



Introduction

This book discusses the origins, evolution, and prospects of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's new roles in international security. During the Cold War, from the founding of the Alliance in 1949 to the breakup of the Soviet empire in 1989–91, NATO was essentially an instrument of collective defense. That is, NATO was an alliance organized to defend its members from external coercion or aggression and, on that basis, to conduct diplomacy with its adversaries to the East and seek a peaceful resolution to East-West differences. While the Alliance has not by any means abandoned its collective defense function, since 1990–92 it has increasingly taken on roles and responsibilities that were no more than implicit in its earlier history.

Some of the new roles involve what is sometimes called "collective security," in that the Alliance is prepared to act in support of general international security interests. In June 1992, NATO foreign ministers formally declared the Alliance's willingness, on a case-by-case basis, to support peacekeeping activities under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Later that year, the Alliance agreed to make troops and equipment available to CSCE and United Nations (UN) efforts to bring peace to the former Yugoslavia, initially in activities such as enforcing the arms embargo and monitoring the no-fly-zone. Since mid-1995, the Alliance's "peace operations" in the former Yugoslavia have overshadowed those of other international organizations, notably since Operation Deliberate Force, the Dayton peace talks, and the establishment in late 1995 of the multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia. In November and December 1996, the Allies agreed that NATO would play a major role in the post-IFOR Stabilization

Force (SFOR) in Bosnia. Since the early 1990s, it has become commonplace in the Alliance to distinguish between “Article 5” missions (to honor the mutual defense commitment in this article of the North Atlantic Treaty—see Appendix 1) and “non–Article 5” missions (to carry out tasks such as peace operations under UN auspices, even if under NATO command).

Simultaneously, the Alliance has been engaged in “outreach” to non-NATO countries in Europe, particularly former adversaries—nations that were formerly East European members of the Warsaw Pact or republics of the Soviet Union. The new institutions involved in outreach activities include the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), established in 1991 and replaced in 1997 by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC); the Partnership for Peace (PfP), founded in 1994; and the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) and the NATO-Ukraine Commission, both established in 1997. The fundamental purpose of all of these institutions is the promotion of positive and peaceful relations among the participating nations. In both NACC/EAPC and PfP, the major activities have included peacekeeping studies and exercises. Russia, Ukraine, and several other PfP nations (including candidates for NATO membership) have participated in IFOR and SFOR.

Since the NATO summit in January 1994, moreover, the Alliance has been engaged in a complex multidimensional process of redefining its command structure and establishing new institutional mechanisms such as Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTFs), in part because of the practical challenges of conducting peace operations. Another major incentive for establishing CJTFs has been to respond to the aspirations of European Allies to build a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), on the basis of the Western European Union (WEU) and other institutions, within the Alliance. CJTF and the new Alliance command structure will have multiple functions, including non–Article 5 tasks as well as collective defense. When serving with the endorsement of the Alliance as instruments for non–Article 5 tasks such as peace operations and humanitarian relief, CJTFs are expected to be available for use by NATO, the WEU, or “coalitions of the willing” composed of self-selected Allies and non-NATO countries such as Russia. The non-NATO countries making use of CJTFs could include EAPC and PfP members, as well as countries outside these institutions, as with IFOR and SFOR in Bosnia.

NATO's principal new security roles have thus been (a) pursuing dialogue and cooperation with former adversaries and other non-NATO nations in the EAPC and Pfp, and (b) contributing to crisis management and "peace operations," particularly under UN auspices.

THESIS AND STRUCTURE OF THIS WORK

The history and prospects of the Alliance's two new roles—cooperation with former adversaries and other non-NATO nations in the Euro-Atlantic region, and crisis management and peace operations—are examined in this study. The new roles represent a significant transformation of the Alliance's purposes. To be sure, the Alliance originated as, and remains, a group of nations dedicated to collective defense—ensuring protection for the Allies against aggression or coercion; and the core function of collective defense (sometimes called "territorial defense") continues to be paramount for the existing Allies and for prospective new Allies such as Poland. Since 1990, however, collective security missions (that is, support for international security beyond the immediate defense of the Allies) have become increasingly prominent in the Alliance's words and deeds.

The words include NATO's offers, beginning in 1992, to support the United Nations and the CSCE (known as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or OSCE, since 1994) in peacekeeping operations; its commitments since 1994 to security consultations with the twenty-seven non-NATO nations in Pfp; and its declarations that "security is indivisible" throughout the region that since the end of the Cold War has often been called the Euro-Atlantic area, defined as the territory of all the OSCE states—that is, Canada and the United States, Europe, Turkey, and the former Soviet Union, including Siberian Russia and the former Soviet republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

The deeds encompass the many Partnership for Peace exercises and other activities that seek to enhance interoperability between Alliance and Partner forces in support of confidence-building and transparency, as well as humanitarian, crisis management, and peacekeeping operations; the efforts to devise CJTFs that could be used not only for collective defense but also for crisis management and peacekeeping by NATO-approved "coalitions of the willing"; and, most significantly, NATO's

first military operations involving actual combat—the interventions under UN auspices in the former Yugoslavia that made possible the Dayton Accords and the NATO-led IFOR and SFOR operations.

These words and deeds, among others, confirm that even as NATO remains an instrument of collective defense, it has been transformed into a vehicle for collective security activities on an ad hoc and selective basis in the Euro-Atlantic region.

The Alliance's new collective security rhetoric and activities raise at least three fundamental questions. What are the prospects for building the peaceful Euro-Atlantic order envisaged in NATO's rhetoric? When further conflicts in and beyond the former Yugoslavia arise, what crisis management and peacekeeping operations is the Alliance likely to undertake? Given that military resources are finite, to what extent can the Alliance devise a positive synergy between its continuing collective defense functions and its new collective security activities?

One of the greatest challenges facing the Alliance today is to clarify the relationship between its long-standing core function of collective defense and its new missions in support of collective security. This challenge will have to be addressed as the Alliance reviews its Strategic Concept and prepares for its projected April 1999 summit in Washington.

To place this challenge in perspective, this book's argument is organized as follows. The rest of the Introduction is devoted to clarifying the distinction between collective defense and collective security—and, indeed, three meanings of collective security—and explaining their significance in European history. This background is essential because the Alliance's ambitions include helping to build a new international security order in the Euro-Atlantic region, and the Allies have drawn heavily on concepts of collective security.

To illustrate the magnitude of the Alliance's transformation, chapter 2 reviews the Alliance's origins and preoccupations during the Cold War, including its policies for peaceful change, and examines how and why it survived the end of the Cold War—mainly because of its internal functions, its continuing collective defense role, and its ability to meet new security requirements.

Chapter 3 examines the first of the Alliance's two new roles—cooperation with former adversaries and other non-NATO countries in the Euro-Atlantic region. Pursuing this objective has been complex and at

times contentious, in part because of the tension between seeking NATO enlargement (which entails making collective defense commitments to specific new Allies) and cultivating cooperative institutions that are intended to be comprehensively inclusive, despite the prominence of the “self-differentiation” principle in PfP and the establishment of special consultative mechanisms with Russia and Ukraine. This chapter also considers dilemmas in trying to combine collective defense and collective security, including the risks in blurring the distinction between Allies and Partners, the antinomy between inclusiveness and effectiveness, and the continuing significance of major power interactions outside formal institutions.

Chapter 4 explores the Alliance’s adaptations regarding crisis management and peace operations, particularly under the press of events in the former Yugoslavia. The Allies have yet to resolve sensitive issues such as the extent to which Article 5 collective defense commitments might apply during the conduct of non–Article 5 operations in support of collective security and whether the Alliance considers a mandate from the UN Security Council or the OSCE politically and legally indispensable (or simply desirable) for the conduct of such operations.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, argues that the Allies have little choice but to follow a two-track policy—pursuing collective security aspirations, to the extent that this is feasible and prudent, while maintaining their collective defense posture and orientation. Collective defense remains the only solid foundation for Alliance cohesion and strength, an essential hedge in the event of political setbacks in Russia or elsewhere, and the most reliable basis for undertaking selected operations in support of collective security.

DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN COLLECTIVE DEFENSE AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY

It is essential to clarify the distinction between the terms “collective defense” and “collective security.” The distinction throws light on some of the larger issues involved in NATO’s efforts to promote the establishment of a peaceful order in what since 1990 has often been called the Euro-Atlantic area—the vast region consisting of Canada and the United States, Europe, Turkey, and the former Soviet Union.

In the interests of clear thinking, a fundamental distinction must be made. Two official statements in 1990–91 illustrate how readily the concepts of collective defense and collective security can be confused. In November 1990, the NATO Allies and the members of the Warsaw Pact agreed in a Joint Declaration in Paris that they were “no longer adversaries” and that they recognized that “security is indivisible and that the security of each of their countries is inextricably linked to the security of all States participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.”¹ A year later, in its new Strategic Concept, approved in November 1991, NATO declared, “The security of all Allies is indivisible: an attack on one is an attack on all.”²

Despite the apparent similarity in these statements, the key distinction resides in the difference between declaring that “the security of all Allies is indivisible” and, more broadly, asserting that “security is indivisible” with regard to nations outside the Alliance but in the CSCE, a vast body including all the states in the Euro-Atlantic region. The first phrase helps to define an alliance based on a mutual defense pledge—that is, collective defense; and the latter expresses an aspiration toward collective security.

The “security is indivisible” phrase may well be an echo of the League of Nations experience with collective security. The more popular form of the phrase in the 1920s and 1930s, “peace is indivisible,” is usually attributed to Soviet diplomat Maxim Litvinov.³ The phrase in the Joint Declaration of Paris in 1990 suggests that the security of all CSCE states is endangered by any threat to the security of any member state. In December 1991, the NATO Allies and the former Warsaw Pact states, meeting in their new North Atlantic Cooperation Council, repeated the November 1990 declaration that “security is indivisible,” and added, “The consolidation and preservation throughout the continent of democratic societies and their freedom from any form of coercion or intimidation therefore concern us all.”⁴

These declarations imply that the security of all CSCE states would be endangered by any threat to peace, or indeed “any form of coercion or intimidation” against a CSCE state—a menace that might well involve a threat of war. It is worth recalling in this regard that Article 11 of the Covenant of the League of Nations declared that “Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League

or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations."⁵

What obligations for concrete action do broad declarations that "security is indivisible" imply, as opposed to the obligations inherent in a mutual defense pledge such as Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty? Both represent attempts to impose some order on the contingent and unpredictable threats in international politics. Both deal, in other words, with the problem of organizing relations among sovereign powers, with a view to preventing war or (if war should nonetheless break out) containing its consequences. As eminent observers such as Martin Wight, Inis Claude, Jr., and Henry Kissinger have pointed out, collective security (at least in the traditional sense of the term, exemplified in the thought and writing of Immanuel Kant and Woodrow Wilson) involves a pact against war; the threat is aggression by a currently unidentified party to the pact, which should ideally include all the states in the state system. In contrast, a collective defense pact binds together an alliance of states to deter and, if necessary, defend against one or more identifiable external threats, a state or a group of states outside the alliance.⁶

Because an alliance, or collective defense pact, is an instrument of states cooperating to seek security from the actual or prospective threats posed by others, one of its chief preoccupations is achieving a favorable, or at least acceptable, balance of power as a means of deterring war or hedging against its outbreak. The members of such an alliance are expected to honor their formal mutual defense pledges in the event of aggression against an ally, but they are not necessarily obliged to take action against acts of aggression affecting non-allies. In a Kantian or Wilsonian collective security system, however, all states in the state system would be united in a cooperative pact, and all states would be obliged to act against any aggressor, because "peace is indivisible" and every state's security interests are believed to be affected by any aggression anywhere. Traditional collective security theory holds that the general sense of security interdependence and the advance commitments to act in such a system would tend to keep the peace and result in the prompt punishment of any aggressors. As Inis Claude noted in an analysis of the premises of this theory of collective security, "The world is conceived not as a *we*-group and a *they*-group of nations,

engaged in competitive power relations, but as an integral *we*-group in which danger may be posed by 'one of us' and must be met by 'all the rest of us.'"⁷

Kantian or Wilsonian collective security enterprises need not be universal in scope. While the original design of the League of Nations envisaged an organization that might ultimately be universal,⁸ its membership was always limited. The aspiration to establish collective security—which is, ultimately, the idea of shared responsibility for international order and the security of others—may apply on a regional basis as well as on a global one, and the obligations assumed may be moral and political rather than legally binding.

Unfortunately, the distinction between the terms “collective defense” and “collective security” has often been deliberately blurred. The concepts of “collective security” associated with the Kantian tradition gained renewed support during World War I and became widely known and highly regarded during the 1920s and 1930s, in large part as a result of the efforts of Woodrow Wilson and other proponents of the League of Nations. “Whatever their failures,” Claude has pointed out, “the Wilsonians clearly succeeded in establishing the conviction that collective security represents a brand of international morality vastly superior to that incorporated in the balance of power system.” As a result, whether because of honest confusion or the “deliberate misappropriation of semantic funds,” the tendency in many quarters since World War II has been to apply the term “collective security” to any alliance, particularly a pact that one approves of—including NATO.⁹

This conceptual confusion is regrettable, because “collective security,” particularly in its traditional sense, was conceived as an alternative to the formation of alliances for collective defense; and distinctions between concepts of “collective security” and “collective defense” can be helpful and illuminating in understanding NATO’s problems and prospects and the general challenge of organizing a peaceful international order in Europe.

To put in context the magnitude of the venture facing NATO, a brief review of the history of thinking about collective security, balance of power, and international order is necessary. This review shows that, while the ideas advanced by Kant, Wilson, and other proponents of a comprehensive system of collective security continue to command

interest and to win support, at least in terms of rhetoric, in practice Alliance governments have supported only a “major power consensus” approach to collective security.

ALLIANCES AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER IN EUROPEAN HISTORY

The challenge of establishing a peaceful international order in Europe has been present since the breakdown of the medieval order and the emergence of the modern state system during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Although the term “collective security” is an early twentieth century invention,¹⁰ the central concept has been advocated—and attempts have been made to implement it—since the beginning of the modern state system in Europe. In Martin Wight’s words,

By collective security we mean a system in which any breach of the peace is declared to be of concern to all the participating states, and an attack on one is taken as an attack on all. It is amusing and at the same time sobering to reflect that this system was written into the Covenant of the League of Nations, and endlessly discussed and refined for the next 15 years, without any suspicion (so far as I know) of knowledge on the part of Woodrow Wilson, or of the League of Nations Union that it had been tried repeatedly in international history since the fifteenth century.¹¹

As early examples, Wight cited the Most Holy League of Venice of 1454 (“the first system of collective security” in modern European history, in his judgment), the Treaty of London of 1518, the Association of the Hague of 1681–83, and the Quadruple Alliance of 1718.¹²

While Wight referred to the various efforts by great-power coalitions to establish a collective security system by treaty, other historians have drawn attention to the diverse yet comparable proposals by a series of statesmen and authors. The “grand design” attributed to Henry IV of France, the peace project of the Abbé de St. Pierre, Immanuel Kant’s essay “Eternal Peace,” and William Penn’s suggestions for a European order are among the better-known predecessors of the proposals that gained widespread attention during and after World War I.¹³

The collective security tradition is rooted in an aspiration to think of interests beyond those of the nation and its allies and to consider those of international society as a whole—on a regional, if not a global, basis.

The hallmarks of the collective security tradition include a desire to avoid grouping powers into opposing camps, and a refusal to draw dividing lines that would leave anyone out. Writing on a spiritual rather than a political level, John Donne in the seventeenth century articulated one of the essential ideas of collective security, a sense of involvement in the fate of others: "No man is an Island, entire of it self; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."¹⁴

The ideologies of the Enlightenment popularized a tradition holding that the evils of state oppression and war resided principally in the behavior of privileged and powerful autocrats—people who might be called dictators today, except that they customarily enjoyed dynastic legitimacy and some loyalty from their subjects. Several influential Enlightenment thinkers held that the long-term solution resided in general democratization, national self-determination, and the organization of a peaceful international order by intrinsically pacific states. At the end of the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant furnished the best-known example of such thinking. Kant held that states with "republican" constitutions would be pacific, because the citizens would "be very loath . . . to bring upon themselves all the horrors of war." Such states, Kant argued, should form a "pacific federation" that "would seek to put an end to all wars forever." This federation's members would escape from "occasions of war" by establishing "public coercive laws" applying to "an ever-growing state of nations, such as would at last embrace all the nations of the earth."¹⁵

Kant acknowledged that war might nonetheless occur sometimes, but held that "each commonwealth . . . may hope on real grounds that the others being constituted like itself will then come, on occasions of need, to its aid." In Kant's view, the only remedy for war and international anarchy was "a system of international right founded upon public laws conjoined with power, to which every State must submit—according to the analogy of the civil or political right of individuals in any one State."¹⁶ Kant advanced several additional ideas associated with the collective security tradition, such as: the moral power of enlightened public

opinion; the indivisibility of international security interests, in that any war or act of oppression should concern everyone; the peace-promoting effects of the “commercial spirit, which cannot exist along with war and which sooner or later controls every people”;¹⁷ the imperative need for open diplomacy and publicity regarding principles of peaceful statecraft, with no secret reservations or policies conducive to war; the imperative of disarmament, with the eventual abolition of standing armies; and the inevitability of progress in establishing a peaceful world order, despite intermittent setbacks.

Woodrow Wilson became the most prominent advocate of Kantian ideas regarding international peace and security. According to Wilson, “No peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property.”¹⁸ As Wilson saw it, in the long-standing European system, “a small coterie of autocrats were able to determine the fortunes of their people without consulting them, were able to use their people as puppets and pawns in the game of ambition which was being played all over the stage of Europe.”¹⁹

As these statements suggest, Kant and Wilson shared many ideas.²⁰ Both deplored balance-of-power arrangements as unreliable and dangerous, and both advocated replacing them with a “community of power”—a reliable predominance of strength against any malefactors that might arise within that community, which would be a comprehensive confederation of like-minded states, a veritable “League of Nations.”²¹ As Wilson put it, “There must be, not a balance of power, but a community of power; not organized rivalries, but an organized common peace.”²² Likewise, both recommended the rule of law in international politics, the institution of mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and the abolition of war as a legal means of settling disputes; war would be legitimate only as the ultimate recourse of the peaceful majority in the face of aggressors within the community of states. In Wilson’s words, “What we seek is the reign of law, based upon the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind.”²³

The phrase “the consent of the governed” is found in the U.S. Declaration of Independence, and points to another similarity in the thinking

of Kant and Wilson—a conviction that the legitimacy of governments should be based on constitutional and democratic self-determination, rather than on the power of despots or the prescriptive right of hereditary autocrats.²⁴ Moreover, both believed in the political solidarity of democratically governed states, the ethical authority of enlightened public opinion, and the elimination of secret diplomacy. Indeed, the first of Wilson's Fourteen Points called for "Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view."²⁵ Kant and Wilson both argued that enduring progress in international politics was feasible, and held that it should be based, whenever possible, on gradual reform rather than violence and revolution. Finally, Kant and Wilson both believed, in Kant's words, that "a powerful and enlightened people" organized as "a republic—which by its very nature must be disposed in favor of perpetual peace"—could play a special leadership role in bringing about a peaceful and law-governed international order.²⁶

Yet Wilson differed from Kant in that he assigned this special leadership role to a particular nation—the United States. In asking Congress for a declaration of war in 1917, Wilson said, "the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free."²⁷ In urging the public and the Senate to support ratification of the Treaty of Versailles, including the Covenant of the League of Nations, Wilson declared that America "has said to mankind at her birth: 'We have come to redeem the world by giving it liberty and justice.' Now we are called upon before the tribunal of mankind to redeem that immortal pledge."²⁸

Wilson's attempt to fulfill the Enlightenment's vision of international order in a concrete League of Nations brought him into contact with practical obstacles to its realization, and these help to account for some of the differences between the eighteenth-century philosopher and the twentieth-century statesman.²⁹ Whereas national self-determination was an abstract principle for Kant, Wilson was confronted with the conflicting

claims of real nations. Several of his Fourteen Points were concerned with the specific problems of Belgium, France, Hungary, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, and Turkey. Partly to gain approval from France and the other victors in World War I for the League of Nations, Wilson accepted many compromises regarding boundaries and minorities. For example, various decisions gave Germans grounds to conclude that “the principle of self-determination was applied only when it worked to the disadvantage of Germans.”³⁰ Whereas Kant called for the abolition of standing armies, Wilson supported “that moderation of armaments which makes of armies and navies a power for order merely, not an instrument of aggression or of selfish violence;”³¹ and the Covenant of the League called for arms reductions “to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations.”³²

Whereas Kant offered no more than a sketchy vision of universal order, Wilson played a central role in defining the specific provisions of an actual institution.³³ Each member of the League was committed “to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League”; to submit all disputes to arbitration, judicial settlement, or inquiry; and to regard any state resorting to war illegally as having “committed an act of war against all other Members of the League,” which would immediately impose financial and trade sanctions and, at the recommendation of the Council, contribute military forces “to protect the covenants of the League.”³⁴

How the military forces would be organized and commanded to enforce the League’s protective commitments was vague. The Covenant stipulated that, aside from exceptions such as procedural matters, “decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all the Members of the League represented at the meeting.”³⁵ The apparent assumption that unanimity could be achieved readily, even in matters involving the use of force, was consistent with the Kantian postulate that an association of like-minded states could rely on the force of world public opinion. The commitments of League members were specified “so precisely that refusal to make a decision or failure to live up to the obligations of membership would be clear for all the world to see.”³⁶ In February 1919, when Wilson presented

the Covenant of the League to the delegates at the Paris Peace Conference, he said,

. . . throughout this instrument we are depending primarily and chiefly upon one great force, and that is the moral force of the public opinion of the world—the cleansing and clarifying and compelling influences of publicity—so that . . . designs that are sinister can at any time be drawn into the open. . . . Armed force is in the background in this program, but it *is* in the background, and if the moral force of the world will not suffice, the physical force of the world shall. But that is the last resort, because this is intended as a constitution of peace, not as a league of war. . . . People that were suspicious of one another can now live as friends and comrades in a single family, and desire to do so. The miasma of distrust, of intrigue, is cleared away. Men are looking eye to eye and saying, “We are brothers and have a common purpose. We did not realize it before, but now we do realize it, and this is our covenant of fraternity and of friendship.”³⁷

Wilson’s conviction that, if properly established, the League of Nations would be “a 99 per cent insurance against war”³⁸ was consistent with the general Enlightenment view that a coalition of like-minded democracies, each with its aspirations for national self-determination satisfied, would find the challenges of maintaining international order and peace quite manageable.³⁹ As Wight has pointed out, “The American and French Revolutions offered a new doctrine of international legitimacy. Prescription and dynastic right were replaced by democracy and national self-determination. These were expected to transform the states-system. Instead of an equilibrium of power, regulated by governments, there would be a fraternal harmony of peoples. . . . Kant and Cobden, Mazzini and the Peace Societies, assumed in their different ways that the enforcement of international order was unnecessary.”⁴⁰

The proposition that relations between democracies are inherently peaceful has featured prominently in the Kantian tradition of thinking about collective security since the Enlightenment. It should nonetheless be recalled that some of the same European autocrats whose behavior was deplored by proponents of democracy and collective security held conceptions of international order based on the balance of power that were comparable in some ways to visions of collective security. The coalition against Louis XIV’s attempts to gain hegemony in Europe terminated the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713 with

the Treaty of Utrecht, which held “that the peace and tranquillity of the Christian world may be ordered and stabilized in a just balance of power, which is the best and most solid foundation of mutual friendship and a lasting general concord.”⁴¹ Similarly, the coalition that defeated Napoleon’s attempts to dominate Europe avowed in the Treaty of Chaumont of 1814 that their aim was “the maintenance of the balance of Europe, to secure the repose and independence of the Powers, and to prevent the invasions which for so many years have devastated the world.”⁴²

Indeed, in some discussions of the balance of power by eighteenth and nineteenth century observers, the obligations of states were described in terms comparable to those outlined in collective security theory. According to Emmerich de Vattel (1714–67), “The constant attention of sovereigns to all that goes on, the custom of resident ministers, the continual negotiations that take place, make of modern Europe a sort of Republic, whose members—each independent, but all bound together by a common interest—unite for the maintenance of order and the preservation of liberty.”⁴³ According to Friedrich von Gentz (1764–1832), all states should defend any victim of aggression: “We must hear of no insular systems, no indifference to a danger apparently foreign to their own immediate interests, no absolute neutrality.”⁴⁴

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Lord Henry Peter Brougham (1778–1868) argued that one of the virtues of the balance of power system was “the perpetual attention to foreign affairs which it inculcates, . . . the unceasing care which it dictates of nations most remotely situated, and apparently unconnected with ourselves; the general union which it has effected of all the European powers, obeying certain laws, and actuated in general by a common principle; in fine, the right of mutual inspection, universally recognised, among civilised states.” In commenting on this passage in Brougham’s work, the British historian Martin Wight wrote, “Here are the germs of ‘peace is indivisible,’ of the idea of collective security.”⁴⁵ Similarly, British prime minister William Gladstone (1809–98) argued for uniting all the powers to “neutralize and fetter and bind up the selfish aims of each” and to focus their attention on “objects connected with the common good of them all.” In Wight’s view, Gladstone articulated “the most elaborate theoretical formulation of the principle of concert in the

nineteenth century, and it is the foundation of the doctrine of collective security."⁴⁶

It was this history of efforts and arguments, by statesmen as well as commentators, that led historians such as Edward Gulick to argue that collective security, "far from being alien to the 'age-old tradition of the balance of power,' not only derives out of the latter, but also must be regarded as the logical end point of the balance-of-power system, the ideal toward which it has been moving, slowly and haltingly, for several hundred years."⁴⁷ Quincy Wright likewise held that collective security was "only a planned development of the natural tendency of balance of power policies"⁴⁸—despite the arguments of Woodrow Wilson and the other proponents of collective security, which were based on the thesis that collective security and balance of power are distinct approaches to international order.

In fact, President Wilson was correct in underscoring the differences between his conception of collective security and balance-of-power approaches to international order. For all the similarities between the two concepts, particularly for champions of a more coherent and institutionalized balance of power based on a high degree of international consensus, the form of collective security that Wilson sought posited a "community of power"—a uniting of all states behind a firm and irrevocable commitment to act against any aggressor. The ideal collective security system would allow no room for choice in any crisis; the law-abiding states would all be obliged to punish any transgressor.

It was precisely because these obligations were well understood by many U.S. Senators that President Wilson's design for the League of Nations was never realized. The League represents a failed attempt to establish an effective collective security arrangement along the lines advocated by Kant and Wilson. The League's Covenant included some principles essential to such an arrangement. However, the prospects for practical implementation of these principles were hobbled by the complete absence of some powers (such as the United States), the episodic and at times propagandistic participation of others (such as Germany and the Soviet Union), and the lack of commitment to consistent application of the principles on the part of others (such as Britain and France). When confronted with a critical challenge—how to deal with the Italian aggression against Abyssinia in 1935–36—several of the small powers

showed greater resoluteness than did Britain and France, apparently because London and Paris still hoped to gain Italian support against Nazi Germany's ambitions. The failure to act in such a clear-cut case disillusioned the League's idealistic champions and the small powers that had hoped to be able to rely on it. It was therefore, in Wight's words, "a seminal failure, the generator of a whole series of other failures."⁴⁹

The successor to the League of Nations, the United Nations, cannot be described as a collective security organization in the Kantian or Wilsonian sense, despite the fact that, as Claude notes, "The doctrine was given ideological lip service, and a scheme was contrived for making it effective in cases of relatively minor importance."⁵⁰ This result was not the one initially sought by powers such as the United States. It should be recalled that the term "United Nations" was proposed in December 1941 by U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt as the name for the states at war with the Axis Powers. At the October 1943 Moscow Conference, Britain, China, the USSR, and the United States agreed that the United Nations fighting the Axis Powers should establish an international organization for peace and security after the war. In describing this projected organization to the Congress, Secretary of State Cordell Hull declared that, "As the provisions of the four-power declaration are carried into effect, there will no longer be need for spheres of influence, for alliances, for balance of power, or any other of the special arrangements through which, in the unhappy past, the nations strove to safeguard their security or to promote their interests."⁵¹

In contrast with the League of Nations Covenant, however, the United Nations Charter affirmed at the outset that collective security principles could not be applied against a major power, and in fact could be applied only on the basis of a consensus of the major powers. This is the significance of the veto power held by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. As a Mexican delegate said at the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945, this represented "a world order in which the mice could be stamped out but in which the lions would not be restrained."⁵² In the absence of effective action under the auspices of the Security Council, governments are at liberty to take the self-help measures of a balance-of-power system.⁵³

As a result, in practice the term "collective security" has had two prominent useful meanings since World War II.⁵⁴ The first meaning is

the model of an ideal international order championed most famously, although with some differences, by Immanuel Kant and Woodrow Wilson—a pact against war made by the community of states, an arrangement for effective action against any aggressor from within that community. According to this model, all the states in the system would have formally agreed that if any one of them should become a law-breaker, a disturber of the peace, the others would have a right—and, indeed, an imperative duty—to take action to punish the aggressor and restore the peace.

The second meaning of collective security, predominant in current diplomatic practice, reflects the “lessons learned” from the League of Nations and other experiences. The fundamental collective security aspiration—to build and uphold a sense of solidarity and shared responsibility in matters affecting international peace and security—persists. However, action in support of collective security today usually consists of a multilateral intervention, undertaken with the implicit or explicit consensus of the major powers, directed against international aggression or internal conflict or disorder. Such intervention can take many forms, including mediation and conciliation, economic sanctions, preventive or coercive force deployments, peacekeeping and crisis management, and peace enforcement.⁵⁵ The parties initiating the action typically justify their intervention—often undertaken at least partly in pursuit of their own security interests—by referring to the will of the international community, humanitarian responsibilities, or international legal principles. Such actions and interventions are based on the argument that all states have an obligation to respect the principles of the UN Charter and other agreements. In recent years, states undertaking such actions and interventions have usually sought political legitimization by referring to a consensus of the major powers—that is, UN Security Council authorization—or, in principle at least, to a broad regional consensus, as with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, the successor to the CSCE).⁵⁶

The first meaning of collective security might be characterized as the traditional “ideal” model, the Kantian or Wilsonian design. The second meaning might be called the “major-power-consensus” model, because it emphasizes the desirability of such consensus for interventions in support of collective security.

In 1955 Ernst Haas drew a similar contrast between “two basic concepts” of collective security: “the notion of ‘universal moral obligations’ of the League Covenant and the concert of the big powers implicit and explicit in the United Nations Charter.”⁵⁷ As Haas observed, “The initial operational and ideological concept underlying the United Nations Charter was far less demanding” than that of the League Covenant, in that “collective action could take place only on issues which were not a matter of basic dispute between the permanent members.”⁵⁸ Haas called for recognizing the limits of politically feasible action in support of collective security: “a theory of collective security . . . should not be based on the assumption of selfless motives,” as in the Wilsonian design; instead, it should take account of the continued impact of “balancing” behavior among the “major powers” and other states, pursuing their own interests and operating within and outside international organizations, if it is to explain “the limited success of collective security principles.”⁵⁹

Some scholars have taken note of the limited prospects for the Kantian ideals embodied in the Covenant of the League of Nations—and excluded from the UN Charter with respect to the major powers, the permanent members of the Security Council—with a hint of regret. According to Martin Wight, “The British argument to justify the veto, that no enforcement action could be taken against a Great Power without a major war, and that in such circumstances the UN ‘will have failed in its purpose and all members will have to act as seems best in the circumstances,’ marked a retrogression . . . from the standards of the Covenant, a recognition that the rule of law is unobtainable in international relations.”⁶⁰

As Wight pointed out, the British government’s analysis in 1945 was anticipated in 1651 by Thomas Hobbes: “Lastly, when in a warre (foreign, or intestine), the enemies get a finall Victory; so as (the forces of the Common-wealth keeping the field no longer) there is no farther protection of Subjects in their loyalty; then is the Common-wealth DISSOLVED, and every man at liberty to protect himselfe by such courses as his own discretion shall suggest unto him.”⁶¹ Indeed, it could be argued that Hobbes’s conclusion applies not only when the UN Security Council is unable to take an enforcement action against one of its five permanent members, but also when the Council fails to take “the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security.”

In these circumstances, Article 51 provides for a state's "inherent right of individual or collective self-defense."

Wight's statement that "the rule of law is unobtainable in international relations" might nonetheless be rephrased. As the Mexican delegate's comment in 1945 suggests, the rule of law in international security affairs is imperfect and contingent, with enforcement generally inapplicable to major powers and in other cases dependent to a great extent on the configuration of relations among the major powers and their willingness to undertake, or at least condone, action against aggressors and others judged to threaten international peace and security. States may therefore appeal to principles of collective security and undertake interventions in support of collective security, but generally not in the comprehensive fashion envisaged by Kant, Wilson, and others in their tradition. Such an all-embracing system of collective security is not at hand.

In practice, actions in support of collective security—that is, interventions intended to advance general international security interests—can be taken only on the basis of a major-power consensus or outside that consensus. The prevailing pattern in the Alliance has been to seek UN Security Council or, in principle, OSCE approval for such interventions. Operations in support of collective security without such an explicit or implicit major-power consensus are nonetheless conceivable, in view of the risk that the legitimizing mechanism ostensibly representative of the international community (the Security Council or the OSCE) could become politically immobilized. Such operations in fact constitute a third type of collective security intervention, though this conception has been less prominent than the Kantian or Wilsonian model of international order or the major-power consensus model. It has probably been less conspicuous than the latter model in the post-World War II experience (despite the tendency during the Cold War for the Security Council to be paralyzed by East-West rivalry) because it implies that the intervening states would be prepared to assume additional political and strategic risks on grounds of necessity and conviction as to the rightness of their cause.

WHY CONCEPTS OF INTERNATIONAL ORDER MATTER FOR NATO

The distinction between concepts of collective defense and collective security is important for NATO because it helps to suggest which objectives

may be achievable and which goals are not likely to be realized as the Alliance seeks to promote the emergence of a peaceful international order in the Euro-Atlantic region. Inis Claude has hypothesized that the interest in collective security in Western societies in the post-Cold War period may be analogous to that following the two World Wars of this century: "collective security is the ideology of a coalition that is at or near the point of winning a major war. . . . It may well be that the termination of the cold war will produce a similar peak-and-valley pattern in the graph of support for the notion of collective security. . . . Postwar-like reactions to the end of the cold war . . . include the initial exuberant expectation that this event would usher in an era of universal political and economic freedom and multilateral cooperation." According to Claude, "zeal for accepting the responsibilities of membership in a collective security system is ephemeral, . . . a passing fancy, briefly entertained by victors in coalition wars."⁶²

Today, it might be argued, the victorious coalition is the Atlantic Alliance. The Alliance is not attempting to establish a full-fledged collective security system of the Kantian or Wilsonian type, but for several years it has championed ideas from the collective security tradition, particularly as that tradition has evolved since the eighteenth century. These ideas include transparency regarding military capabilities and plans, democratization (including civilian and democratic control of the military), and the proposition that "security is indivisible." The Partnership for Peace is intended to promote deepened security cooperation between the Alliance and each of its twenty-seven PfP Partners. The main operational focus of PfP exercises involves preparations to take action against any unanticipated breaches of the peace in the Euro-Atlantic region (and perhaps beyond) by dispatching crisis management and peacekeeping forces. Many PfP Partners (including Russia), moreover, have participated in IFOR and SFOR in Bosnia. On a number of occasions since the end of the Cold War, the Alliance has evinced a principled rejection of the possibility that, as a collective defense pact, it has any identifiable adversaries; and it has emphasized its new collective security missions, including crisis management and peace operations.

The collective security tradition encompasses many admirable aspirations—above all, the notion of building a comprehensive international consensus on shared responsibilities in maintaining peace and

security. However, historical attempts to implement the Kantian and Wilsonian approach—to make reciprocal and comprehensive collective security commitments the principal basis of a system of order among autonomous states—have generally been unsuccessful. As Martin Wight points out, the fourth century B.C. league of the Hellenes, the Greek states, was “entirely ineffective, as every system of collective security has been.”⁶³

Strictly observed Wilsonian collective security commitments, experts have noted, would imply a theoretical risk of “global war”⁶⁴ or “ideological war . . . in defense of peace,”⁶⁵ because any local conflict could lead to a general war, particularly if it involved one of the major powers. In practice, however, the most serious shortcoming of such traditional collective security designs has been their naïveté about the willingness of governments to honor abstract commitments to the principle that “security is indivisible.” The historical tendency, as during the League of Nations experience, has been for major powers to place little confidence in general pledges to collective security principles.

Instead, governments have relied on their own judgments, on their own military capabilities, and on alliances and understandings with specific major powers. As Inis Claude noted in a celebrated analysis,

The men who bear the responsibility for conducting the foreign relations of states tend to regard their business as a pragmatic endeavor, requiring careful attention to cases rather than doctrinaire application of a formula. They value skill in sizing up a situation, in differentiating it from other situations, in determining the implications of alternative responses; they seek latitude and freedom of maneuver. . . . [S]tates are not prepared to do, or convinced that they should do, the things that an operative system of collective security would require them to do.⁶⁶

The historical failures of attempts to establish comprehensive collective security arrangements of the Kantian or Wilsonian type offer grounds for caution and prudence with regard to NATO’s efforts to promote collective security principles.⁶⁷ General commitments to the notion that “security is indivisible” will not be honored unless governments are convinced that doing so would be consistent with their interests. With regard to actual contingencies such as Bosnia, NATO governments have supported only the major-power consensus approach to collective

security, despite their many declaratory endorsements of ideas drawn from the Kantian and Wilsonian tradition.

In early 1995, Max Jakobson, a former Finnish ambassador to the United Nations, summed up the importance of national interests in decision-making about collective security as follows:

The initials of international organizations remain abstractions unless brought to life by the national will of the member states. . . . The reality is that, although politicians pay lip service to the idea of collective action in defense of common values or of the principle of collective security, nations will take up arms only when their own national interests are directly threatened. The Balkan crisis is not perceived to constitute such a threat.⁶⁸

The action taken by NATO later in 1995 under U.S. leadership suggests that the Allies had finally concluded that their core interests were threatened and that action was imperative; the action was taken under UN Security Council auspices because a major-power consensus was available.

However, years of combat and bloodshed in the former Yugoslavia—and of diplomatic acrimony in the Alliance—preceded that decisive intervention in mid-1995. This experience outlines the narrow parameters for collective security in post-Cold War Europe. James Goodby, an American diplomat and scholar, has noted that the collective security aspiration “is not and never may be a condition” of international affairs.⁶⁹ Moreover, he says, “Collective action to enforce international norms will never be automatic, but instead will be highly dependent upon specific circumstances.”⁷⁰ This implies that combined action in support of collective security will be undertaken selectively, and will have to “coexist with national policies aimed at maintaining a power equilibrium.”⁷¹

As Goodby’s comments suggest, in the absence of an effectively functioning collective security system of the Kantian or Wilsonian type (an arrangement that apparently has never been achieved in international history), states must depend ultimately on their own strength, usually combined with that of others in alliances for collective defense. The configuration of power relationships among alliances (and among the rare powers able to do without allies) has customarily been known as the balance of power. As has already been suggested, the balance of power may be complemented by the emergence of an explicit or

implicit consensus among the major powers on collective security interventions favorable to their interests (an episodic and uncertain prospect), or an intervention by states willing to act in support of collective security outside such a major-power consensus (a potentially even more remote prospect).

The term “balance of power” may lead to confusion in at least three ways. As Wight has noted, the concept is burdened with (a) “the equivocalness and plasticity of the metaphor of ‘balance’”; (b) “the overlap between the normative and the descriptive”; and (c) the “necessarily subjective” assessments of those involved in a specific balance of power. Moreover, the term has had several distinct connotations, including “an even distribution of power,” “the principle that power ought to be evenly distributed,” “any possible distribution of power,” and “the principle that our side ought to have a margin of strength in order to avert the danger of power becoming unevenly distributed.”⁷²

Proponents of Kantian or Wilsonian concepts of collective security (or of an even more ambitious approach to war-prevention, world government) have deplored the intrinsic precariousness of an international order that is dependent, in the last resort, on a balance of power—despite the shared interests of states in commerce and other forms of intercourse, and despite their intermittently acknowledged moral, legal, and political obligations. Balance-of-power arrangements are precarious in that they involve a continual risk of war. Efforts to acquire a margin of security or, if possible, a preponderance of power over prospective opponents have led to arms competitions, which at times have culminated in war.⁷³ Anxieties about a loss of power and an increase in relative vulnerability may provoke war as well. Wars of fear, arising out of estimates of actual or prospective vulnerability, may well be more common than wars of gain or wars of doctrine in relations between major powers.⁷⁴

For all the intellectual effort invested in analyses of “balance-of-power” politics, surprisingly little consensus has been achieved even on basic questions. For example, what explains the relative peacefulness of Europe (aside from the Crimean War, the wars of German and Italian unification, conflicts in the Balkans, and so forth) during the century from 1815 to 1914? Was the absence of any general war a result of the Concert of Europe, the consensus of an international aristocracy on the

principles of a sober “balance-of-power” system? Inis Claude maintains that this “happy century . . . actually demonstrated the peace-preserving effect of the threat of a preponderantly powerful coalition. Britain, the balancer, held in its hands the possibility of turning the scales against an ambitious Continental state.”⁷⁵

In contrast, Martin Wight contends that “the pacification of Europe was due less to the working of the Concert than to there being at that time apparently limitless opportunities of independent expansion outside Europe for Britain, Russia and France, while Prussia was busy conquering Germany. When the outward expansion began to come to an end, the great powers were thrown back upon one another in Europe, and the Concert broke down in the crises that led to the First World War.”⁷⁶

Kissinger has offered yet a third interpretation: “The century of peace produced by the Congress of Vienna had been buttressed by three pillars, each of which was indispensable: a peace of conciliation with France; a balance of power; and a shared sense of legitimacy.” In his view,

it was not so much the balance of power as Europe’s abdication of it that had caused the debacle of World War I. The leaders of pre-World War I Europe had neglected the historic balance of power and abandoned the periodic adjustments which had avoided final showdowns. They had substituted a bipolar world much less flexible than even the Cold War world of the future, in that it lacked the cataclysmic inhibitions of the Nuclear Age. While paying lip service to equilibrium, the leaders of Europe had catered to the most nationalistic elements of their public opinion.⁷⁷

As Kissinger’s observations suggest, many of the prerequisites for the “balance of power” managed by the sometimes idealized nineteenth-century Concert of Europe long ago disappeared, in part because of the potent political forces that some observers had expected would make it easier to achieve an effective Kantian or Wilsonian collective security system. Democratization and the rise of public opinion have constrained the freedom of action of governments, and the principle of national self-determination (at least in some cases) has hampered the definition of arrangements based on the *de facto* subordination of certain nationalities and/or the redrawing of state boundaries. Moreover, the shift during World War II from a European system based on a



multiplicity of major powers to one dominated by two superpowers—to say nothing of changes in military technology—made many of the old assumptions obsolete.

The powers of Western Europe nonetheless turned to the most basic instrument of balance-of-power politics—an alliance for collective defense—when they felt threatened in the years immediately following World War II. Their efforts eventually led to the formation of the Atlantic Alliance. While collective defense has always been NATO's core purpose, it has long had other functions. One of the central questions at hand is to what extent NATO may successfully sustain its long-standing functions while also pursuing collective security purposes.