

les notes de l'ifri - n° 12

Série transatlantique

Burdensharing in NATO

2

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing

Stanley R. Sloan

Sous la direction de Nicole Gnesotto

1999

Institut français des relations internationales

Ifri is a research centre and a forum for debate on the major international political and economic issues. Headed by Thierry de Montbrial since its founding in 1979, Ifri is a non-profit organization.

Ifri has a team of specialists which carries out research programmes on political, strategic, economic and regional subjects, and follows the major international issues.

The “*Transatlantic Series*” proposes concise analyses in English or French of the main Transatlantic debates and political issues in both the United States and Europe. It benefits from the support of the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

L’Ifri est un centre de recherche et un lieu de débats sur les grands enjeux politiques et économiques internationaux. Dirigé par Thierry de Montbrial depuis sa fondation en 1979, l’Ifri est né de la transformation du Centre d’études de politique étrangère créé en 1935. Il bénéficie du statut d’association reconnue d’utilité publique (loi de 1901).

L’Ifri dispose d’une équipe de spécialistes qui mène des programmes de recherche sur des sujets politiques, stratégiques, économiques et régionaux, et assure le suivi des grandes questions internationales.

La série transatlantique des « Notes de l’Ifri » propose des analyses concises, en français ou en anglais, des principaux débats transatlantiques et des enjeux politiques menées tant aux États-Unis qu’en Europe. Elle reçoit le soutien du German Marshall Fund of the United States.

This publication also benefits from the support of the Ministry of Defence.
Cette publication a également reçu le soutien du ministère de la Défense.

The opinions expressed in that text are the responsibilities of the author alone.
Les opinions exprimées dans ce texte n’engagent que la responsabilité de l’auteur.

© Droits exclusivement réservés, Ifri, Paris, 1999
ISBN 2-86592-073-9
ISSN 1272-9914

Ifri - 27, rue de la Procession - 75740 Paris Cedex 15 - France
Tél. : 33 (0)1 40 61 60 00 - Fax : 33 (0)1 40 61 60 60
E-mail : ifri@ifri.org - Site Internet : <http://www.ifri.org>

Contents

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World	p. 5
<i>Stanley R. Sloan</i>	
Introduction: A Perpetual Issue in a New Setting	p. 5
Burdensharing as a Congressional-Executive Issue	p. 8
Historic Roots of the Issue	p. 10
From Failure of EDC to the Fall of the Wall	p. 14
Burdensharing After the End of the Cold War	p. 17
<i>A New Context for the Debate</i>	p. 17
<i>Bosnia and NATO Burdensharing</i>	p. 21
<i>The Senate Debate on NATO Enlargement and Burdensharing</i>	p. 27
<i>Reflections on the Debate</i>	p. 40
US Public Perspectives on the Alliance	p. 41
Sharing Security Burdens in the 21 st Century	p. 45
Author	p. 49
Acronyms and Conventions	p. 51

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

*Stanley R. Sloan**

■ Introduction: A Perpetual Issue in a New Setting

With the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union, perhaps it was not unreasonable to hope for an end to the defense Burdensharing debates that had been part and parcel of the transatlantic alliance since its founding in 1949. Such hopes, however, were no more than wishful thinking. Even though the Soviet threat has vanished, the world remains a dangerous place. Global peace and stability still rely on the willingness of democratic nations to bring force into the service of diplomacy, when necessary. The burden of responding to this challenge will not be borne by the United States alone.

A Burdensharing discussion is guaranteed by the fact that political leaders in sovereign states must attempt to buy their citizens the best security possible for the least cost to national treasuries. As long as the United

* Senior Specialist in International Security Policy, Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress.

Burdensharing in NATO

States and its transatlantic allies wish to preserve their alliance, sharing the burdens of maintaining international peace and security will remain a natural and inevitable issue. The challenge is to ensure that the issue does not overwhelm the fundamental rationale for maintaining the alliance in the first place.

In the early months of 1999, the NATO allies will make critical decisions designed to shape the *raison d'être* for their alliance in the opening years of the 21st century. The new Strategic Concept, scheduled to be agreed by allied leaders at the NATO summit in Washington in April, will reflect an allied assessment of the appropriate missions of the alliance and an appreciation of the resources required to support those missions. This document will therefore set the standards against which allied Burdensharing efforts may be judged for many years.

The backdrop for the current Burdensharing discussion is provided by two issues in particular. Both issues demonstrate the intimate link between perceptions of the missions of the alliance and the costs of implementing commitments in support of those missions. The first issue that provoked new American concerns was the conflict in Bosnia, and the question of how to attempt to restore peace and order to this sensitive region. The second issue was the question of how much NATO enlargement would cost and how such costs should be shared. Taken together, the debate on these two issues reveals factors that are likely to continue to shape US attitudes toward defense Burdensharing in the 21st century, irrespective of what is agreed in the 1999 Strategic Concept.

The Bosnia and enlargement issues also reveal two parallel and occasionally competing themes that have historically characterized the US approach to defense Burdensharing. One theme, generally pursued by US administrations, holds that the European allies should earn their keep in the Alliance by doing more themselves: spending more money on

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

defense, providing more forces for self- and collective-defense, and contributing more to allied operations in and beyond Europe. A second theme, generally more popular with the US Congress, is that the European allies should not only improve their own defense efforts but should also reduce the alliance-related costs to the United States by taking responsibility for tasks that would otherwise be borne by the United States, providing payments to offset the cost of US force deployments in Europe, and buying US-produced weapons systems.

These themes call attention to the fact that the US system of government more often than not produces mixed signals to the Allies on the Burdensharing issue. US administrations, including the Clinton Administration, tend to focus on the strategic importance of allied defense efforts. The Congress, on the other hand, has the principal responsibility for authorizing and appropriating monies for government programs, including defense. Members of Congress, therefore, are particularly interested in any way that the cost of programs can be reduced or contained, and tend to see allied Burdensharing through this particular prism. Meanwhile, public opinion polls generally find the American people willing to take on international security burdens as long as the burdens are shared with allied countries through some equitable formula or distribution of tasks.

This analysis surveys US attitudes toward defense Burdensharing. Its purpose is to suggest the likely contours of the issue in the years immediately ahead. The analysis examines the question from a variety of perspectives, looking at the dynamics of congressional-executive relations, summarizing the historical roots of the Burdensharing relationship and tracing its development throughout the Cold War. It then looks at the issue in contemporary perspective, through the prisms of the controversy over the US response to the Bosnia crisis, the debate on

NATO enlargement, and the sentiments reflected in public opinion about the US role in the world and US relations with its European allies.

■ **Burdensharing as a Congressional-Executive Issue**

After the Second World War, the United States, Canada and their wartime Western European allies shaped a post-war alliance designed both to counter Soviet power in Central Europe and to provide a more secure framework for relations among the Western European countries. The US Congress played an active role in the shaping of that alliance, in part because President Harry Truman's Administration wanted to minimize the risk that an unwilling Congress would jeopardize US participation in whatever post-war structures were agreed upon.

Consequently, the US Congress, and in particular the US Senate, became a partner to the transatlantic bargain shaped between 1948 and 1954. That formative period established a basic relationship between the executive and legislative branches of the government that has produced remarkably consistent patterns of institutional behavior over the last 50 years. The Congress has never acted to limit the leading US role in the alliance. But the willingness of the Congress to back both Republican and Democratic administrations in their political and resource commitments to the alliance has been qualified by persistent congressional pressure for readjustment of defense burdens between the United States and its allies.

Congressional-executive relations on the Burdensharing issue, therefore, have been a mix of cooperation and confrontation, sometimes characterized by partisan political behavior, but more often than not influenced primarily by differing institutional perspectives and responsibilities.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

The equitable sharing of burdens and benefits within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has been an issue among the partners to the transatlantic bargain for five decades. The Congress, from the earliest years of the alliance, has attempted to control, where possible, the extent of the American commitment to the alliance while lobbying for increased European defense efforts. The Burdensharing issue has found the Congress frequently at odds with US administrations, not because administrations have wanted to give the Europeans a “free ride” but because executive branch perspectives on the issue are influenced by somewhat different priorities than those of the Congress.

The executive branch perspective is shaped largely by the president’s responsibilities as commander-in-chief, charged as he is with preserving the nation’s security. The perspective of the Congress is influenced primarily by its constitutional mandate to raise and allocate the funds to support the government’s programs. The President’s responsibility creates a broad geostrategic framework for decision-making. The congressional responsibility, on the other hand, gives rise to requirements which are primarily focused on available resources – the tax and manpower base – and the political, social and economic concerns of the taxpayers. The geostrategic framework may be of great concern to individual Senators and Representatives, but it is not the first institutional priority for the Congress.

Given the different sources of principal concern, it is only natural that the two branches of government have developed distinct and occasionally conflicting positions on the Burdensharing issue. The geostrategic orientation of executive branch responsibilities has led all American administrations since NATO was founded to the conclusion that there is no acceptable alternative in the near term to the alliance, and that although the costs of the arrangement could be made more tolerable (a task best left to the administration, of course), there should be no fundamental shift in the nature of US involvement in NATO, even if the sharing of costs and

Burdensharing in NATO

benefits seems inequitable to the United States. The Congress, influenced to a greater extent by fiscal and domestic factors, has consistently sought ways in which the burdens of the alliance could be controlled, even if the control measures risked or even required fundamental changes in the US commitment to the alliance.

When the Congress has from time to time asserted its role in managing the transatlantic bargain, its involvement has usually been regarded by the administration in power as an intrusion and by the European allies as a perverse influence on the “normal” conduct of international relations. But from the beginning, the Congress has been a not-so-silent partner in the transatlantic bargain. It was deeply involved in the creation of the alliance and in authorization of the original American commitment to the peacetime military posture and strategy of NATO. At the time, the Congress made known its concerns about the bargain, and some of those concerns remain as alive in 1998 as they were in the early 1950s. The Congress has accepted none of the offers tendered by successive American administrations to “trust” their judgement about managing the alliance – it has jealously guarded its share of the management rights.

■ **Historic Roots of the Issue**

The roots of the Burdensharing issue remain firmly planted in the historic negotiations of the late 1940s and early 1950s which shaped the original transatlantic bargain¹. The terms of the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty

1. The author has analyzed this period in *NATO's Future, Toward a New Transatlantic Bargain*, National Defense University Press, 1985. In addition, the early phase of congressional-executive relations on the Burdensharing issue is discussed in detail in Timothy P. Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance, The Origins of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1981). An important basic resource for the 1948-1954 period is the Department of State series, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, particularly 1950, Vol. 3, *Western Europe*, and 1952-1954, Vol. V, *Western European Security*.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

reflected a compromise between the European desire for explicit US commitments to provide military assistance to its prospective NATO allies and the American desire – strongly expressed in the Congress – for more general, less specific assistance provisions. In this fundamental aspect of the bargain, the Europeans had to settle for the general commitment which was more consistent with the mood in the Congress.

Between the Congress and the Europeans, the Truman Administration practiced a form of diplomatic footwork that subsequently became a standard part of the repertoire of every American post-war administration. The Truman Administration sought to convince the Europeans that the American commitment to the alliance was resolute, while reassuring the Congress that the commitment was not a bottomless pit. Since that time, subsequent administrations have been required under a great variety of circumstances to continue to reassure the Europeans of the validity of the American defense commitments in Europe while justifying to the Congress the price tag on the “entangling alliance” that NATO had become. The most recent embodiment of this interaction has been the Clinton Administration’s advocacy of NATO enlargement on strategic and ideological grounds combined with efforts to convince Congress that the price to the United States would not be too high.

It is important to recall that, when the Senate approved the North Atlantic Treaty, Senators were reassured by the Truman Administration, and by Secretary of State Dean Acheson in particular, that the United States would not be required to deploy large numbers of US troops to Europe to implement the commitment. This all changed in September 1950, when President Truman seized the occasion of the Korean war to commit to the deployment of four US army divisions to Europe. In return, France promised to lead the way toward a European Defense Community. The deal was quite simple: the United States would help defend Europe if Europe would make a serious effort to defend itself.

Burdensharing in NATO

When Congress returned to session in January 1951 following midterm elections, the wisdom of deploying large numbers of US troops to Europe and participation in an integrated allied command was severely questioned by conservatives among the Republican majority in the Senate, supported by some influential conservative spokesmen outside the Congress, most notably former President Herbert Hoover. The Republicans pressed the Truman Administration on two principal issues. The first issue was whether the deployment was appropriate in terms of US strategic and fiscal interests. The second was whether the President could, without congressional authorization, deploy American troops overseas – the “war powers” issue which later returned to prominence with the Vietnam War.

After extensive hearings and debate, the Senate ultimately vindicated the administration’s decision, but not without qualification. Senate Resolution 99, approved by the Senate on April 4, 1951 by a vote of 69 to 21, supported the deployment, but also declared that the Joint Chiefs of Staff should certify that the European allies were making a realistic effort on behalf of European defense; that the Europeans should make the major contribution to allied ground forces; and that provisions should be made to utilize the military resources of Italy, West Germany and Spain.

The form of the Senate’s action – a “sense of the Senate” resolution – did not insist on congressional authority over the President’s decision, but neither did the Senate give up its claim to exercise such control in the future. The Senate declared that any additional troop deployments should be made only with congressional approval. In sum, the Senate made it clear that it wanted to be regarded as an active partner in the transatlantic bargain. It remained reluctant to contemplate an extensive, open-ended US commitment to the defense of Europe, and it expected Europe to carry the bulk of the burdens, particularly in ground forces, for the continent’s defense. The Senate sought the rearmament of Germany and pointedly

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

reminded the administration that it retained the right to involve itself more decisively in US policy toward the alliance should its wishes be overlooked.

Neither the Senate's hopes nor the Truman Administration's strategies panned out in subsequent events. When President Eisenhower came to office in 1953, he brought with him conflicting legacies: his experience as NATO's first Supreme Allied Commander and the desire of conservative Republicans to install a policy of fiscal austerity and to minimize the direct American contribution to European defense. The administration responded to the desire for fiscal austerity by deciding to rely heavily on nuclear weapons to deter the Soviet Union, perhaps not fully recognizing that the policy of "massive retaliation" would also be interpreted in Paris as a sign of American intent to pull troops back from Europe once the European Defense Community was approved.

In 1954, unsure of the American commitment and of France's own ability to balance German power in a defense community, the French National Assembly killed the community treaty, thereby removing one important ingredient from the original Franco-American compromise. Germany was admitted to NATO and the alliance adopted the US strategy of massive retaliation.

The defeat of the European Defense Community frustrated American hopes that such a community would eventually make it possible for the United States to withdraw most of its ground forces from Europe – hopes which had substantially influenced congressional attitudes toward participation in the alliance.

As a consequence of these events, simply outlined here, the military strategy of the alliance came to rest heavily on the threat of the United States to use nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union in the event of a

Burdensharing in NATO

Soviet attack on Western Europe. At the same time, the credibility of that threat depended on a continuing and substantial American military presence in Europe. These basic features of the alliance were adjusted over the years to take into account changing circumstances, but they remained fundamental organizing principles for the alliance until the end of the Cold War.

■ **From Failure of EDC to the Fall of the Wall**

In NATO's forty years prior to the end of the Cold War, the Congress actively involved itself in the evolution of US policy toward the alliance. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the United States began to suffer serious balance of payments problems which began to focus attention on the cost of US troop deployments to Europe. The Vietnam War, French withdrawal from NATO's integrated command structure in 1966, and US economic problems undercut support for US overseas troop commitments and produced a strong congressional movement, led by Senator Mike Mansfield (D-Montana), to reduce substantially US troops in Europe. The Senator from Montana introduced the first of the "Mansfield Resolutions" on August 31, 1966. The resolution judged that "*the condition of our European allies, both economically and militarily, has appreciably improved...*". Based on this evolution, the development of détente, and mounting US fiscal and monetary problems, the Senate was asked to resolve that "*a substantial reduction of United States forces permanently stationed in Europe can be made without adversely affecting either our resolve or ability to meet our commitment under the North Atlantic Treaty*".

Senator Mansfield reintroduced the resolution in 1967, 1969, and 1970. When it emerged on January 25, 1970, the resolution had obtained the signatures of 50 Senators, perhaps the highwater mark of support for

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

efforts to cut US troops in Europe. But these resolutions, and similar efforts through 1974, failed to win final passage.

In 1970 the Nixon Administration pledged to the NATO allies that the United States would not make unilateral reductions in its forces in Europe if the allies would also work to maintain their defense efforts. This approach, which was also applied to US allies in Asia, became known as the “Nixon Doctrine”. It embodied the traditional US executive branch’s inclination to remain committed in Europe in return for serious allied defense efforts.

In the course of the 1970s, the Mansfield amendment approach to Burdensharing faded away while a less confrontational tendency emerged in the Congress. Under the leadership of moderates like Senator Sam Nunn (D-Georgia), the legislative focus was shifted to include fine-tuning the US contribution to NATO and promoting better use of US and European defense resources while at the same time seeking European offsets to US balance of payments costs.

In the late 1970s, led by President Jimmy Carter, the United States proposed, and the allies accepted, a long-term defense program including the goal of increasing defense spending by approximately 3 percent per year for a five-year period beginning in 1980. At the same time, political sentiment in the United States rallied behind the requirement for increased US defense spending, and many members of Congress began to criticize what they saw as insufficient allied defense efforts.

The growing congressional impatience with allied defense efforts was reflected in passage of a requirement for an “allied commitments report”. The amendment required the Secretary of Defense to report on allied progress toward meeting the 3 percent spending objective, to describe cost-sharing efforts being undertaken to “equalize” the sharing of defense

Burdensharing in NATO

burdens with NATO allies and Japan. The provision also expressed the sense of Congress that the president should seek increased support from host nations for the costs of stationing US forces there.

The Administration of President Ronald Reagan lobbied with the allies to encourage increased defense spending while at the same time telling Congress that European contributions to Western defense are more substantial than they are often portrayed in the United States. The Congress, however, was not convinced that the administration had done enough to promote stronger European defense efforts, and imposed a ceiling on US force levels in 1983 but allowed the President to waive the cap if necessary for national security reasons.

The Congress was particularly concerned that the allies had consistently fallen short of the goal of increasing defense spending by 3 percent each year. On June 20, 1984, Senator Nunn, joined by Senator William Roth (R-Delaware) and 16 other cosponsors, offered an amendment to the 1985 defense authorization bill which expressed concern that NATO's conventional force weaknesses produced excessive reliance on the early use of nuclear weapons. They proposed to reduce US forces in Europe by 30,000 per year beginning in 1987 if the allies did not live up to the goal of increasing defense spending by 3 percent in real terms or meet other specific goals to improve NATO conventional defenses.

The measure was narrowly defeated on a vote which crossed party and ideological lines. But the message was clear. The Congress wanted to see evidence of European willingness to take on a significantly greater share of NATO defense efforts. And, even though the Nunn-Roth amendment failed, the Senate did pass by an overwhelming majority a substitute amendment offered by Senator William Cohen (R-Maine) capping US force levels in Europe at 326,414, the level requested by the administration for fiscal year 1985.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

During the 1980s, there was a growing US interest in the potential development of a “European pillar” in NATO. In 1987, Senators Roth and Nunn joined in producing a report that called for a stronger European role in the Alliance, recommending that “*the Allies should jointly pledge that all future Alliance decisions will take into consideration the need for the European Allies progressively to assume a greater share of NATO responsibilities*”². Most US officials had not at this point calculated how a stronger European role in the Alliance would be taken into account in NATO decisionmaking and distribution of leadership responsibilities.

The main focus remained on the need to equalize burdens in the alliance through increased European contributions, and advocacy of a stronger European pillar was largely understood as a need for more European finances, forces, and fighters. As a report prepared for Congress early in 1989 observed, “*The legislative initiatives and floor debates of the 100th Congress [1987-1988] clearly indicate a pervasive concern that the defense efforts of the European allies are deficient, and that NATO is overly dependent on US military contributions*”³.

■ **Burdensharing After the End of the Cold War**

A New Context for the Debate

In 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and disintegration of the Soviet Union destroyed the geopolitical context that had shaped all previous Burdensharing

2. *NATO in the 1990s*, Special Report of the North Atlantic Assembly, May 1988, p. 11.

3. Christopher C. Bolkcom, *NATO Burdensharing: An Analysis of Major Legislation in the 100th Congress*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress 88-772 F, January 3, 1989.

Burdensharing in NATO

discussions. The question became a bigger one: do we still need NATO? The answer was formally provided by the Allies when they agreed on a new Strategic Concept for NATO in 1991⁴. The new concept was based on the assumption that the world remained a dangerous place, that political and military cooperation could be helpful in dealing with those dangers, and that NATO provided a logical venue for such cooperation.

The 1991 Strategic Concept shifted the framework for Burdensharing quite fundamentally. Given its focus on new and diverse challenges to security arising beyond not only NATO's borders but beyond Europe's borders as well, the concept put an increased premium on allied abilities to deploy forces beyond national borders to participate in peace support operations. The collapse of the Soviet threat combined with the emergence of a variety of new challenges helped broaden views in the United States about what constituted contributions to security. The Pentagon had for several years accepted the relevance of including development assistance statistics in its annual report to the Congress on defense Burdensharing. In the 1990s, more Members of Congress appeared willing to acknowledge that such efforts did constitute security contributions, even though they still from time to time criticized them as tarnished by self-serving trade promotion motivations⁵.

Meanwhile, virtually all the allies, including the United States, were adjusting their military efforts to reflect their perception of a more benign international system. The United States began reducing its forces in Europe from over 300,000 down to current levels of around 100,000,

4. « *The Alliance's Strategic Concept* » in *the NATO Handbook, North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, Brussels, 1995, p. 239. (This and other basic NATO documents can also be found on the NATO web page at <http://www.nato.int>.)

5. For example, at the direction of the Congress in the FY 1998 Defense Authorization Act, the March 1998 edition of the « Report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense » includes factors such as multinational military activities, cost sharing and foreign assistance in addition to defense spending in its measures of allied Burdensharing contributions.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

without pressure or insistence from Congress. This withdrawal process lowered the volume of the voices in Congress complaining about Burdensharing in the early 1990s, but they did not disappear completely.

The main congressional complaint in those years was that the United States, led by President George Bush, had to carry the main brunt of the military response to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. But even that concern became muted by the fact that the European and other allies who did not make force contributions to the Desert Storm operation provided funds in support of the operation. When all the contributions were recorded, the cost had been fully offset by contributions from US allies in Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

With regard to Europe, the Bush Administration focused its attention on maintaining US leadership even while reducing US forces and weapons deployed there. The administration supported in principle the goal of a stronger European pillar in NATO but was suspicious of a developing European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), seeing the initiative as possibly a French trojan horse designed to undermine NATO as well as to undercut US leadership in Europe. The Bush Administration attitude clearly reflected a traditional US "yes, but..." approach to European defense cooperation. Yes, the United States supported a stronger European role in the alliance, but it did not want the allies to "*go off in a corner and gang up on the United States*", as a US official once put it to me. Key Bush Administration officials believed that was exactly where French policy was headed⁶.

6. For a perceptive survey of US policy toward ESDI see Philip Gordon, *US and ESDI in the New NATO*, « Les Notes de l'Ifri », série transatlantique, n° 4, Ifri, 1998; see also the excellent analysis of French policy toward NATO's transformation in Robert P. Grant, « France's New Relationship with NATO », *Survival*, Vol. 38, No. 1, spring 1996, pp. 58-80; for an insightful analysis of Bush Administration policy toward ESDI see Catherine Guicherd, *A European Defense Identity: Challenge and Opportunity for NATO*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress 91-478, June 12, 1991.

Burdensharing in NATO

After winning the White House from George Bush in 1992, Bill Clinton took a different tack. Clinton's national security team saw a growing European role in the alliance as a normal and desirable post-Cold War policy goal. The administration sought to highlight its more positive attitude toward European defense cooperation at the NATO summit meeting in Brussels in January 1994. Clinton's team allowed the communiqué to be filled with glowing references to the potential for the Western European Union to assume greater responsibility for defense in Europe, and promoted the concept of "Combined Joint Task Forces" as a vehicle for Europeans to relieve the United States of responses to security problems in Europe.

The exuberance with which the Clinton Administration embraced ESDI and the WEU, while appreciated in Europe as a useful antidote to the Bush skepticism, was nonetheless misleading to many in the United States. Members of the Senate and House who were looking for ways in which defense burdens could be reduced, in part to help get the US budget deficit under control, seized on this approach as one that would let the United States leave European security issues to the Europeans while the United States tended to its global responsibilities.

The unfortunate fact was that European unity had not yet developed sufficiently to permit a major transfer of burdens and responsibilities. The new Burdensharing approach was tested almost immediately by the developing crisis in Bosnia. The Clinton Administration sought to avoid US military involvement in the Bosnia conflict, as had the Bush Administration. A majority of Senators and Congressmen would clearly have preferred that Europe step in and clean up the mess.

What happened next demonstrated that the end of the Cold War and the development of a "European Security and Defense Identity" would not bring an end to the defense Burdensharing debate. The European allies

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

were not able on their own to bring an end to the conflict in Bosnia. Alliance responsibilities and burdens clearly would have to continue to be shared, not divided neatly between compartmented European and American roles.

And so, the Burdensharing debate at the end of the 20th century is much more traditional than one might have expected just after the end of the Cold War. The defense problem has changed: how to support diverse and expensive peacekeeping operations in and around Europe, rather than how to mount an effective defense against the Soviet Union. But the Burdensharing issue remains quite familiar: how can defense burdens be shared equitably across the Atlantic between the United States and a Europe which is not likely to be “united” in defense for many years to come?

Bosnia and NATO Burdensharing

The debate over the US role in the Bosnia crisis has been the most significant NATO Burdensharing issue since the end of the Cold War. The issue is rooted in the fact that both American and European leaders initially tried to deal with the Bosnia problem by dividing, not sharing, responsibility for dealing with the crisis.

On the US side, the decision by President George Bush to take a “hands off” approach to Bosnia established a reticent US posture that handicapped international responses to the crisis. On the European side, the unfortunate statement in April 1991 by Luxembourg Prime Minister Jacques Santer, then serving as President of the European Community’s Council, that Bosnia could be handled by the Europeans reinforced American reluctance to become too deeply involved. One student of the Bosnia crisis has noted that the European assertion of responsibility “suited the US position on Yugoslavia in many ways, for policymakers

Burdensharing in NATO

*were unwilling to commit substantial US resources or any troops to an area no longer of vital strategic interest. Moreover, a core motivation of US urgings for greater European participation was to ensure Europe's responsibility for the transition in Eastern Europe"*⁷.

In June 1991, as the United States became immersed in its first national election campaign of the post-Cold War era, war broke out in former Yugoslavia. Bush decided not to lead or even participate actively in attempts to prevent or control the growing conflict. The administration relied largely on efforts by the members of the European Community (the precursor of the European Union) to negotiate a peaceful settlement. The Bush Administration's approach was undoubtedly influenced by the inherent complexity of the Balkan situation, the unlikelihood of an early resolution and the strong opposition from US military officials to any commitment of US forces. The latter, combined with European reticence to act decisively and the approach of the 1992 presidential election campaign, militated against a potentially costly intervention in former Yugoslavia. In retrospect, many observers believe that a US-European intervention in 1991 would have been much less costly than the more belated action has been.

During the US presidential election campaign, Bill Clinton, the Democratic challenger, criticized President Bush for failing to respond to the crisis. After taking office, however, President Clinton retreated from the greater involvement implied by his campaign rhetoric. The new administration instead expressed a willingness to contribute US peacekeeping forces, but only after the warring parties agreed to a settlement. Meanwhile, a number of nations, led by the British and French, contributed forces to a United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) designed to protect humanitarian relief efforts in the war-

7. Susan L. Woodward, *Balkan Tragedy, Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War*, The Brookings Institution, Washington, 1995, p. 158.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

torn region but without a mandate to do anything forceful to halt the fighting.

The Burdensharing aspect of the issue festered until mid-1995, with the United States proposing actions (air strikes, arms supplies to the Bosniaks) designed to balance Serbian military advantages and the European allies opposing any moves that might put their forces in an even more delicate or dangerous situation. Even though the Clinton Administration had pursued what could arguably be called an “activist” strategy toward the Bosnia issue, the bottom line in mid-1995 was that neither the administration, nor the Congress, nor the American people were eager to commit the United States in Bosnia in circumstances that could produce heavy casualties among US forces and uncertain results. Even the most impassioned arguments in the congressional debate over lifting the arms embargo to “do something” for the Bosnians assumed that it would be politically impossible to commit US ground forces until there was a peace settlement. At the same time, many Members of Congress apparently were coming to the conclusion that the inability of Europe to get its act together to deal decisively with the Bosnia crisis lay at the heart of the dilemma for the United States.

At that crucial time, while conditions rapidly deteriorated in Bosnia, the French and British governments, which were providing the bulk of troops in UNPROFOR, suggested that they might soon abandon the costly and increasingly frustrating mission. The United States, helped by a strong Croatian ground offensive against Serbian positions in Bosnia and NATO air strikes against Serbian targets, initiated a negotiating process that eventually led to the peace accords, signed in Dayton, Ohio, on December 17, 1995, and the creation of a NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR).

Burdensharing in NATO

In spite of strong congressional misgivings and without formal congressional support, the United States agreed to play the leading role in IFOR, supplying close to one half of the ground forces. Legislation that would have denied funds for US deployments in Bosnia was narrowly defeated in the House. The Senate passed a resolution supporting the US armed forces that would be deployed in the Bosnia operation. Neither the House nor the Senate, however, endorsed the IFOR mission or US involvement in it.

When President Clinton sought to justify the IFOR commitment to the Congress and to the American people in a televised address on November 27, 1995, he argued that the United States had been forced to act by the need to restore the credibility of NATO. To some, his speech almost sounded like he was complaining that “*the allies made me do it*”. This approach was not of particular comfort to those in the Congress who had hoped that a “new NATO” would mean a NATO at less cost to the United States. Such expectations had been elevated in January 1994 when, at President Clinton’s first NATO summit in Brussels, Belgium, the United States endorsed the European desire to establish a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) and volunteered to support European-led operations with NATO assets.

For the next two years, many Members of Congress rebelled against a commitment that they believed was not in the service of vital US interests, that should be more a responsibility of the Europeans than of the United States, and which was undertaken without appropriate congressional involvement. In view of congressional sentiment, and perhaps with some wishful thinking, the United States and the allies limited the IFOR mandate to one year only. The implication was that the United States could pull its troops out after the year’s work was done. As the deadline approached, it became clear that withdrawal of US troops and of IFOR would only invite a return to war, and the IFOR was

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

regenerated as the Stabilization Force (SFOR), which was projected to last for 18 months. Burdensharing concerns were somewhat ameliorated by the fact that the US contribution to SFOR would be reduced to around 8,500 compared to the approximately 22,000 involved in IFOR.

In the second half of 1997 and into 1998 it became obvious that SFOR would not have completed its work by mid-1998, and Members of Congress, without any enthusiasm, increasingly accepted that the United States would continue to deploy forces in Bosnia for some time into the future. The Congress has continued appropriating funds for the US involvement in Bosnia in spite of the fact that the cost of US military operations in Bosnia through Fiscal Year 1999 is now estimated to total some \$9.4 billion. Efforts to constrain or limit US involvement have been defeated in both the House and the Senate.

Diminished congressional resistance to the Bosnia operation reflects the perception that IFOR and SFOR have been successful military operations and important accomplishments for NATO in the post-Cold War world. Nonetheless, the Congress has made it clear that it does not want the US commitment to be open-ended and that it expects the European allies to carry increasing shares of the burden. This sentiment has been reflected in the congressional focus on implementation of the civilian parts of the Dayton Accord. The ability to reduce the Western military presence in Bosnia relies heavily on development of a self-sustaining peace in Bosnia, and the general congressional sentiment is that the European allies need to increase their contributions to this process.

At a hearing of the House Committee on International Relations in March 1998, Nebraska Republican Douglas Bereuter, a moderate who supports activist US world and European roles, emphasized congressional concern about European contributions to the civilian implementation programs, asking administration witnesses “*Have the European Governments and*

Burdensharing in NATO

*EU speeded up the disbursement of funds for economic assistance since last year? Also, are we satisfied that the EU is keeping its pledge to lead the economic reconstruction for Bosnia?''*⁸. Representative Bereuter probably spoke for many Members when he told the administration witnesses that they could communicate to the European allies his impatience with the slow pace of implementation.

In addition, most Members of Congress would like the Europeans to take increasing responsibility for the military operation in Bosnia. The House-Senate Conference Report on the Fiscal Year 1998 defense authorization bill (H.R. 1119) included a non-binding provision that recorded the sense of the Congress that the United States should not participate in a follow-on force in Bosnia after June 1998 but may provide support to a follow-on force of European ground troops, under the aegis of the European Security and Defense Identity or NATO. The same report also required the President to report to the Congress on steps to be taken to transfer responsibility to a European-led peacekeeping force.

The debate over Bosnia and Burdensharing demonstrated that the United States was willing, albeit reluctantly, to take on leadership responsibilities and burdens in Europe when necessary *and* when led by the President. It has also made clear the strong desire among Members of Congress for European nations to carry more of the burden. Excessively ambitious rhetoric from European leaders as well as from the Clinton Administration in the early-mid-1990s encouraged some Members of Congress to believe that united European security and defense efforts could produce near-term burden relief for the United States. Perhaps the Bosnia experience has leavened such expectations, but it has not removed

8. US Congress House, Committee on International Relations. «The Prospects for Implementation of Dayton Agreements and the New NATO Mission in Bosnia », hearing, March 12, 1998, p. 16.

the perceived need for the European allies to make commitments and sacrifices comparable to those made by the United States.

The Senate Debate on NATO Enlargement and Burdensharing⁹

Against the backdrop of the experience in Bosnia, on April 30, 1998, the US Senate, by a vote of 80-19, gave its advice and consent to the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to the North Atlantic Treaty. The wide-ranging debate included consideration not only of the qualifications of the three candidates but, perhaps more importantly, of the quality of the Alliance itself. The most important issues discussed on the Senate floor included how enlargement related to NATO's purposes and how the costs of enlargement could be equitably shared. In many respects, the debate was a contemporary echo of issues discussed when the original North Atlantic Treaty was ratified some 49 years before.

The public US debate that preceded formal Senate consideration of NATO enlargement focused heavily on the cost and Burdensharing issue. The debate was hindered by the fact that a number of different private, US government and NATO estimates of costs varied wildly, depending on assumptions chosen by the authors. The oft-quoted cost of \$125 billion for enlargement came from the high end of the US Congressional Budget Office's calculation of what it would cost to integrate the new allies if a Soviet-style military threat were suddenly to reappear. Analysts at the US Rand Corporation had projected a more moderate cost range of from \$10-110 billion. The Clinton Administration in January 1997 reported to Congress that the cost would be around \$27-35 billion over a ten-year

9. This discussion is based on Jonathan P. Robell and Stanley R. Sloan, *NATO: Senate Floor Consideration of the Accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland*, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress 980669F, August 10, 1998.

Burdensharing in NATO

period, and asserted that the US share of the cost would be just \$1.5-2.0 billion – the rest being picked up by the NATO allies and the candidate states.

The Burdensharing aspect of the cost debate intensified when French President Jacques Chirac at the NATO summit in Madrid in July 1997, apparently piqued by US insistence on including only the three strongest candidates in the first membership wave, was widely quoted as saying that France would not pay a single additional cent for NATO enlargement¹⁰. Chirac's statement immediately found its way into the arguments of enlargement skeptics in the American debate.

Faced with this diverse range of estimates, and suggestions that the allies might not pick up their fair share, even supporters of NATO enlargement were concerned that an effective Burdensharing approach be in evidence. Senator William V. Roth, Jr., Chairman of the Senate NATO Observer Group noted *“How the costs of NATO expansion will be shared will be critically important in the ratification debates, particularly in the US Senate”*. He cautioned that the issue could emerge *“as the Achilles’ heel – not only of NATO enlargement but of the Alliance itself”*¹¹.

Senator Joseph Biden – Co-chairman of the Senate NATO Observer Group and also a supporter of both NATO and NATO enlargement, warned that *“for NATO to remain a vibrant organization [...] the non-US members must assume their fair share of direct enlargement costs and for developing power projection capabilities. To do otherwise would cast the United States in the role of ‘the good gendarme of Europe’ – a role that*

10. See, for example, Michael Dobbs and John F. Harris, « France Balks at Paying Share of NATO Expansion Costs », *Washington Post*, July 10, 1997, p. 1; Paul Bedard, « Paris has no Francs for NATO Expansion », *Washington Times*, July 10, 1997, p. 1; and Brooks Tigner, « Burdensharing Debate Mounts », *Defense News*, July 14-20, 1997, p. 1.

11. Senator William V. Roth, Jr., « Roth's Rx for NATO » *Christian Science Monitor*, June 18, 1997.

*neither the American people, nor the Senate of the United States, would accept*¹².

In December 1997, the allies tried to deal with the problem in two ways. First, they released calculations by the NATO international staff suggesting that all previous assessments of cost had been much too high, and that the commonly funded expenses of NATO enlargement would total just \$1.5 billion over 10 years. In addition, the allies agreed that they all would pay their fair share of enlargement expenses – a declaration frequently cited by US administration officials in response to congressional Burdensharing concerns.

When the time came to debate the issue on the floor of the Senate, the question of how much enlargement would cost remained blurred by lack of a consensus on how to measure such costs. It was clear, however, that some Senators would not support enlargement until they were convinced that the costs of enlargement and of NATO's new missions were truly “manageable” and would be shared equitably by the European allies.

From the outset, enlargement was linked to the development of NATO's Strategic Concept and the degree to which it should focus on new missions beyond collective defense. Many supporters of enlargement believed a broader mission profile would strengthen NATO by ensuring its relevance in a new European security structure. Others argued that the redefinition of the Strategic Concept amounted to “treaty creep” – that is, it would create a NATO organization beyond the scope of the North Atlantic Treaty.

Most Senators who advocated adding the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to the Alliance also supported using NATO to meet the new

12. Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., « The Prospects for NATO Enlargement », Address to the Atlantic Council of the United States, June 18, 1997.

Burdensharing in NATO

security challenges that have emerged since the end of the Cold War. Senator John McCain (R-Arizona) entered into the *Congressional Record* (CR) a statement by the New Atlantic Initiative, an organization composed primarily of former government officials. The statement declared that NATO has rightfully closed the door on its successful mission to prevent Soviet domination of Western Europe, but that “*Its larger purpose of ensuring peace and freedom in Europe and the Atlantic region endures*”. It outlined a new identity for NATO, as “*an alliance aiming to promote peace and stability in the Atlantic region, devoted to the spread and consolidation of democratic ways in Europe, and capable of protecting Western interests against such future threats as may emerge*”. The statement tied this vision of the future to the legislation at hand, pronouncing, “*Crucial to this process of adaptation is NATO’s willingness to admit new members [...] Otherwise it will remain a relic of the Cold War of diminishing relevance to the contemporary world*” (CR, 18 March 1998, S2200)¹³.

Supporters of enlargement and of an expanded role for the Alliance contended that the original text of the North Atlantic Treaty provided for the new missions being proposed for NATO. (These missions are often referred to as “non-Article 5” missions because they would not be in response to a direct attack on a member’s territory, which, under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, would be considered an attack against all members.) Specifically, they cited Article 4 of the Treaty, which reads: “*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*”. Senator William Roth (R-Delaware) spoke about the flexibility of the 1949 treaty:

13. These and subsequent similar parenthetical references are to the relevant pages in the US *Congressional Record*.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

Some fifty years ago, the drafters of the Washington Treaty included provisions not only to provide for the territorial defense of the North Atlantic region, but also for the possibility of common action to protect other interests of the North Atlantic Community. It was the United States that insisted upon this provision – Article 4 of the Charter – and a construction of the Charter that would permit actions beyond the narrow scope of territorial defense (CR, 30 April 1998, S3861).

Yet while enlargement supporters argued that non-Article 5 missions are acceptable under the terms of the Washington Treaty, they reaffirmed the centrality of Article 5 to the mission of the Alliance. Senator Roth said, *“The resolution makes crystal clear that the Senate firmly believes that NATO’s first priority must be the mission of collective defense”* (CR, 30 April 1998, S3861). He pointed out that Section 3(B)(i) of the protocols on accession states that *“in order for NATO to serve the security interests of the United States, the core purpose of NATO must continue to be the collective defense of the territory of all NATO members”*.

Senators against enlarging the Alliance and broadening its operational purview argued that NATO is straying from its original mission and that the Washington Treaty is far more limited than supporters of enlargement claim.

Senator Ashcroft, who saw NATO enlargement as likely increasing potential defense burdens, began by questioning NATO’s transition from a Cold War institution to its current security role. He said: *“We have to ask ourselves at this juncture, ‘What is the purpose of the treaty?’ Is it appropriate or possible to change the treaty, without amending the treaty, just by beginning to lean everyone in one direction, to turn the treaty to one side or another, or begin to assert that there are new things to be considered because the treaty is evolving? I have to tell you [...] I don’t*

Burdensharing in NATO

believe in treaty evolution any more than I believe in the evolution of the Constitution” (CR, 27 April 1998, S3627).

Senator Larry Craig (R-Idaho) also expressed concern that the proposed evolution of NATO’s mission would create an institution different from what the founders of the Alliance envisioned: *“It is my concern that the President’s vision of a new NATO will signal the end of NATO as a defensive alliance and begin its role as a regional peacekeeping organization” (CR, 23 March 1998, S2446).* Senator Warner said, *“...we are in danger of turning this fine Alliance into a ‘mini-UN’” (CR, 19 March 1998, S2275).* Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-New York) entered into the *Congressional Record* an address he gave to a meeting of the Associated Press in celebration of its 150th anniversary; his remarks surveyed the resolution of ratification’s mention of Article 4-based missions (Section 3(B)(ii)) and asked, *“Does this not read suspiciously like a license to get into a fight just about anywhere?” (CR, 27 April 1998, S3612).*

Challenging the notion that Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty allows the type of changes to NATO’s mission being proposed, Senator Ashcroft asked, *“Is this what was intended when this NATO agreement came into existence? Was it designed to have this kind of elasticity? [...] Not according to the folks who presided in the US Senate in 1949 when this great treaty organization was ratified”.* He then quoted Senator Tom Connally (D-Texas), chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in 1949: *“Let us not forget that this treaty is limited in scope. Its main purpose is to maintain the peace and security of the North Atlantic area. We do not propose to stretch its terms to cover the entire globe” (CR, 27 March 1998, S3628).*

Senator Ashcroft introduced an amendment (No. 2318) designed to prevent NATO from taking on missions he believed would require

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

amendment of the Washington Treaty. He said his amendment would “*make sure that the Senate will not be endorsing what I call ‘treaty creep’ where we just allow a creeping mission to get us to the place where we are no longer able to sustain those things which ought to be sustained*” (CR, 27 April 1998, S3629). The amendment stipulated that the United States would oppose all NATO military operations unless:

- the operation is intended for the purpose of collective self-defense in response to an armed attack on the territory of an Alliance member; or
- the operation is in response to a threat to the territorial integrity, political independence, or security of a NATO member.

The amendment was attacked by supporters of NATO enlargement who argued that NATO’s new mission profile helped ensure that the European allies, including the new allies, would participate with the United States in responses to new security challenges. Senator Roth argued against the amendment, saying, “*At its best this amendment is unnecessary to achieve the goals of its sponsors. At its worst, the amendment would undercut the Alliance’s will and capability to defend the security interests of the North Atlantic community of democracies*”. The fact that NATO acts only by consensus made the amendment unnecessary, he said, because the United States can never be forced to participate in a NATO operation. He argued that the authors of the Washington Treaty did envision non-Article 5 missions and that the United States should not set the precedent of unilaterally reinterpreting the Washington Treaty, an action which he said “*runs counter to the spirit and traditions of the Alliance*” and would encourage the other members of the Alliance to do the same. Senator Roth closed by asking, “*In a world of rogue states with biological, chemical and nuclear weapons increasingly at their disposal, why would we [...] want to [...] discard one of the best vehicles through which to prompt allied support for US security interests?*” (CR, 30 April 1998, S3861).

Burdensharing in NATO

In the closing hours of the debate on April 30, Senator Joseph Biden (D-Delaware) made a motion to table the amendment. The roll call vote succeeded, with 82 yeas and 18 nays, and the amendment was tabled, effectively killing it¹⁴.

On April 28th, prior to the vote on the Ashcroft amendment, Senator Kyl introduced Amendment No. 2310, which added to the Resolution of Ratification a statement of the Senate's "understanding" of US policy toward NATO's Strategic Concept. Senator Kyl argued that the Senate should have a voice in the revision of the Strategic Concept: "*In my view, the current resolution focuses too much on what NATO should not be and should not do. The resolution does not attempt to lay out a comprehensive set of principles to guide development of the strategic concept. And so this proposed amendment will establish the Senate's vision of the future of NATO and, I hope, help to lay the foundation for American positions on the strategic concept*" (CR, 28 April 1998, S3695).

He went on to say, "*Our principal objective here [...] is to ensure that NATO remains an arm of US power and influence. NATO [...] must remain the principal foundation for the security interests of its members. This means NATO must be prepared to defend against a range of common threats to our vital interests*" (CR, 28 April 1998, S3695). The amendment identified post-Cold War concerns like weapons of mass destruction and access to natural resources as legitimate. However, the amendment tempered its recognition of the threats of ethnic or religious rivalries and historic disputes with a statement that only threats of this type occurring in the North Atlantic area should be within NATO's purview.

14. The tally of votes can be found in the *Congressional Record* of 30 April 1998, p. S3862. The text of the amendment can be found in Appendix 2.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

Senator Kyl's amendment faced little opposition. Senators Warner and Moynihan asked for several points of clarification, but both eventually voted in favor of the amendment. The Senate approved the amendment by a vote of 90 yeas to 9 nays¹⁵.

On the question of NATO's mission, therefore, a majority of US Senators supported a broader role for the alliance. In so doing, they also supported using NATO as an instrument for sharing the burdens likely to be encountered in the new security environment.

Senators on both sides of the debate were concerned with how much the enlargement of NATO would cost the Alliance generally and the United States in particular. Senators who questioned the costs of the process focused on the potential for enlargement to become an open-ended financial commitment; in general, supporters concentrated on the non-monetary benefits of enlargement and expressed confidence in the lower cost estimates.

Critics of the figures given by the administration and by NATO complained that no accurate estimate of the cost involved in admitting the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland was available for them to examine. The estimates that were available – prepared by the US Government, NATO itself, and several non-governmental organizations – all made assumptions of force size and strategic posture that were highly debatable in the rapidly changing European security environment. Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) said, "*I have seen projections range from \$125 billion down to \$1.5 billion. When you have that wide a variance, something is very strange*" (CR, 17 March 1998, S2145). Senator Harkin went on to mention a problem with current cost estimates: "*Another piece of the puzzle we are missing is how new members are to address their military*

15. The tally of votes can be found in the *Congressional Record* of April 28, 1998, p. S3698. The text of the amendment can be found in Appendix 2.

Burdensharing in NATO

shortfalls. Although the shortfalls were to be identified in December 1997, the countries' force goals will not be set until this spring. In other words, we are without a plan to address the force goals and the price tag associated with it. I am very uncomfortable signing the American taxpayer's name to a potentially ballooning blank check" (CR, 17 March 1998, S2145).

Senator Larry Craig (R-Idaho) expressed similar concerns: “[...] *all of this cost related information will be made available to Congress only after the Senate's advice and consent to expansion is final and irrevocable. That means if the information is not satisfactory to the Senate, we will have no recourse*” (CR, 23 March 1998, S2446).

Senator Harkin directly addressed the Burdensharing aspects of enlargement. Currently the United States pays approximately 25 percent of NATO's common operational costs; opponents of enlargement worried that the addition of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland would create upward pressure on the US share of costs. These fears were exacerbated by the recent trend among European countries toward reducing defense spending and conflicting reports of whether or not the French had agreed to help pay the cost of enlargement. Senator Harkin introduced an amendment (No. 2312) stipulating that the United States would be limited to paying no more than 25 percent of the expenditures involved in integrating the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland into the Alliance. He stated, “*What my amendment says is what is good for one side ought to be good for another. [...] If 25 percent is good for the common budgets, it ought to be good for the national budgets.*” The amendment was defeated by a roll call vote of 76 nays to 24 yeas¹⁶.

16. The tally of votes can be found in the *Congressional Record* of April 28, 1998, p. S3687. The text of the amendment can be found in Appendix 3.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), who, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, wields substantial influence in spending decisions, introduced two amendments designed to reduce the US share of the Alliance's common budget and to impose tighter congressional control over expenses incurred in the process of integrating the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland into NATO's command structure. Senator Stevens originally introduced both amendments (Nos. 2065 and 2066) on March 23, 1998 (CR, S2437-S2438) and later said, "*My original intent in proposing these amendments was to bring some greatly needed accountability to the critical issue of recognizing and clarifying all the costs to the United States to enlarge the NATO alliance*" (CR, 30 April 1998, S3845). Amendment No. 2065 stipulated that none of the costs involved in admitting new members to the Alliance could be paid by the United States unless Congress specifically authorized the funds. Amendment No. 2066 would have cut off all US funding to NATO beyond the current fiscal year unless the Secretaries of State and Defense certified to the Congress that the United States would contribute no more than 20 percent of the total common budget. The effect of this second amendment would be an immediate 5 percent cut in the share of NATO's common budget paid by the United States.

Both of Senator Stevens' amendments were significantly modified through negotiation with the supporters of ratification, who very much wanted to bring Senator Stevens "on board". Inserted into Amendment No. 2065 was the language "*other than through the common-funded budgets of NATO*", which left intact the existing channels of authorization for common budget funding but asserted congressional control over any additional assistance given to new Alliance members. The second amendment, No. 2066, was broken into two parts over the course of the debate. The first section of the revised amendment was a non-binding statement of the "sense of the Senate" which declared that the President should, every year for five years beginning in fiscal year 1999, propose to

Burdensharing in NATO

NATO a one percent reduction in the share of the common budget paid by the United States. The second section of the amendment carried the force of law and stipulated that the total US commitment to the NATO common budget in any fiscal year after October 1, 1998 may not exceed the total of all such payments made in fiscal year 1998, unless specifically authorized by the Congress.

In their original forms, both of Senator Stevens' amendments were opposed by the sponsors of the Resolution of Ratification. Upon further negotiation, however, both were accepted as "friendly" amendments and passed by voice votes. Senator Stevens voted in favor of the final text of the Resolution of Ratification¹⁷.

Many Senators who advocated enlargement also expressed concern about the financial burden that would be borne by the United States. They differed from their opponents, however, in that they were generally satisfied with the studies that produced lower cost estimates. Enlargement supporters also proposed that the United States would reap money-saving benefits from the stability they expected an enlarged Alliance to create.

Senator Biden called the high-end figures "*bizarre*" (*CR*, 27 April 1998, S3638). The Department of Defense (DoD) in February 1997 provided the Congress with a report projecting the cost of enlargement to be between \$27 and \$35 billion; the DoD study encompassed both costs to all 19 national defense budgets as well as NATO common budget funds. NATO itself studied the issue after the July 1997 invitations to join had been made to the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland; NATO's December 1997 figure, which was restricted to increases in the common budget, was approximately \$1.5 billion. This estimate subsequently was

17. Acceptance of Amendment No. 2065 can be found in the *Congressional Record* of April 28, 1998, p. S3859; acceptance of Amendment No. 2066 can be found in the *Record* of the same day, p. S3847. The texts of both amendments can be found in Appendix 3.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

accepted by both the DoD and the General Accounting Office (GAO). Senator Carl Levin (D-Michigan) argued that the NATO study should be accepted by the Senate as reliable because it was conducted with the knowledge of which countries had been invited (earlier estimates had planned for the possible inclusion of a fourth country) and more precise information regarding the state of the Polish, Hungarian, and Czech military establishments than had previously been available. Senator Levin said, “[...] *that original estimate of the administration was way off and it was way high, and the revised estimate done by NATO after on-site visits and looking only at the direct costs resulting from the increase in the size of NATO, that assessment has been approved by the GAO and by the DoD*” (CR, 19 March 1998, S2254).

Other Senators chose to focus on the non-monetary benefits of NATO enlargement. Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland) spoke on this point: “[...] *opponents of enlargement point to the cost. [...] But [...] what is the cost of not enlarging NATO? I believe the cost of not enlarging NATO will be far higher. [...] What will be the cost to European security? What will be the cost to the new democracies of Eastern Europe? [...] What would be the long-range cost to America of failing to prepare NATO for the 21st century? The cost would be instability in Europe and the increased chance of being pulled into yet another conflict. The cost of preventive security is always less than the cost of war*” (CR, 18 March 1998, S2197).

Senator Max Cleland (D-Georgia) concurred: “*For a long time I have asked myself the question, ‘Can we afford it?’ [...] I now ask myself, ‘Can we afford not to do it?’*” (CR, 29 April 1998, S3748).

Many supporters of accession also noted that while the dollar-value of US contributions to the common budget might increase in an enlarged NATO, the percentage contribution would decrease slightly. Nonetheless,

Burdensharing in NATO

advocates of enlargement fought to defeat Senator Harkin's amendment requiring a percentage spending cap. Senator Biden argued that the amendment was a "*hamstringing of our national defense budget, unrelated to NATO*" (CR, 28 April 1998, S3670). He claimed it would hinder US interests by prohibiting bilateral weapons sales or other defense assistance to the new Alliance-member countries unless the other nations of the Alliance were willing to pay 75 percent of the cost.

Reflections on the Debate

What, on balance, did the Senate's debate on NATO enlargement contribute to understanding of the Burdensharing issue in the alliance? First, it revealed that there is a division in the Senate concerning what NATO's roles and missions should be. A majority of Senators appears to accept that NATO should broaden its focus to take on missions that go beyond collective defense. But several Senators have questions about such an expansion of NATO's mission – even if that expansion has in fact already taken place, as vividly demonstrated by NATO-led activities in the Balkans. These Senators believe that NATO's primary function should be to maintain a collective defense against threats to the territory of NATO members. Many of them tend to see the expanded mission as dragging the United States into operations, such as the one in Bosnia, that the United States should leave to the Europeans.

For those Senators who support NATO's expanded mission profile, the Burdensharing demand is for the Europeans to do more in support of the new mission. This means that the European allies should devote resources to expand their ability to project military force beyond their national borders to contribute to allied operations like the one in Bosnia or to *ad hoc* coalition operations in or beyond Europe. The difference between this group of Senators and those who oppose NATO's broader mission profile is that these Senators are willing for the United States to join in and even

lead non-Article 5 missions; those supporting a narrow mission profile believe the United States should let the Europeans take on such tasks themselves.

The common thread that runs through the positions of virtually all Senators, and is probably shared by most members in the House of Representatives, is that the allies should devote more resources to Western responses to security challenges in and around Europe.

■ US Public Perspectives on the Alliance

In a democracy, the actions of public officials could be expected to reflect to some degree the attitudes of the voters who elected them. Certainly, in the United States, political leaders like to believe that they are acting in the best interest of the nation *and* in ways that will be accepted in public opinion. However, unless public opinion is strongly felt and expressed, officials have greater freedom to interpret that opinion selectively, occasionally to misrepresent public opinion, or to try to lead opinion in desired directions.

In the case of transatlantic Burdensharing, the American people have opinions that help frame attitudes of executive and congressional officials. Although it appears that Members of Congress occasionally use public opinion selectively when it comes to defense Burdensharing issues, one could also say that congressional concern about Burdensharing, on balance, reflects broad public attitudes.

Virtually all recent public opinion polls have found that the American people support an engaged and balanced US role in the world. According to studies conducted by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland, only around 12 percent of

Burdensharing in NATO

Americans would support a US withdrawal from world affairs, some 13 percent would support a US role as the world's "preeminent leader" and a large majority of 74 percent want the United States to "do a fair share in international efforts". These results, obtained in 1995, are reinforced by more recent studies by the Pew Research Center. According to PIPA, Pew's surveys in September 1997 found only 11 percent supporting isolationism, 12 percent favored the United States being "the single world leader", and an overwhelming majority of 73 percent favored the United States playing "a shared leadership role"¹⁸.

The message from the American people, then, is quite clear. They do not want the United States to adopt isolationism, neo- or otherwise, they do not support a hegemonic "world policeman" role for the United States, and they want the United States to share global security burdens with other nations. And, they apparently believe that those burdens are not currently shared effectively.

In a PIPA June 1996 poll, only 15 percent of Americans agreed that "*it is appropriate and necessary for the US to spend a larger percentage of its national income or GNP on defense than its allies*"¹⁹. An overwhelming number of respondents (80 percent) believed that "*all of the industrialized countries should spend about the same percentage of their national income or GNP on defense*". In 1995, PIPA asked those polled whether they thought the United States' contribution to NATO constituted less than its fair share, more than its fair share or was "about right". Fifty-three percent chose "more than its fair share" while some 30 percent said that the US share was "about right".

18. Steven Kull, I. M. Destler, Clay Ramsay, *The Foreign Policy Gap, How Policymakers Misread the Public*, The Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland and its Program on International Policy Attitudes, October 1997, p. 27.

19. *Op. cit.*, p. 128.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

There is also a general view in the American public that our allies rely too much on US protection. In 1995, PIPA reports, “*an overwhelming 89 percent said that these countries ‘rely too much on the US’*”. In addition, a similar percentage judged that if the United States intervenes somewhere in the world to the mutual benefit of the United States and other countries, “*we should require other nations to pay a share of the costs depending on their ability to pay and how much the intervention is in their interests*”²⁰.

With regard to the Bosnia operation, even though Members of Congress have expressed strong reservations about US military involvement, the American people have been relatively supportive. By early 1998, a majority of Americans supported the presence of US troops in Bosnia. Furthermore, three quarters of the respondents in one poll agreed that the danger of war spreading to other countries in the region made the peacekeeping operation in Bosnia “good insurance”²¹.

Many Members of Congress have argued that Bosnia should be handled largely by the Europeans, and would prefer that any US contribution be limited to air and naval forces. But most Americans apparently do not accept that Bosnia is purely a “European” problem. When asked, only 35 percent supported the statement that “*Bosnia is in Europe, therefore the Europeans should be ready to take responsibility for the problem themselves and not insist that the US be part of the operation too*”. A majority of 63 percent, on the other hand, identified with the statement that “*The operation in Bosnia is a NATO operation and the US is part of*

20. *Op. cit.*, pp. 128-129.

21. *Seeking a New Balance, A Study of American and European Public Attitudes on Transatlantic Issues*, Program on International Policy Attitudes, Center for the Study of Policy Attitudes and the Center for International and Security Studies at the School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland, June 1988, p. 40.

Burdensharing in NATO

*NATO. Therefore, it is only fair that Europeans should expect that the US should also do its part*²².

What makes these levels of support for the US role in Bosnia even more impressive is the fact that most Americans apparently believe that significant numbers of American troops are being killed by hostile fire. Some 63 percent of those polled believed that Americans had been killed by hostile fire at a time when there had been no US casualties from hostile fire in Bosnia²³.

Perhaps most interesting, the American public strongly supports a continued US role in Europe. According to PIPA, “*An overwhelming majority sees the importance of US ties to Europe as undiminished by the end of the Cold War*”²⁴. Furthermore, the public is even willing to share both burdens *and* responsibilities with the European allies. The PIPA study reports that an 80 percent majority of Americans supports an equal partnership between the United States and Europe²⁵.

What do these indicators of public attitudes suggest about the future US approach to transatlantic Burdensharing? The most general answer is that, under current circumstances, US public opinion creates a relatively permissive environment within which the United States can continue to play a leading role in NATO operations. The American people will want to be reassured that nations which benefit from such operations either participate with the contribution of military forces or, if that is not possible, make other kinds of contributions to reduce or offset the costs to the United States.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

Several factors could upset this relatively permissive environment. If US economic fortunes were to turn downward, and the American people felt less optimistic about their financial futures, they would likely be more circumspect than they are today about the US international role. Furthermore, if an operation appeared to be costing too much, particularly in terms of American lives, to justify its continued prosecution, support for such an operation could erode rapidly. Or, if allied nations appeared unappreciative of the US effort or unwilling to contribute themselves, the American people would likely question continued US involvement. They may support “equal” US and European roles in the Alliance, but they certainly expect more-or-less equal contributions to security.

Perhaps most importantly, US public opinion will always be influenced mightily by the ability of the President to justify risks and expenditures in terms of American values and interests. Failure of a President to do so would diminish public support and increase congressional inclinations to cut off or limit funding for the operation in question.

■ Sharing Security Burdens in the 21st Century

For at least the immediate future, the United States is likely to remain the only true global power, with military resources beyond those available to most other nations. From the US perspective, this is both good and bad news. On the one hand, it is unlikely that any peer competitor will emerge to challenge US power for at least the next decade. The United States should have sufficient resources to defend its vital interests successfully, even if lesser powers and even terrorist groups can pose troublesome challenges to a range of US interests around the world. On the other hand, the United States does not want to be the world’s policeman. Even though its power puts the United States in what could be described as a

Burdensharing in NATO

hegemonic position, neither the American people nor the US Congress are willing to support a hegemonic foreign and defense policy.

To avoid the potential costs in lives and national treasure that a world policeman role would require, the United States must seek to engage other nations in the process of building and maintaining international peace and stability. This task does not start from scratch. Most democratic nations around the world, many of whom are formally allied to the United States, see the benefit of maintaining a relatively stable globe, appreciate the US role in responding to threats to stability, and are willing to contribute to efforts to defeat aggression or defuse conflicts.

This suggests that future US administrations will seek to continue a global leadership role for the United States in league with like-minded states, and particularly in alliance with its NATO partners. US administrations will, in keeping with tradition, base decisions concerning the level of US involvement on a strategic matrix that includes a great variety of factors. Such decisions will be difficult to sustain, however, if they do not take into account the need to sustain them politically and financially in the United States. Domestic political support for an activist US world role will require administrations to demonstrate that they have sought and gained international political and resource support for US overseas commitments.

Transatlantic Burdensharing will therefore remain a predictable, and occasionally problematic, aspect of US-European relations for as long as the United States and the European nations believe that their interests benefit from continued political/military cooperation in the framework of NATO or any successor arrangement.

Management of the Burdensharing relationship will depend on a number of factors, some of which are susceptible to policy manipulation, some of

The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing in the Post-Cold War World

which are not. First and foremost among the variables will be the financial well-being and resource base of the United States. When the US economy is doing well, there will be financial margins for US administrations to spend in support of international security commitments. When the US economy is weak or in recession, pressures for reduced US efforts and increased allied contributions will grow.

Although the resource issue is the most fundamental variable, the overall political climate of the transatlantic relationship is almost as important. US leaders and the public are willing to make sacrifices on behalf of global stability if they feel that our efforts are both successful and appreciated. Excessive criticism of US policies by apparently ungrateful allies could lead Americans, in exasperation, to tell them to “put up or shut up”.

More specifically with regard to Europe, the United States will expect the European allies to translate the logic of NATO’s new mission profile into defense spending and forces on the ground. From the US Burdensharing perspective, the process now underway in many NATO countries of reorienting forces away from border defense and toward greater flexibility and mobility for force projection must be accelerated. The allies must put a floor under falling defense expenditures to keep their military establishments from being hollowed out, or left behind as the US military continue to buy and deploy new technologies that could revolutionize future warfare. US supporters of NATO will expect the allies not to put artificial geographic limits on NATO cooperation, and to join the United States in dealing with the new challenges that do not always present themselves as classical attacks by one state on another.

In the long run, the process of European unification may produce a more coherent European contribution in the transatlantic Burdensharing equation. Currently, however, the process has contributed more acronyms

Burdensharing in NATO

than it has force improvements. The United States will be looking in particular for operational European Defense and Security *Capabilities* to give true meaning to a European Security and Defense Identity.

For its part, the United States will from time to time reflect domestic dissensus in its approach to Burdensharing, particularly when the President and the Congress find themselves on different wavelengths concerning the goals, ways and means of US defense and security policy. The signals from Washington will not always be clear. Weak or foreign-policy-inattentive Presidents will leave vacuums that the Congress will seek to fill, not always with coherence or strategic wisdom. The American people may not always be well-informed concerning the true efforts and attitudes of allies, and such circumstances can lead to fissures in transatlantic solidarity. The European allies can expect that their admirable levels of foreign assistance to less developed nations will not always be appropriately reflected in US calculations of security efforts, even though such efforts now are more positively evaluated by US officials and Members of Congress than in some earlier days.

Whether or not the Burdensharing issue will remain manageable will depend on the skill and political commitment of leaders on both sides of the Atlantic. In the end, the equation is quite simple. As long as all partners to the bargain believe that the basic deal serves their interests, they must do whatever is within their means to keep the deal alive and reasonably well.

Author

Stanley R. Sloan is the Senior Specialist in International Security Policy in the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress. During 1997-98 he has served as advisor to the Senate NATO Observer Group, and also as Rapporteur for the North Atlantic Assembly's project on NATO in the 21st century.

Mr. Sloan was educated at the University of Maine (BA), Columbia's School of International Affairs (MIA), and American University's School of International Service. He is a Distinguished Graduate of the Air Force Officers' Training School and served as a commissioned officer in the United States Air Force. Stanley Sloan began his more than three decades of public service at the Central Intelligence Agency in 1967, serving as NATO desk officer, European Community desk officer, member of the US Delegation to the Negotiations on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions, and as Deputy National Intelligence Officer for Western Europe.

Stanley Sloan has been employed by the Congressional Research Service since 1975 where, before assuming his current position, he served as Division Specialist in US Alliance Relations, Specialist in European Affairs and head of the Europe/Middle East/Africa Section in the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division of CRS.

Stanley Sloan's books include *The US Role in the 21st Century World: Toward a New Consensus?* (Foreign Policy Association, October 1997);

Burdensharing in NATO

NATO's Future: Beyond Collective Defense (McNair Paper, National Defense University Press, December 1995), *NATO in the 1990s* (editor) (Pergamon-Brassey's, 1989), *Conventional Arms Control and Europe's Future* (Foreign Policy Association, March 1989) and *NATO's Future: Toward a New Transatlantic Bargain* (National Defense University Press, 1985, and Macmillan, 1986).

Acronyms and Conventions

ARRC :	Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps, Force de réaction rapide sous commandement de l'OTAN
AWACS :	Airborne Warning and Control System
C4I :	Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence
CBO :	Congressional Budget Office
CFE :	Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty
CFSP :	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CJTF :	Combined Joint Task Force
CR :	Congressional Record
DoD :	Department of Defense
ECHO :	European Community Humanitarian Office
ESDI :	European Security and Defense Identity
EU :	European Union
FoFA :	Follow-on Forces Attack
FORPRONU :	Force de protection des Nations unies
GAO :	General Accounting Office
GFIM :	Groupes de forces interarmées multinationales, Combined Joint Task Forces, CJTF
IFOR :	Implementation Force, Force multinationale de mise en œuvre de la paix
IISS :	International Institute for Strategic Studies
KEDO :	Korean Energy Development Organization
LTDP :	Long Term Defense Program, NATO
NATO :	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Burdensharing in NATO

NDU :	National Defense University
NSIP :	NATO Security Investment Program
PIPA :	Program on International Policy Attitudes
R&D :	Research and Development, Recherche et développement
RMA :	Revolution in Military Affairs, Révolution dans les affaires militaires
SACEUR :	Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, Commandant suprême des forces alliées en Europe
SFOR :	Stabilisation Force, Force multinationale de stabilisation
TLE :	CFE Treaty Limited Equipment
UN :	United Nations
UNPROFOR :	United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia
USAID :	US Agency for International Development
USEUCOM :	US European Command
WEU :	Western European Union
WHNS :	Wartime Host Nation Support
WTO :	World Trade Organization
WTP :	Weapons of Mass destruction

les notes de l'ifri

Série transatlantique

Already published

US and ESDI in the New NATO

Les États-Unis et l'IESD dans la nouvelle OTAN

N° 4, 56 pages, 35 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Philip Gordon

Du cinéma au multimédia.

Une brève histoire de l'exception culturelle

N° 5, 96 pages, 45 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Laurent Burin des Roziers

Où en est l'Alliance atlantique ? L'improbable partenariat

N° 6, 64 pages, 30 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Frédéric Bozo

Where Does the Atlantic Alliance Stand? The Improbable Partnership

N° 6 bis (version anglaise du N° 6), 64 pages, 30 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Frédéric Bozo

The United States, Iran and Iraq: Containment or Engagement?

Les États-Unis, l'Iran et l'Irak : endiguement ou dialogue ?

N° 7, 96 pages, 45 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Geoffrey Kemp, Phebe Marr et Raymond Tanter

Sous la direction de Bassma Kodmani-Darwish

Burdensharing in NATO

The United States and the Arab Gulf Monarchies

Les États-Unis et les monarchies arabes du Golfe

N° 8, 64 pages, 30 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Joseph A. Kechichian

Sous la direction de Bassma Kodmani-Darwish

Anglo-American Relations and Crisis in Yugoslavia (FRY)

Les relations anglo-américaines à l'épreuve de la crise yougoslave

Jane M. O. Sharp

N° 9, 84 pages, 40 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Le partage du fardeau dans l'OTAN – Enjeux et réalités

Nicole Gnesotto

N° 11, 68 pages, 30 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Burdensharing in NATO – The US and Transatlantic Burdensharing

Stanley R. Sloan

Sous la direction de Nicole Gnesotto

N°12, 56 pages. 30 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

Burdensharing in NATO – The German Perception

Karl Heinz Kamp

Sous la direction de Nicole Gnesotto

N°13, 50 pages. 30 F. En vente uniquement à l'Ifri.

To be published

Enjeux et modalités de la restructuration des industries de défense
Frédérique Sachwald

Les États-Unis et la France. La puissance entre mythes et réalités
Philippe Moreau Defarges

Le triangle atlantique.
L'émergence de l'Amérique latine dans les relations Europe/États-Unis
Alfredo Valladao

The Euro and the Dollar: An Agnostic View
Claude Bismut, Pierre Jacquet

Les nouveaux débats nucléaires
Camille Grand

La politique étrangère des États-Unis après le Monicagate
John Mason

Les Européens ont-ils relevé le défi américain ?
Frédérique Sachwald

Conceptions russes des rapports transatlantiques
Dmitri Trenin

