparency” and “simplification” through a

¹⁰⁶ http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/68827.pdf (Accessed 08 March 2005).

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

document bringing together the union's four treaties, the document was remarkably silent on the matter of a mandate.¹⁰⁸ This serves to explain why, even before the Brussels Summit began in December 2003, there was little agreement regarding an appraisal of the product of Giscard d'Estaing's convention. As the *International Herald Tribune* noted in its opinion pages on 11 December 2003: “The Brussels summit about to take place closes (in principle) the year-long process devoted to giving an enlarged Europe a constitution. The Europeans are far from agreement on the draft of that constitution.”¹⁰⁹ Principle among those in disagreement on the draft constitution was Poland.

3. The EU Constitutional Debate

After the constitutional convention published its findings and submitted its proposed constitution, the Polish government and its opposition expressed deep concerns with a number of issues within the proposal. Even before the summit at which the heads of state and government of the EU member states were to negotiate the draft constitution, a number of meetings were held to hammer out a basic agreement on the text of the constitution. Among these meetings was one arranged by the EU President, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi that took place in late November 2003 in Naples, Italy between the EU foreign ministers. At the heart of Polish opposition to the draft constitution to be adopted at the Brussels Summit scheduled for 12-13 December was the revision of the voting system that had been proposed by the Nice Treaty of February 2001. Changes made included scrapping weighted voting in favor of a double-majority, wherein a simple majority of states representing 60 percent of the EU population would be sufficient to pass proposals. The number of EU Commissioners would be capped at 15 and would serve on a rotational basis. The rationale behind this decision was that a Commission of 25 would be too unwieldy and would make it incredibly difficult to reach agreements on proposed matters. Other issues that served as stumbling blocks to the Polish government were subsidies to German companies that had been allowed to exceed those authorized by the European Union. Subsidies provided by Germany to certain of its companies were initially approved in 1957 in response to the dire economic conditions

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ William Pfaff, “Seeking to Make Europe One EU Constitution,” *International Herald Tribune* (Paris: December 11, 2003), 8.

found in Germany following the end of the Second World War. This issue had somehow never been revisited, or was allowed to remain in place regardless of Germany's subsequent economic revival. Additionally, a proposal was made for the establishment of a permanent EU military planning cell. Countries interested in this institution were those most in favor of an EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and a European Security and Defense Policy with central roles opposed to those existing in NATO. Finally, Poland, and several other countries including: "[m]ainly Roman Catholic Ireland, Italy, Malta, Portugal, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia," were insistent in their support of the inclusion of a reference to the Judeo-Christian heritage of Europe in the preamble of the Constitution.¹¹⁰ Opposition to this initiative was comprised of secular states such as France, Belgium, and Denmark, as well as largely Muslim groups throughout the continent.

At the meeting of the foreign ministers held in Naples, no progress was made on any of the above issues. In fact, while Poland was joined by Spain on the issue of voting procedures and Austria on the issue of one commissioner per member state, other issues were criticized by other states, including the Netherlands which denounced the European Union's inability or unwillingness to punish France and Germany for breaking EU budgetary rules.¹¹¹ While the meeting of the EU foreign ministers was proceeding in Naples, Polish President Kwasniewski spoke out on this same matter on the Polish radio program, "Signals of the Day." According to Polish radio, he emphasized that the fact "that France and Germany avoided punishment for excessive level of their budget deficits was an argument in favour of strengthening our [the Polish] position in the negotiations, and that the shape of the future EU constitution suggested by the EU Convention could strengthen positions of some member countries."¹¹²

Well before sending its delegation to Brussels to negotiate the constitution, the Polish government had agreed that the Nice Treaty was to remain in force and that those other objections voiced by Poland would have to be addressed before an agreement could

¹¹⁰ "Several EU Countries Want Christianity Mention in EU Constitution," *Agence France-Presse*, May 20, 2004.

¹¹¹ London BBC News, 28 November 2003. FBIS-EUP20031128000372 (28 November 2003): .

¹¹² Warsaw Polish Radio 1, 28 November 2003. FBIS-EUP20031128000269 (28 November 2003):

be reached. While disagreement over the proposed voting procedures was the central obstacle to a Polish agreement, the government was unwilling to advocate the outspoken idea expressed by Jan Rokita, the former leader of the political party Civic Platform, who supported a bargaining position characterized by the phrase “Nice or Death (Die).” The government’s adherence to a position promoting the Nice Treaty voting rules was unanimously supported within the Sejm and was the position advanced by the Polish delegation which included the Prime Minister, Leszek Miller, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Włodimierz Cimoszewicz. As with the statement regarding the reference to Europe’s Judeo-Christian heritage, Poland enjoyed the support of other states on the other issues to which it objected. The terms outlined in the Nice Treaty continued to be supported as well by Spain and the other members of the Visegrad Four.

4. Brussels Summit I

Poland maintained its opposition to the draft constitutional treaty for a number of reasons. First, the Polish government was most concerned about the revisions of the Nice Treaty. Resistance to the modifications of the Nice Treaty was based initially on the fact that the provisions of the treaty had not been tried within an enlarged European Union. The treaty had been based on the enlargement, but as the new member states had joined and the time had come for the system to be exercised, Germany and France balked and wanted to “change the rules.” In an interview in mid-December, Leszek Miller even cited a comparison articulated by his wife, Aleksandra, who complained: “How can you prepare a dish of soup and then immediately say that it is no good without even trying it?”¹¹³ Kwasniewski’s position was similar--“let us first try Nice!”¹¹⁴ In fact, the Polish President even challenged Chirac and Schroeder to explain themselves. As he asserted: “[W]hen they adopted this system, did President Jacques Chirac and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder not see this disproportion? It is up to them to explain why they supported it and why they now consider it bad.”¹¹⁵ Under the revised voting procedures, Poland would not have nearly the strength that it would have had under the Nice Treaty to

¹¹³ Leszek Miller, interview, Warsaw PAP, 16 December 2003. FBIS-EUP20031216000486 (16 December 2003).

¹¹⁴ Aleksandr Kwasniewski, interview, Paris *Liberation*. FBIS-EUP20031210000338 (10 December 2003).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

express its opposition. Poland considered its role as a new, and considerably large, member of the European Union as one of protecting the smaller states from the dictates of the largest states. Through its strength, both real and perceived, gained from the weight given it under the Nice Treaty, Poland expected to be able to prevent the largest countries in Europe from dominating the European Union. The specific threat in this regard was that represented by France and Germany and the perceived Franco-German Bloc within the European Union. According to Polish Foreign Minister Cimoszewicz, “‘the double majority’ system would ‘unusually strengthen the four largest, strongest members’—Germany, France, Britain, and Italy. We are deeply convinced that Poland is defending the European ideal in its battle.”¹¹⁶ According to one Polish politician, Konrad Szymanski, opposition to the Nice Treaty is directly related to Poland’s ability to form a blocking minority with “like-minded member countries.”¹¹⁷ Szymanski makes a reference to Poland and Eastern Europe’s interest in the eastern dimension and those members of the European Union who border the Mediterranean and are interested in supporting the Magreb countries of North Africa. He notes that, given the revisions of the Nice Treaty in the draft constitution, the percentage of votes controlled by “the coalition of the countries with interests in the eastern dimension of the European Union would then shrink to 18.4 from 23.3 percent. It is no accident that the coalition of the Mediterranean countries, that is, of countries interested in the southern dimension of EU policy, is bolstered by the draft EU constitution to 35.1 percent from their former 30 percent under the treaty of Nice.”¹¹⁸ Equally troublesome to Szymanski who is a member of Poland’s Law and Justice party was the amount of regulation imposed upon member states by the European Union. He and the Law and Justice Party are interested in trimming and simplifying European law. However, given the Franco-German bloc that he believes continues to favor even further regulation, “under the treaty of Nice these two countries together held a 17-percent vote whereas under the draft EU constitution they will enjoy a 29.3-percent vote.”¹¹⁹ The final issue that Poland had with the change in

¹¹⁶ “Poland Says It Is Protecting Small States in Resisting New EU Voting System,” *The Financial Times*, December 11, 2003.

¹¹⁷ Warsaw *Rzeczpospolita*, 8 January 2004. FBIS-EUP 20040108000287 (8 January 2004).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

voting rules was the perceived underhanded manner in which the issue had arisen. Contrary to common knowledge, French and German objections to the Nice Treaty voting weights were not immediately undertaken by the discussions or working groups of the convention. In fact, as Jerzy Kranz, a former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador to Germany, asserts: “the Convention, at the inspiration of and with approval by France and Germany, came up with its proposal for the distribution of votes and the qualified majority thresholds at the end of April 2003, or quite all of a sudden when the Convention work had already been in its final stage.”¹²⁰ Even more important was the lack of discussion on the issue that occurred within the convention and the fact that once Germany and France had agreed on their support of the issue, they did not consider it necessary to consult Poland.¹²¹ Finally, Poland and many other new states were also concerned that they would lack representation in the EU Commission if the number of commissioners was capped at 15. The Polish government steadfastly adhered to the concept of “one country-one vote.”

Even the apparently less important issues pointed to an inherent disagreement between Poland and France and Germany. The issue of German subsidies was related to the concern associated with the unfair protection provided to German companies. Poland’s membership in the European Union would prohibit Poland from providing the same protection to its own companies. Poland’s extensive western border with Germany and close trade relations only served to exacerbate the situation. Finally, Polish insistence on the inclusion in the preamble of a statement referencing the Judeo-Christian heritage of Europe was a cultural issue. As an overwhelmingly Catholic state with close ties to a Polish Pope who had endorsed the idea of this reference, it was critical that it be included. The Polish government was unwilling to budge in this regard, especially given the fact that the idea was widely supported by the people of Poland. Ultimately, Poland was left with the impression that the only compromise to be made was on their side.

¹²⁰ Jerzy Kranz, “Between Nice and Brussels or Life After Death,” *Reports and Analyses* (Warsaw: Center for International Relations, January 2004), 9.

¹²¹ *Ibid.* Within this analysis, Kranz also lays out the German and French propensity to agree on issues bilaterally, without ever consulting the rest of the EU. Kranz maintains that France and Germany believe that all of their joint positions “should be approved of [by the union] without any major debates.” *Ibid.*, 10.

When the Brussels Summit concluded on 13 December, it was judged by the majority of the European Union, principally France and Germany, as a total failure. The reaction was immediate. According to scholar Mark Gilbert in his article “‘A Fiasco, But Not a Disaster’: Europe’s Search for a Constitution,” “Chancellor Gerhard Schröder hinted broadly that Germany would not carry on paying for the EU if the constitution were not adopted.”¹²² Regarding French President Jacques Chirac, Gilbert notes that while he insisted “there was no ‘crisis with a capital C,’ [he] also brandished the threat that a ‘pioneer group of countries’ centered upon France and Germany would pursue advanced integration in a wide range of areas: the ‘two-speed Europe’ that supporters of European integration have hitherto sought to avoid.”¹²³ Poland and the other countries opposed to the draft constitution were condemned for acting outside the interests of Europe. The European Union remained focused, however, on achieving an agreement. While some European publications blamed France and Germany for the impasse, considerable blame was also leveled against Spain and Poland for their outspoken positions and unwillingness to deal.

5. Reassessment of Position

The returning Polish delegation was happily greeted by the ruling parties as well as those of the opposition. Describing the support for Leszek Miller’s position at Brussels, Heather Grabbe, former Deputy Director of the Center for European Reform and currently serving in the cabinet of the EU Commissioner for Enlargement, says that “Miller found his tough EU stance to be the only area where he enjoys the support of all political parties. But short-term political gain was not the only reason for Miller’s hard line. Many Poles were pleased to see their prime minister say “no” to Germany and France because they resent how the EU has treated Poland in the last few years.”¹²⁴ All of Poland’s political parties were steadfast in their support of the Nice Treaty. Among

¹²² Mark Gilbert, “‘A Fiasco But Not a Disaster’: Europe’s Search for a Constitution,” *World Policy Journal*, 1, 21, March 22, 2004, 50.

¹²³ Gilbert.

¹²⁴ Heather Grabbe, “Poland: The EU’s New Awkward Partner,” *Centre for European Reform Bulletin*, February/March 2004. The treatment of Poland refers, in large part, to the one-sided accession negotiations between Poland and the EU. Upon joining the EU in May 2004, Poland was not a member of the Schengen Agreement and its agricultural sector will not receive subsidies equal to those of the EU-15 until 2013.

the statements of support that the government received, the heads of the parliamentary floor groups of both Civic Platform (PO) and Law and Justice were particularly indicative of the unified stance of Poland's political parties. After meeting with Prime Minister Leszek Miller following his return from Brussels, Donald Tusk of Civic Platform insisted that “[t]he conviction that it is worthwhile continuing being together on this matter so important for Poland, the maintenance of the Nice system and the good position of Poland in the EU during negotiations concerning the EU constitutional treaty, is a joint one.”¹²⁵ Ludwik Dorn of Law and Justice stressed that it was important for Miller to know with certainty “that he has behind him the support of Polish political forces.”¹²⁶

Outside Poland, in the interim between the first and second Brussels Summits, meetings were held between Britain, France, and Germany that disquieted those states that had prevented an agreement in Brussels in December 2003. At the same time, there was talk by France of a two-speed organization with some integrating faster than others. Jacques Chirac had in mind “a pioneer group,” based around the original six members of the European Coal and Steel Community. According to an article in the *Economist*, however, this was highly unlikely to succeed since “Italy, the Netherlands, and even Luxembourg [had] said they [did] not favor it.”¹²⁷ Despite this fact, some of Poland's allies, such as the Czech Republic, readily acknowledged that if there was to be a core group within the European Union they wanted to be a member.

By the end of March 2004, Poland began to lose the support that it had enjoyed from other states within the European Union opposed to the draft constitution. When the Socialist Party assumed control in Spain following the Madrid bombings, it quickly began to maneuver the Spanish government’s position much closer to that of France and Germany. Meanwhile, other states began to defect. In the face of this dwindling support, Poland maintained its adherence to a constitution that included the voting provisions provided for in the Nice Treaty.

¹²⁵ Warsaw PAP, 19 December 2003. FBIS-EUP20031219000323 (19 December 2003).

¹²⁶ Warsaw PAP, 19 December 2003.

¹²⁷ “Brussels Breakdown,” *Economist*, December 18, 2003.

6. Brussels Summit II

When the Heads of State and Government of the European Union met again in Brussels on 15 June 2004, an agreement on the constitution was ultimately achieved. Returning home, the Polish Interim-Prime Minister, Marek Belka, claimed victory. The opposition within the government, however, was relentless in its criticism of the agreement. Janusz Lewandowski, a newly elected member of the European Parliament and member of Civic Platform, declared: “This is a Polish concession with a lack of concessions on the part of so-called old Europe.”¹²⁸ The leader of the Law and Justice Party, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, said “that after elections PiS (Law and Justice Party) would not enter into an alliance with any party that would wish to accept the EU constitution.”¹²⁹ Finally, Wojciech Wierzejski, an MEP for LPR, “said his party planned to file charges against Poland’s delegates to the EU Brussels summit, who in agreeing to the EU Constitution had ‘worsened Poland’s position within the EU.’”¹³⁰ The opposition was unanimous in their condemnation of the agreement achieved by the delegation. Despite the rhetoric of the opposition, Prime Minister Belka celebrated the agreement because he had been able to achieve some sort of concession on each of the points contended at the December 2003 summit.

In the end, as the state representing the final obstacle to reaching an agreement, Poland had eventually relented in its opposition. Though Poland accepted the double-majority system in lieu of the voting system under the Nice Treaty, it was able to achieve a requirement for a higher percentage of EU members representing a higher percentage of the EU population in order to pass any proposal. Under the initial double-majority proposal, agreement was required by a simple majority of the member states, representing 60 percent of the EU population. Poland achieved agreement on a system requiring agreement by 55 percent of the member states representing 65 percent of the population. In addition to this, a “braking mechanism” was achieved, wherein as few as 25 percent of the member states could delay a proposal and force additional negotiations for an

¹²⁸ Warsaw PAP, 18 June 2004. FBIS-EUP 20040619000008, 19 June 2004.

¹²⁹ “Polish Opposition Leader Attacks EU Constitution ‘Capitulation,’” *Warsaw PAP*, June 18, 2004.

¹³⁰ “President Says Poland ‘Moral Victor’ in Battle for EU Constitution,” *Warsaw PAP*, June 20, 2004.

undetermined period of time. Second, Poland reached an agreement to revisit the question of German subsidies in five years. Third, the European Union scrapped the idea of a permanent EU planning cell and agreed to include terminology referencing cooperation and coordination with NATO. Fourth, Poland would be allowed to nominate its own commissioner by 2014. Equally important is the fact that there was agreement to a shared presidency within the European Union—a three-member presidency will share the office. Finally, Poland did not achieve their long-held objective of inclusion of a reference to Europe's Judeo-Christian heritage. In spite of that, Belka, his Foreign Minister, and the President were pleased with the outcome reached.

7. Assessing the Actions of the Polish Government

The Polish government's stance in the EU constitutional debate was influenced by a variety of factors--namely those related to Poland's perceived national interests. In order to be considered an equal among the leading members of the European Union, Poland was compelled to protect its interests. Ultimately, Poland's stubbornness was borne of its unwillingness to give up its voice in decision-making--no matter that some decisions were not to be tied to national security and other issues reserved to the realm of state sovereignty. As Adam Michnik, the editor of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, made clear in answering a question posed by *The Guardian*: “There’s no point preaching to us or pushing us. It won’t work. We didn’t regain our own voice just to give it up.”¹³¹

C. CONCLUSIONS

The decisions made by the Polish government in their support of Iraq and their criticism of the EU draft constitution, were related issues, but only inasmuch as they represented Poland's desire to somehow reconcile once again capabilities and interests to guarantee Poland's security. Each of them reveals Poland's continuing reliance on both the United States and Europe for different purposes. Poland's support of the war in Iraq reflected Poland's desire to tie the United States to the security assurances promised and underscored its belief that the United States is the underwriter of Poland's security. However, the credibility of this assurance must continue to be reinforced by Polish demonstrations of its reliability. Poland's decision to support the United States in Iraq, while still a candidate for EU membership and in opposition to the stated position of

¹³¹ Ian Traynor, “New Boy Poland Flexes Its Muscles,” *The Guardian*, December 10, 2003.

France and Germany, emphasizes the importance that the Polish government placed on this sign of solidarity. Poland's support also represents its unwillingness, for now, to place its trust in the European Union to provide for its security.

On the European continent, Poland expresses little interest in signing away its security to France and Germany. If the European Union is to achieve a defense capability, complementary to that provided by NATO, Poland is determined that it will play a central role. Equally important to Poland is the further development and continued integration of the European Union. Poland understands that Europe will not be a credible defender of Poland unless it acknowledges the same threats and considers them in the development of a common European security and defense policy. Only through its willingness to take a stand and makes its interests heard, as in the case of the constitutional debate, can Poland ensure that the direction of this development is such that Poland will benefit. Though the debate on the constitution had little to do with security-related issues, the Polish position demonstrated that Poland would make its case on any issue in which it had an interest. The conclusion to be drawn is that in the realm of security Poland could be expected to be even more stubborn. Poland is certainly interested in the development of a common European security and defense policy, but only one in which its security concerns and interests, as well as those of Europe's smaller members for whom Poland will speak out, are taken into account and acknowledged. In the EU debate on the constitution, it is important to note that Poland was the last member to agree to the treaty--even while, at the time, it had only been a member of the European Union for little more than a month.

V. CONCLUSION

A. SUMMARY

Poland's historical framework imposed several constraints on the democratic government that emerged following the end of the Cold War. Without the option of simply declaring its neutrality, Polish politicians were compelled to seek security guarantees to protect their new-found independence. At the same time, there was a desire among Polish elites to anchor the state into Western institutions and to rejoin Europe. With that in mind, Lech Walesa and his foreign minister, Krzysztof Skubiszewicz, appealed to NATO and the European Union for membership.

Upon achieving membership, the actions taken by the Polish government as a member of both NATO and the European Union reflected Polish security policy's unquestionably atlanticist foundation. As a result of Polish credibility concerns related to its allies throughout its history, Poland sought to demonstrate its reliability in the hopes that, when Poland must call upon them, its allies will respond in kind. While the European Union and NATO have evolved as institutions from their original purposes during the Cold War, the Polish perception of them has remained unchanged.

After 9/11, when the threat perceptions of the United States and Europe diverged and a transatlantic rift emerged, Poland found itself in a position in which it might now be compelled to choose between Europe and the United States. Despite the unwillingness of Polish politicians to consider such a choice, their decisions would serve to exacerbate Poland's resulting balancing act in its relations with the United States and Europe. Given Poland's decision to defy the stated joint position of France and Germany to support the US-led war in Iraq and its decision to staunchly defend its interests in the EU constitutional debate, one could have surmised that Poland had forsaken its European ties and membership in the European Union for a "special" relationship with the United States.

Ultimately, however, when one considers Poland's actions as a member of NATO and the European Union and the factors that influenced its decisions to support the United States in Iraq and to challenge Germany and France on the EU constitution, Poland's

actions reflect something quite unexpected. In the short term, Poland will certainly continue to rely on the security guarantees of the United States and NATO, especially in light of the yet undeveloped capabilities of the European Union's security and defense policy. However, as the European Union continues to further integrate and husband its resources, Poland will seek to use its influence within the union to direct its development in order to improve the ability of its fellow European states to provide support to the United States and NATO. In light of this situation I believe that although Poland would definitely prefer to maintain US influence in Europe for its own security as well as to maintain stability within Europe, in the event that the roles of NATO and the United States continue to diminish and US interests continue to differ with those of Europe, Poland will most certainly rely on the security that the European Union would provide them. This development and eventuality has specific policy implications for both the United States and Europe in the future.

B. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. United States

The United States has largely taken for granted the allegiance that Poland and its Eastern and Central European neighbors have provided since 9/11. In exchange for their political support, in many cases achieved in direct opposition to their publics, the United States has failed to provide tangible acknowledgement of their sacrifices and understanding of the difficult position in which its support has placed Poland within the European Union. The US government should strive to repair the rift that resulted from the war in Iraq to prevent placing Poland at odds with France, Germany, and the rest of Europe. At the same time, the United States should continue to support the development of European defense capabilities and a common foreign and security policy. A stable Europe is as important to the United States as it is to Europe itself. Ultimately, the United States should reward Poland's support and work to seriously consider its interests to strengthen the already strong relationship.

2. Europe

Europe, especially France and Germany, has taken for granted Polish interests. In joining the European Union, the terms of Poland's accession did not provide the sort of welcome that Poland had envisioned. Rather than joining under the same conditions as

other states had, Poland was subjected to limited immigration, reduced CAP subsidies, and reduced voting rights. Equally troubling to the Polish people was the presumption by France and Germany to speak for Poland in determining the EU position toward the war in Iraq and the harsh treatment Poland received during EU constitution negotiations. Given Poland's propensity to support European initiatives, including the security and defense policy, France and Germany should take into account the interests, especially those related to security, of its newest members to avoid alienating them. Concerns over security will inevitably take priority over any other consideration in these states and if Europe does not seriously consider their perceived threats there will be an unquestioned tendency by these states to seek elsewhere the guarantees they require. Bearing in mind Poland's historical concerns with Russia, France and Germany should not seek bilateral relations with Russia, while failing to consider the implied message this sends to Poland. Instead, Europe should seek to formulate a cohesive European policy toward Russia and the states that comprise the European Union's Eastern Dimension. Only by engaging in this sort of discussion will Europe ultimately be able to cultivate a *common* European foreign and security policy on the continent.

For the time being, Poland will continue to align itself with the United States to guarantee its security. At this point in time, it must. In the long run, however, Poland's security will lie with those near whom it resides and with whom it shares its various economic, political, and security interests--the European Union. Both the European Union and the United States have work to do in their relationships with Poland. Poland's atlanticism, while not permanent, may still become so.

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