

The Myth of a No-NATO-Enlargement Pledge to Russia

In the latter half of the 1990s, as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was preparing to expand its membership for the first time since the admission of Spain in 1982, Russian officials claimed that the entry of former Warsaw Pact countries into NATO would violate a solemn “pledge” made by the governments of West Germany and the United States in 1990 not to bring any former Communist states into the alliance.¹ Anatolii Adamishin, who was Soviet deputy foreign minister in 1990, claimed in 1997 that “we were told during the German reunification process that NATO would not expand.”² Other former Soviet officials, including Mikhail Gorbachev, made similar assertions in 1996–1997. Some Western analysts and former officials, including Jack F. Matlock, who was the U.S. ambassador to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1990, endorsed this view, arguing that Gorbachev received a “clear commitment that if Germany united, and stayed in NATO, the borders of NATO would not move eastward.”³ Pointing to comments recorded by the journalists Michael Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, former U.S. defense secretary Robert McNamara averred that “the United States pledged never to expand NATO eastward if Moscow would agree to the unification of Germany.”⁴ According to this view, “the Clinton administration reneged on that commitment ... when it decided to expand NATO to Eastern Europe.”⁵

These assertions were sharply challenged at the time by other observers, including former U.S. policymakers who played a direct role in the German reunification process. George H. W. Bush, Brent Scowcroft, and James A. Baker,

who served as president, national security adviser, and secretary of state in 1990 respectively, all firmly denied that the topic of extending NATO membership to former Warsaw Pact countries (other than East Germany) even came up during the negotiations with Moscow on German reunification, much less that the United States made a “pledge” not to pursue it.⁶ In 1997, Philip Zelikow, who in 1990 was a senior official on the National Security Council (NSC) staff responsible for German reunification issues, maintained that the United States made no commitment at all about the future shape of NATO, apart from some specific points about eastern Germany that were codified in the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany signed in September 1990. “The option of adding new members to NATO,” Zelikow wrote, was “not foreclosed by the deal actually made in 1990.”⁷

The controversy surrounding this matter abated briefly after the initial round of NATO enlargement in 1997–1999 that led to the admission of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, but it flared up again in 2001–2002 when NATO prepared to invite several more countries to join, including the three Baltic states, which until August 1991 had been part of the USSR. In 2008, the proposed admission into NATO of two other former Soviet republics (Georgia and Ukraine) sparked a new flurry of allegations. In September 2008, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov of Russia insisted that in the 1990s the United States had “made a commitment not to expand NATO” and had “repeatedly broken this commitment” in the years since.⁸ Similar claims were made by some Western analysts, who asserted that the United States “had promised the Russians that NATO would not expand into the former Soviet empire.”⁹ Zelikow and other former U.S. officials who played a direct role in the negotiations on German reunification once again rebutted these statements and denied that any such assurances were ever given.

Much of the controversy about this issue stems from a few conversations held in the first half of February 1990, just after the collapse of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. The talks took place amidst unprecedented political maneuvering in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), where parliamentary elections were due to be held on March 18, 1990. Of particular relevance are the conversations between Baker and Mikhail Gorbachev on February 9, 1990 and a conversation between West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Gorbachev the following day. Also of great importance are the talks between Kohl and Gorbachev in Moscow and Stavropol in July 1990. Fortunately, with the passage of time, the American, German, and Russian records from these as well as other talks and meetings pertaining to German reunification have become available.¹⁰ Moreover, nearly all of the major participants in the high-level diplomacy that led to German reunification have written memoirs, which collectively enrich the declassified records and fill in key gaps.¹¹ Because many of the relevant documents were

inaccessible until the past two to three years, most of the earlier claims about what supposedly was said during the 1990 negotiations were based on tenuous or partial evidence, if any. The recent declassification of crucial archival materials in Germany, Russia, the United States, and numerous other European countries finally allows for clarification on the basis of contemporaneous records.

The documents from all sides fully bear out Zelikow's argument and undermine the notion that the United States or other Western countries ever pledged not to expand NATO beyond Germany. The British, French, U.S., and West German governments did make certain commitments in 1990 about NATO's role in eastern Germany, commitments that are all laid out in the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany, but no Western leader ever offered any "pledge" or "commitment" or "categorical assurances" about NATO's role vis-à-vis the rest of the Warsaw Pact countries. Indeed, the issue never came up during the negotiations on German reunification, and Soviet leaders at the time never claimed that it did. Not until several years later, long after Germany had been reunified and the USSR had dissolved, did former Soviet officials begin insisting that the United States had made a formal commitment in 1990 not to bring any of the former Warsaw Pact countries into NATO. These claims have sparked a wide debate, but they are not accurate.

The Context of the February 1990 Negotiations

To understand the significance of the negotiations in early February 1990, we need to take account of the context in which they occurred. In the few months preceding the talks, the East European Communist regimes had collapsed in rapid succession. Interim non-Communist governments had come to power in Eastern Europe until full-fledged elections could be held later in 1990. A sense of wonderment was still palpable in the region, though combined with a slight unease.¹² Officials in the new governments were beginning to realize just how much the security environment in Eastern Europe had been changed. They still assumed that the Warsaw Pact would survive (a sentiment that did not diminish until later in the year), but they believed that the Pact would, at minimum, be transformed from a military alliance into a predominantly political grouping for arms control and other purposes. Many of them began to sense that a "security vacuum" was emerging in Eastern Europe, a phrase that would be used increasingly over the next year and a half. Officials in the region expected

that the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) or some other pan-European organization could help fill that vacuum. In subsequent months, some also hoped that a sub-regional organization, especially the new Visegrad Group (initially comprising Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland) could eventually provide greater security for its members.

One option that was definitely *not* yet under consideration in any Warsaw Pact country was the prospect of joining NATO. Even in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, where the new governments in early 1990 were seeking to conclude agreements with Moscow on the withdrawal of Soviet military forces from their territory, senior officials for the time being were pinning all their hopes on the CSCE and a transformed Warsaw Pact. In Poland, Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and other leading political figures across the spectrum were so alarmed about the prospect of a reunified Germany that they publicly called for the Warsaw Pact to be bolstered and for Soviet troops to remain indefinitely on Polish (and East German) soil until the status of Germany and of the German-Polish border could be resolved.¹³ Not until February 20, 1990, nearly two weeks *after* the Gorbachev-Baker and Gorbachev-Kohl talks, did any official or unofficial observer in Eastern Europe even hesitantly bring up the option of forging closer ties with NATO and “perhaps eventually being integrated into the [organization’s] political councils.”¹⁴

These comments, by Foreign Minister Gyula Horn of Hungary, were widely seen in Hungary and elsewhere as a ploy in the campaign for Hungary’s parliamentary elections, scheduled for March 25. Horn was *not* calling for the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact or for Hungary’s withdrawal from it. On the contrary, he believed that Hungary should remain in a “politically transformed” Warsaw Pact while seeking closer ties with NATO’s political consultative committees. This approach, he suggested, would help foster “a pan-European security organization,” a goal that was broadly similar to Gorbachev’s own proclaimed objective for Europe. Furthermore, Horn’s comments were an aberration and were not taken up by the Hungarian government or by any other East European government. Nor did his idea win support from Western leaders, who mostly ignored it or brushed it aside. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, who happened to be in Hungary at the time to discuss unrelated matters, downplayed the proposal as a “revolutionary” concept that was not yet worth considering.¹⁵

Most important of all, the fact that Horn gave his speech well after the Gorbachev–Baker and Gorbachev–Kohl negotiations means that his remarks could not possibly have influenced what was said during those talks. Not until the late spring of 1990 did any East European official raise the question of dissolving the Warsaw Pact (the newly elected Hungarian prime minister, József Antall, was the first to do so), and not until the latter half of 1990 was the option of pursuing membership in NATO mentioned even tentatively.¹⁶ Moreover, even in 1991, when the East European countries' overtures to the alliance became more serious, the NATO governments tried their best to discourage East European leaders from even broaching the topic.¹⁷ In the first several weeks of 1990, when the prevailing assumption in Eastern Europe was that the Warsaw Pact would survive (if only to offset Germany), there was not yet any talk of bringing Pact countries into NATO. That option, even if it had been proposed, would have still seemed utterly fanciful, and in the first half of February it was simply not on the agenda of any East European country.

Nor had the issue come up at all in Moscow, where senior officials were only slowly beginning to grasp the magnitude of what had occurred in Eastern Europe. The historian Vyacheslav Dashichev has rightly observed that “no one in the Soviet Union, neither Gorbachev nor the ruling political elite nor the wider Soviet society, was ready, either psychologically or conceptually, for the fundamental turnaround that occurred” in the Eastern bloc.¹⁸ Gorbachev and his advisers even initially hoped that they could benefit from what had just happened. A leading adviser on Europe, Sergei Karaganov, expressed this view in early 1990:

The changes in the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, and Romania have provided a potent push for perestroika ... They have strengthened its irreversibility, and showed that there is no reasonable alternative to the democratization of the political system and the marketization of the economy.¹⁹

Unduly optimistic though this statement may seem in retrospect, it was an accurate reflection of the still surprisingly upbeat mood in the Kremlin during the first several weeks of 1990. Gorbachev himself made similar comments when he met with ten senior foreign policy advisers on January 26, 1990 to discuss the status of Germany. This was the first meeting of this kind that he had convened since the momentous events of October–November 1989.²⁰ In his opening remarks, Gorbachev said that despite talk about German reunification, he believed that the process could be dragged out “for at least several years,” and that the USSR in the meantime could steer things to its own advantage, not least by exploiting “the presence of our troops” in East Germany. He also was convinced that Germany, if it did eventually unify, would be fully outside NATO.

Almost all of his advisers were equally optimistic. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze believed that the USSR would not need to “get drawn into a discussion of reunification.” The chairman of the State Security Committee (KGB), Vladimir Kryuchkov, largely agreed with Shevardnadze, but said that in the lead-up to the March 1990 parliamentary elections in the GDR, the USSR should work with the recently formed Social Democratic Party (SPD) rather than continuing to rely on the enervated Socialist Unity Party (SED, the Communist party).²¹ Aleksandr Yakovlev, one of Gorbachev’s closest advisers, concurred that the USSR should rely on the new SPD in East Germany, but he believed that the SPD might be better off if it campaigned on a platform of unity, provided that this was made conditional on the establishment of a neutral, demilitarized Germany. Rafail’ Fedorov, the first deputy head of the International Department of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) and one of the leading Soviet experts on Germany, saw no need to deal with unification at all because “according to my data, the people in West Germany do not want unification now.” Any steps by the USSR that would encourage a united Germany, he argued, would merely “play into the hands of the revanchist forces.” This view was endorsed by Valentin Falin, another Germany expert and the head of the CPSU International Department, who called for a more active posture to maintain the GDR. Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov disagreed, arguing that it was “unrealistic” to believe that they could “preserve the GDR” as a truly separate state. Even Ryzhkov, however, expected that a “confederation” linking the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the GDR on an equal basis would be feasible, and that the USSR could “set the terms” for this confederation, keeping it entirely out of NATO’s sphere. This option, he stressed, would enable the Soviet Union to avoid “giving away everything to Kohl.”

As the four-hour meeting drew to a close, Gorbachev made clear that he was relatively upbeat about the USSR’s ability to attain a desirable outcome. He argued that the Soviet government “must strive to win as much time as possible. The main thing now is to drag out the process, regardless of what its final goal might be.” To this end, he proposed that they work in concert with NATO countries that were wary of German reunification. “France,” he said, “does not want the unification [of Germany], and England is afraid of being relegated to the back seat.” Gorbachev saw France and the United Kingdom as useful partners in “restraining those who are in a big rush,” and he also was eager to work closely with Poland and other “socialist countries,” reassuring them that the USSR would uphold its commitments to its Warsaw Pact allies in preventing any encroachments on borders. (It is telling that Gorbachev still regarded the USSR’s allies as “socialist countries.”) Gorbachev was even buoyant about the SED’s chances in the March parliamentary elections and was intent on sticking

with the party. He emphasized that “it would be wholly unreasonable to write off the SED” or to discount its role in “crystallizing a force on the left.”

The records of the meeting shed valuable light on Gorbachev’s view of the situation in Eastern Europe and Germany as he approached his talks with Baker, Kohl, and others in February 1990. The Soviet leader was convinced that the Warsaw Pact would survive (and even thrive) and that the USSR could use “the presence of its troops in the GDR” to slow the pace of change in Germany and to forestall any erosion of Soviet security interests. To the extent that the question of NATO enlargement came up at all at the meeting, it pertained only to Germany, and Gorbachev and the others emphasized that they would not permit East Germany to be incorporated into NATO under any circumstances. Neither Gorbachev nor any of his advisers even thought to bring up the question of the expansion of NATO to other Warsaw Pact countries beyond East Germany. This was simply not an issue at the time. Gorbachev was still fully confident that the USSR would continue to “work with its allies” in the Warsaw Pact, and he therefore did not yet even conceive of the possibility that they might someday aspire to join NATO.

Four days after Gorbachev conferred with his advisers, he held talks in Moscow with Prime Minister Hans Modrow of East Germany, who offered a sobering appraisal of the situation in the GDR. Modrow told the Soviet leader that pressure for “the forced unification of Germany” was increasing and that “a growing portion of the GDR population no longer supports the idea of the coexistence of two German states.”²² He warned Gorbachev that “unless we take the initiative now, the process that has begun will continue to unfold in an uncontrolled manner at a breakneck pace.” To help “slow down the process,” he urged “the Soviet Union to reaffirm its legal rights in Germany together with the three other powers. It would be worth reaching quick agreement on a partnership among the four powers to stabilize the situation.” Although Modrow was hopeful that at least some of the “euphoria about reunification” would subside after the March elections, he believed that only a strong “alliance with the Soviet Union” would enable the GDR to get through the crisis.

Gorbachev, in response, urged Modrow to “hang in there” and not to lose hope, and he promised to speak urgently to Kohl about the importance of “adhering to a far-sighted policy” and “avoiding any destabilization of Modrow’s government.” Gorbachev also promised to take a more assertive role in demanding that events in Germany be strictly regulated by the four powers. He expressed confidence that

the East German government would be under less pressure after the March elections. The GDR could then move at a more gradual pace toward a “treaty of cooperation and friendship” with the FRG and “eventually a confederative structure” of the two states. Gorbachev reassured Modrow that the Soviet Union would “safeguard the interests of the GDR” and “preserve the GDR as a sovereign state while preventing any interference in its internal affairs.” This outcome, he said, was the “paramount goal” for the USSR, along with “ensuring the military neutrality of the GDR and the FRG.”

The conversation with Modrow, like the meeting four days earlier between Gorbachev and his advisers, underscored Gorbachev’s confidence about the situation in Germany and about the USSR’s leverage on the German question as he approached his talks with Baker and Kohl. Gorbachev still believed that he could forestall the reunification of Germany and guide the process of change in a direction favorable to the Soviet Union. He was optimistic that the GDR after the March 1990 elections would be in a stronger position to resist unification. Gorbachev’s optimism on this score proved wholly unfounded, but he obviously did not know that at the time. The important thing here is to understand how Gorbachev viewed the situation when he met with Baker and Kohl in early February 1990. His confidence about the SED’s and SPD’s chances in the parliamentary elections naturally influenced his conduct of the negotiations with Baker and Kohl and the results he hoped to achieve. His outlook at the talks was also shaped by his confidence that the Warsaw Pact would survive and by his determination to ensure the “military neutrality of the GDR and FRG.” Gorbachev’s view of the situation would have induced him to welcome a pledge by Baker that NATO would not seek to extend its jurisdiction to eastern Germany (thus allowing it to be neutral), but Gorbachev would not even have contemplated seeking an assurance about NATO expansion beyond Germany because in February 1990 that issue was not yet within his ken.

Also, Gorbachev was not yet under intense domestic pressure over this issue. Although some initial criticism of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe was voiced at the CPSU Central Committee plenum on February 5–7, 1990, the plenum focused almost exclusively on domestic political matters, specifically Gorbachev’s proposal to revoke Article 6 of the Soviet constitution, which for decades had codified the CPSU’s unchallenged dominance in Soviet society.²³ The complaints expressed at the plenum about the demise of the Eastern bloc were fragmentary, and most of them were mild compared to the much more scathing criticism about this issue in subsequent months. Shevardnadze felt compelled to respond to the criticism at the February plenum right away, but the scattered complaints he encountered there were nothing compared to the fierce, sustained attacks he came under in the spring and summer of 1990. Moreover, none of the critics at the plenum even hinted at the possibility that the East European

countries would seek to join NATO. For them, as for Gorbachev and Shevardnadze, that issue was not yet of any relevance.

The Gorbachev–Baker Talks

Before Baker arrived in Moscow for his talks with Gorbachev, his negotiating leeway had been circumscribed somewhat by Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher of West Germany, who in Tutzing at the end of January 1990 gave a speech declaring that a united Germany would be a member of NATO, but that NATO's jurisdiction would not extend to the eastern part.²⁴ Genscher had not cleared his speech beforehand with Kohl or his aides, who might have sought to modify the formulation if they had found out about it in advance. But Genscher had acted because he was deeply worried at the time about Moscow's reaction to German reunification, and he hoped that this anodyne formulation would defuse Soviet objections. Another possible motive, in the view of many U.S. officials, was Genscher's lack of enthusiasm for NATO.

Genscher and Baker discussed the issue when they met in Washington, D.C. in early February, and Baker agreed to go along with the Tutzing formulation, at least for the time being.²⁵ At a joint press conference after their meeting, Genscher said that he and Baker "were in full agreement that there is no intention to extend the NATO area of defense and security toward the East," meaning eastern Germany. When asked by journalists what exactly this meant, Genscher insisted that he was not talking about "a halfway membership [for a united Germany] this way or that. What I said is there is no intention of extending the NATO area to the East."²⁶ Baker was relieved that Genscher had accepted that Germany would be a member of NATO, and so Baker was willing to use a version of the Tutzing formulation when he traveled to Moscow. But he also consistently emphasized that the issue would have to be definitively settled in the "2+4" framework encompassing the FRG, the GDR, and the four external powers (France, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the USSR).

Baker arrived in Moscow on February 7, 1990 and met with Shevardnadze that day and the next for preliminary talks. At the session on the second day, Baker told the Soviet foreign minister that NATO would be transforming itself into a more political organization and that the USSR and all other European countries would be better off if a united Germany were firmly anchored in NATO, which would act as a crucial check on German power.²⁷ Baker then said, using Genscher's formulation, that if Germany were included in NATO, the

**NATO expansion
was simply not even an
issue in February 1990.**

United States and its allies would guarantee “that NATO’s jurisdiction or forces would not move eastward.” Later in the conversation, Baker repeated that if a united Germany were securely rooted in NATO, the U.S. government could guarantee that no NATO forces would ever be deployed on the territory of the former GDR. Shevardnadze did not seem convinced that NATO membership for a united Germany would be desirable, but Baker had set the stage for the line he would pursue in his meeting with Gorbachev the next day.

The Soviet and U.S. records of the May 9 conversation between Baker and Gorbachev are largely identical.²⁸ According to the Soviet transcript, Baker told Gorbachev that “we understand that it would be important not only for the USSR but also for other European countries to have a guarantee that if the United States maintains its military presence in Germany within the NATO framework, there will be no extension of NATO’s jurisdiction or military presence one inch to the East.” The U.S. memorandum of the conversation, compiled by Baker’s aide Dennis Ross, contains very similar phrasing, quoting Baker as saying that “there would be no extension of NATO’s jurisdiction or NATO’s forces one inch to the East.” Both documents also indicate that Baker went on to say that “we believe that the consultations and discussions in the framework of the ‘2+4’ mechanism must give a guarantee that the unification of Germany does not lead to the extension of NATO’s military organization to the East.” Toward the end of the conversation, Baker brought up the point again:

I want to ask you a question, which you don’t need to answer right now. Assuming that unification will occur, would you prefer a united Germany outside NATO and completely independent with no American troops [on its soil] or a united Germany that maintains its ties with NATO, but with a guarantee that NATO’s jurisdiction and forces will not extend to the East beyond the current line?²⁹

Gorbachev refrained from giving a direct response to Baker’s question but said that he and his colleagues in Moscow would soon be “discussing all of these matters in depth.” He then added that “of course it is clear that an expansion of NATO’s zone [to the GDR] would be undesirable.” Baker replied: “We agree with this.”

The phrasing of these passages and the context of the negotiations leave no doubt that Baker and Gorbachev (and Baker and Shevardnadze the day before) were talking about an extension of NATO into East Germany, and nothing more. This portion of their discussion was entirely about the future of Germany, including its relationship with NATO. At no point in the discussion did either Baker or Gorbachev bring up the question of the possible extension of NATO membership to other Warsaw Pact countries beyond Germany. Indeed, it never would have occurred to them to raise an issue that was not on the agenda anywhere—not in Washington, not in Moscow, and not in any other Warsaw Pact or NATO capital. The concept Baker was advocating—NATO membership

for a united Germany but no NATO “jurisdiction” in eastern Germany—was impractical, as other U.S. officials almost immediately realized, but that does not change the fact that the only “guarantee” he was offering pertained to eastern Germany.

U.S. Policy Reformulations and the Gorbachev–Kohl Talks

Both Baker and Bush had kept in close touch with Kohl before he held his own talks with Gorbachev on February 10. Bush had sent Kohl a written message on February 9 affirming U.S. support for “the idea put forward that a component of a united Germany’s membership in the Atlantic alliance could be a special military status for what is now the territory of the GDR.”³⁰ For reasons discussed below, this formulation was somewhat different from the phrasing Baker had used in his talks with Shevardnadze and Gorbachev, but the basic idea was still that the territory of East Germany would be treated differently from the rest of Germany once the country was united within NATO. Bush also noted that Kohl would “be hearing before your talks with Gorbachev about the details of Jim Baker’s discussions with the Soviets on the future of Germany.” This was indeed the case.

Shortly after Baker finished his own meeting with Gorbachev, he sent Kohl a detailed summary of the portions of his talks with both Shevardnadze and Gorbachev that dealt with Germany.³¹ Baker acknowledged that there was still significant opposition in Moscow to German reunification and, even more, to German membership in NATO. He quoted verbatim the question he had asked Gorbachev about a united Germany’s status vis-à-vis NATO, including the promise that Germany’s membership in NATO would be accompanied by “assurances that NATO’s jurisdiction would not shift one inch eastward from its present position” to the territory of the GDR. Baker quoted Gorbachev’s response, including his statement that “certainly any extension of the zone of NATO would be unacceptable.” Baker then indicated, in parentheses, the inference he would draw from Gorbachev’s comments: “By implication, NATO in its current zone might be acceptable.” This parenthetical remark indicates that Baker still embraced the formulation devised by Genscher.

Other U.S. officials, however, had quickly grown skeptical about the practicality of allowing NATO’s “jurisdiction” to extend to only part of a member state of the alliance. Even a few State Department experts were doubtful about this idea from the outset, arguing that “the plan sounds great on paper, but

At the time, Gorbachev still believed that he could forestall the reunification of Germany.

What Gorbachev cared about was NATO's role in East Germany.

how do you actually get it implemented?”³² Some NSC staff officials were equally skeptical.³³ They persuaded Scowcroft and ultimately Bush that the references to “jurisdiction” should be dropped and that the operative phrase should be a “special military status” for East Germany, with the details to be worked out in the “2+4” framework. The

inclusion of the “special military status” wording in Bush’s missive to Kohl on February 9 was therefore an important signal of a change in U.S. policy. The idea was to make clear that the whole of a united Germany would be protected under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty providing for collective defense, but that the territory of East Germany would be treated in a special way in order to overcome Soviet objections to Germany’s continued membership in NATO.

Kohl’s two rounds of talks with Gorbachev on February 10 lasted for more than three hours and ranged widely over the future of Germany, including its relationship with NATO. The Soviet and West German transcripts of the discussions contain similar but not quite identical phrasing.³⁴ According to the Soviet transcript, Kohl at one point mentioned that “NATO must not expand the sphere of its activity,” a vague formulation that did not elicit any reaction from Gorbachev. The West German document renders Kohl’s comment as: “Naturally, NATO must not extend its sphere to the territory of today’s GDR.” Although the phrasing in the West German transcript is slightly more explicit in referring to East Germany, the discrepancy is of negligible importance. Both transcripts show that Gorbachev would have understood the comment to refer to eastern Germany, and both indicate that he did not respond to the point at all.

Later in the conversation, Gorbachev made clear that he still did not approve of the West German and U.S. proposals for German membership in NATO after unification. He contended that “it would be foolish if one part of Germany entered NATO and the other part entered the Warsaw Pact.” He went on to suggest that a better approach would be to leave Germany outside both military alliances. Gorbachev said he was aware that the West German government “would not accept neutrality,” but he insisted that, under his own proposal, Germany “would not be neutral” because it would still be a member of the European Community. He argued that rather than being a “neutral” state, Germany would be a “non-aligned” state. Kohl responded unenthusiastically, and Gorbachev indicated that they would have to come up with “reasonable solutions that would not poison the atmosphere in our relations.” Later on, Kohl made one final brief reference to NATO, saying (according to the West German transcript) that “in parallel with the unification process in Germany, it will be necessary to search for mutually satisfactory solutions to the question of the

alliances.” The Soviet transcript contains identical phrasing except at the very end where, instead of “to the question of the alliances,” it says “in connection with the existence of NATO and the Warsaw Pact.” The difference in the wording is of no substantive importance.

These were the only times that the topic of NATO came up during Gorbachev’s lengthy negotiations with Kohl. The declassified records from all sides thus confirm that at no point, either in Baker’s discussions with Gorbachev on February 9 or in Kohl’s talks with the Soviet leader the next day, was the question of NATO enlargement beyond Germany ever discussed. Gorbachev did not seek any assurances about this matter and certainly did not receive any. The Soviet leader at this juncture was still firmly opposed to the inclusion of a united Germany in NATO and was still pushing for *de facto* FRG neutrality. That is where his efforts were focused. He was not yet even thinking about the possibility that, at some point in the future, several of the other East European countries might seek to join NATO.

NATO and the Settlement on Germany

Both Baker and Kohl had arranged with Gorbachev that the final settlement regarding Germany, including the “special military status” of the GDR, would be ironed out in the “2+4” framework—a framework that was formally set up a few days later when Baker and Shevardnadze met in Ottawa with Genscher and the British, East German, and French foreign ministers.³⁵ The shift to this format meant that any items discussed at the bilateral meetings on February 9–10, 1990 would be superseded by the specific provisions hammered out in subsequent weeks and months of negotiations. NATO was among the topics covered in the later rounds of talks, but only in connection with Germany’s integration into the alliance. Declassified records of the negotiations, along with many thousands of pages of other relevant documents, confirm that at no point during the “2+4” process did Gorbachev or any other Soviet official bring up the question of NATO expansion to East European countries beyond East Germany. Certainly no one in Moscow demanded or received an “assurance” that no additional Warsaw Pact countries would ever be allowed to join the Western alliance. Nor did anyone seek to link German reunification with this issue.

After the revision of U.S. policy on February 9, the U.S. government maintained a consistent position that the whole of Germany should be a full member of NATO (a member fully covered by Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty) but that the territory of eastern Germany should be accorded a “special military status.” When Bush met with Kohl at Camp David on February 24–25, he persuaded the West German chancellor to adopt the same position.³⁶ The formulation they used at their joint press conference after the talks had been

presaged in Bush's dispatch to Kohl on February 9 and it remained the basic West German and U.S. stance in all future negotiations with Soviet officials on the German question:

We share a common belief that a unified Germany should remain a full member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, including participation in its military structure. We agreed that U.S. military forces should remain stationed in the united Germany and elsewhere in Europe as a continuing guarantor of stability. The Chancellor and I are also in agreement that, in a unified state, the former territory of the GDR should have a special military status, that it [sic] would take into account the legitimate security interests of all interested countries, including those of the Soviet Union.³⁷

The two leaders were determined to adhere to this position and were privately confident that they could eventually induce Gorbachev to accept it in return for large-scale financial support, a supposition that proved to be correct. They never believed, or had any reason to believe, that part of the deal would have to be an assurance that their governments would not someday bring other former East-bloc countries into NATO.

Gorbachev held out for nearly four more months. His willingness to yield on any of the disputed points was curtailed in the spring of 1990 not only by his personal inhibitions but also by the increasingly bitter complaints he and Shevardnadze were encountering at home about the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the trends in Germany that seemed to be "vitiating the Soviet Union's sacrifices in the Second World War."³⁸ Even as the recriminations intensified, however, events on the ground were steadily diminishing the USSR's leverage. The decisive victory of conservative parties in the GDR's elections on March 18 greatly magnified the pace of reunification within Germany, regardless of whether outside parties were ready for it. Officials in the Soviet Foreign Ministry and in the CPSU continued to take a firm stance against German reunification and NATO membership. But one of Gorbachev's closest advisers, Anatolii Chernyaev, had concluded by early May 1990 that "it is perfectly obvious that Germany is going to be in NATO. There is simply no realistic way for us to prevent this. It is inevitable."³⁹

Gorbachev deflected Chernyaev's advice and persevered for several more weeks with his attempts to prevent German membership in NATO.⁴⁰ Hard-line Soviet officials and military officers who were alarmed by the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact continued to accuse Shevardnadze and Aleksandr Yakovlev (and implicitly Gorbachev) of having "betrayed the cause of socialism and undermined the vital interests of the Soviet Union."⁴¹ None of this, however, caused Gorbachev to seek a guarantee from NATO governments that they would not extend the alliance to other East European countries after Germany was reunified. What Gorbachev cared about was NATO's role in East Germany.

A modicum of progress on Germany was achieved when Gorbachev and several key aides held a summit meeting with Bush, Baker, and others in Washington, D.C. in late May and early June 1990, but the real turnaround came during Gorbachev's discussions with Kohl in Moscow and Stavropol' Krai in mid-July, when the Soviet leader finally made the crucial concessions on Germany's full membership in NATO.⁴² The

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results of those talks paved the way for the September 1990 signature of the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany. Article 5 of the treaty defined the "special military status" of the territory of eastern Germany by stipulating that no foreign troops other than those of the USSR's Western Group of Forces and no soldiers from German units assigned to NATO would be deployed on the territory of the former GDR until all Soviet forces were pulled out of Germany in 1994. Article 5 also stipulated that after the Soviet withdrawals were completed, the only soldiers ordinarily permitted in eastern Germany would be from German units, including units assigned to NATO.

These restrictions settled the matter once and for all. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had made sure that the treaty text would contain specific provisions fulfilling what they had been promised over the previous several months, namely that when the whole of Germany was integrated into NATO, the territory of the former GDR would be accorded a "special military status." They did not even contemplate seeking a provision that would bar any other Warsaw Pact countries from eventually pursuing membership in NATO. The issue of NATO enlargement had never been raised during the negotiations on German reunification, except in connection with eastern Germany. Hence, it is not surprising that nothing about this matter was included in the treaty.

No Pledge Then . . . or Now

In 1998, the British analyst Michael MccGwire wrote an article strongly opposing NATO's decision in 1997 to invite the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to join the alliance. MccGwire claimed that "in 1990 Mikhail Gorbachev was given top-level assurances that the West would not enlarge NATO, ensuring a non-aligned buffer zone between NATO's eastern border and Russia." The U.S.-led decision to expand the alliance, MccGwire argued, "violates the bargain struck in 1990 allowing a united Germany to be part of NATO."⁴³ His article was republished a decade later in another journal, whose

editors hoped that it would help readers understand Russia's invasion of the former Soviet republic of Georgia in August 2008.⁴⁴ That invasion, the argument went, was designed not only to thwart Georgia's bid for NATO membership, but also to exact revenge against NATO itself for having violated the "top-level assurances" that were supposedly given in 1990 to Gorbachev.

When MccGwire originally published his article in 1998, most of the records pertaining to the negotiations on the "external" aspects of German reunification were not yet accessible. But by the time his article was republished, those records had finally been released. The declassified evidence undermines MccGwire's contention that "top-level assurances" were provided to Gorbachev in 1990 "ensuring a non-aligned buffer zone between NATO's eastern border and Russia." No such assurances were ever given or sought. Gorbachev did for a long while seek assurances that Germany would be kept out of NATO, but he failed to receive them. The West German and U.S. governments stuck by their position that Germany should be a full member of NATO and the Soviet leader ultimately backed down on the issue.

Gorbachev did receive numerous assurances during the "2+4" process that helped to sweeten the deal for him, but none of these had anything to do with the enlargement of NATO beyond Germany. Baker brought a nine-point package of "assurances" (or "incentives") with him to Moscow for talks with Gorbachev and Shevardnadze on May 16–19, 1990. The nine points included: 1) a commitment to hold talks on sharper cuts in conventional force levels in Europe; 2) a proposal to start talks to reduce short-range nuclear weapons; 3) a reaffirmation by German leaders that Germany would not possess or produce nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons; 4) a pledge to eschew any NATO deployments in eastern Germany during a specified transition period; 5) the granting of a respectable transition period for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from German territory; 6) a commitment to reconstitute NATO to "take into account the changes that had occurred in Europe"; 7) a promise to resolve any questions about Germany's borders before unification; 8) a commitment to enhance the role of the CSCE; and 9) encouragement of "a satisfactory treatment of the USSR's economic ties with Germany."⁴⁵ Each of these assurances had already been provided individually to the Soviet Union, but, as Baker later explained: "By wrapping them up in a package and calling them 'nine assurances,' we greatly enhanced their political effect."⁴⁶ The deputy national security adviser, Robert Gates, later recalled that "'inducements' and 'incentives' were nice diplomatic words," but "in truth we were trying to bribe the Soviets out of Germany."⁴⁷ No one ever thought that a pledge about NATO expansion would be any part of this.

Instead, the two main assurances offered to Moscow concerned the “special military status” of the territory of the former GDR and the large amounts of funding that would be transferred from the FRG to the Soviet Union, ostensibly to offset the “costs” of German unification for the USSR, including the expenses of Soviet troop withdrawals. The former assurance was codified in Article 5 of the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany, signed in September 1990. Assurances about German economic assistance were laid out

in four bilateral documents signed shortly after unification: the Agreement on Some Transitional Measures signed on October 9, 1990; the Treaty on the Conditions of the Limited Stay and the Modalities of the Planned Withdrawal of Soviet Troops from the Territory of the Federal Republic of Germany signed on October 12, 1990; the Treaty on Friendship, Partnership, and Cooperation signed on November 9, 1990; and the Treaty on the Development of Comprehensive Cooperation in the Fields of Economics, Industry, Science, and Technology, also signed on November 9, 1990. Onerous though these economic obligations became, the German government made good on all of them.⁴⁸

The aim here has not been to judge, one way or the other, whether the enlargement of NATO was, or is, wise. That issue has been explored in great depth elsewhere. The purpose here has simply been to determine whether Russian and Western observers and officials are justified in arguing that the U.S. government, and perhaps some of the other NATO governments, made a “pledge” to Gorbachev in 1990 that if the USSR consented to Germany’s full membership in NATO after unification, the alliance would not expand to include any other East European countries. Declassified materials show unmistakably that no such pledge was made. Valid arguments can be made against NATO enlargement, but this particular argument is spurious.

Valid arguments can be made against NATO enlargement, but this particular one is spurious.

Notes

1. NATO’s membership did not “expand” in October 1990 when East Germany was absorbed into West Germany and simultaneously brought into the alliance, as the number of NATO member states did not change.
2. Michael R. Gordon, “The Anatomy of a Misunderstanding,” *The New York Times*, May 25, 1997, p. E3.
3. House Committee on International Relations, *U.S. Policy Toward NATO Enlargement: Hearing*, 104th Cong., 2nd sess., June 20, 1996, p. 31.

4. Robert S. McNamara and James G. Blight, *Wilson's Ghost: Reducing the Risk of Conflict, Killing, and Catastrophe in the 21st Century* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2001), pp. 85–86. For the relevant passage, see Michael Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993), pp. 185–186.
5. Leon V. Sigal, *Hang Separately: Cooperative Security Between the United States and Russia, 1985–1994* (New York: Century Foundation Press, 2000), p. 174.
6. George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Knopf, 1998), pp. 236–242; James A. Baker III with Thomas M. DeFrank, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War, and Peace, 1989–1992* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995), pp. 234–235. See also Gordon, "Anatomy of a Misunderstanding" (Baker's comments).
7. Philip Zelikow, "NATO Expansion Wasn't Ruled Out," *International Herald Tribune*, August 10, 1995, p. 5, <http://www.ihf.com/articles/1995/08/10/edzel.t.php>.
8. "A Conversation With Sergei Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister," *Charlie Rose Show*, PBS, September 25, 2008.
9. George Friedman, "Georgia and the Balance of Power," *New York Review of Books* 55, no. 14 (September 25, 2008), p. 24, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/21772>.
10. Among the archives holding valuable collections of declassified materials are the Arkhiv Gorbachev-Fonda (AGF) and Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii (RGANI) in Moscow; the Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (SAPMO) and Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (BStU) in Berlin; the Bundesarchiv, Abteilungen Potsdam (BAAP) in Potsdam; the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA II) in College Park, Maryland; the George Bush Presidential Library (GBPL) in College Station, Texas; and the Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library (SGMML) at Princeton University, which houses the James A. Baker III Papers. Many of the declassified records have recently been published. For collections of crucial Soviet documents, see Aleksandr Galkin and Anatolii Chernyaev, eds., *Mikhail Gorbachev i germanskii vopros: Sbornik dokumentov, 1986–1991* (Moscow: Ves' mir, 2006); A. Chernyaev, ed., *V Politbyuro TsK KPSS: Po zapisyam Anatoliya Chernyaeva, Vadima Medvedeva, Georgiya Shakhnazarova* (Moscow: Al'pina Biznes-Buks, 2006); A. Chernyaev, *Sovmestnyi iskhod: Dnevnik dvukh epokh, 1972–1991 gody* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2008), pp. 833–896; A. S. Chernyaev, "M. S. Gorbachev i germanskii vopros," *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, no. 2 (March–April 2000): 98–128; V. M. Falin, *Konflikty v Kreml'e: Sumerki bogov po-russki* (Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf, 1999). For anthologies of declassified West German and East German documents, see Hanns Jürgen Küsters and Daniel Hofmann, eds., *Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik: Deutsche Einheit—Sonderedition aus den Akten des Bundeskanzleramtes 1989/90* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1998); Auswärtiges Amt, *Deutsche Aussenpolitik 1990/91: Auf dem Weg zu einer europäischen Friedensordnung eine Dokumentation* (Munich: Bonn Aktuell, 1991); Detlef Nakath and Gerd-Rüdiger Stephan, eds., *Countdown zur deutschen Einheit: Eine dokumentierte Geschichte der deutsch-deutschen Beziehungen 1987–1990* (Berlin: Dietz, 1996); Detlef Nakath, Gero Neugebauer, and Gerd-Rüdiger Stephan, eds., "Im Kreml brennt noch Licht": *Spitzenkontakte zwischen SED/PDS und KPdSU, 1989–1991* (Berlin: Dietz, 1998). For excerpts from U.S. documents, see Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). Zelikow and Rice, both of whom worked on the National

- Security Council staff in 1990, were given privileged access to U.S. records when preparing their book.
11. Baker with DeFrank, *Politics of Diplomacy*; Bush and Scowcroft, *World Transformed*; Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*; Robert L. Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War: An Insider's Account of U.S. Policy in Europe, 1989–1992* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Helmut Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit* (Berlin: Propylaen, 1996); Hans Dietrich Genscher, *Erinnerungen* (Berlin: Siedler, 1995); Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung* (Berlin: Siedler, 1993); Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (London: HarperCollins, 1993); Robert M. Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996); Hans Modrow, *Aufbruch und Ende* (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur, 1991); Hans Modrow, *Ich wollte ein neues Deutschland* (Berlin: Dietz, 1998); Igor Maksimychyev and Hans Modrow, *Poslednii god GDR* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1993); Vyacheslav Kochemasov, *Meine letzte Mission: Fakten, Erinnerungen, Überlegungen* (Berlin: Dietz, 1994); Mikhail Gorbachev, *Zhizn' i reformy*, vols. 1 and 2 (Moscow: Novosti, 1995); Mikhail Gorbachev, *Kak eto bylo: Ob'edinenie Germanii* (Moscow: Vagrius, 1999); Yulii Kvitsinskii, *Vor der Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten* (Berlin: Siedler, 1993); A. S. Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym: Po dnevnikovym zapisiyam* (Moscow: Progress-Kultura, 1993); Aleksandr Yakovlev, *Sumerki* (Moscow: Materik, 2003); Valentin Falin, *Bez skidok na obstoyatel'stva* (Moscow: Respublika, 1999); Valentin Falin, *Politische Erinnerungen*, trans. Heddy Pross-Weerth (Moscow: Droemer Knaur, 1993); Vladimir Kryuchkov, *Lichnoe delo* (Moscow: Olimp, 1996); Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody: Reformatsiya Gorbacheva glazami ego pomoshchnika* (Moscow: Rossika-Zevs, 1993); Georgii Shakhnazarov, *S vozhdymi i bez nikh* (Moscow: Vagrius, 2001); Vladimir Semyonov, *Von Stalin bis Gorbatschow: Ein halbes Jahrhundert in diplomatischer Mission, 1939–1991* (Berlin: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1995); *Raspad: Kak on nazreval v "mirovoi sisteme sotsializma"* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1994); Sergei Akhromeev and Georgii Kornienko, *Glazami marshala i diplomata: Kriticheskii vzglyad na vneshnyuyu politiku SSSR do i posle 1985 goda* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1992); Georgii Kornienko, *Kholodnaya voina: Svidetel'stvo ee uchastnika* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1994); Eduard Shevardnadze, *Als der Eiserner Vorhang zerriss: Begegnungen und Erinnerungen*, trans. Nino Sologashvili and Alexander Kartoziya (Duisburg: Peter W. Metzler Verlag, 2007); Dmitrii Yazov, *Udary sud'by: Vospominaniya soldata i marshala*, rev. ed. (Moscow: Paleia-Mishin, 1999). As with all memoirs, these books need to be used with caution and to be cross-checked against declassified documents and against other memoirs.
 12. For detailed assessments of eastern European perceptions of the new security environment that emerged in the wake of the 1989 upheavals, see Mark Kramer, "NATO, Russia, and East European Security," in *Russia: A Return to Imperialism?* ed. Uri Ra'anani and Kate Martin (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp. 105–161; Mark Kramer, "Neorealism, Nuclear Proliferation, and East-Central European Strategies," in *Unipolar Politics: Realism and State Strategies After the Cold War* ed. Ethan B. Kapstein and Michael Mastanduno (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), pp. 363–443; Mark Kramer, "The Collapse of East European Communism and the Repercussions Within the Soviet Union (Part 1)," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 5, no. 4 (Fall 2003): 178–256; Mark Kramer, "The Collapse of East European Communism and the Repercussions Within the Soviet Union (Part 2)," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6, no. 4 (Fall 2004): 3–67; Mark Kramer, "The Collapse of East European Communism and

- the Repercussions Within the Soviet Union (Part 3)," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7, no. 1 (Winter 2004–2005): 3–96.
13. "Mazowiecki: Bez dwuznaczności w sprawie granic," *Gazeta wyborcza* (Warsaw), February 22, 1990, p. 1; Janusz Reitter, "Po co te wojska," *Gazeta wyborcza* (Warsaw), February 14, 1990, p. 1; Roman Stefanowski, "Soviet Troops in Poland," *Radio Free Europe Report on Eastern Europe* 1, no. 9 (March 2, 1990): 15–17. The one notable exception was Lech Wałęsa, who unsuccessfully called on the government to pursue an agreement on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Poland.
14. "NATO-válasz a Horn-nyilatkozatra: Magyarokra tartozik a döntés," *Népszava* (Budapest), February 22, 1990, p. 1. See Külügyminisztérium Magyar Köztársaság (KMK), *Magyarország és a NATO* (Budapest: KMK, 2003), pp. 1–28; Celestine Bohlen, "Hungary Broaching a Role in NATO," *New York Times*, February 24, 1990, p. 6; "Improvizáció—a NATO tag Magyarországról," *Beszélő* (Budapest), March 3, 1990; Alfred Reisch, "The Hungarian Dilemma: After the Warsaw Pact, Neutrality or NATO?" *Radio Free Europe Report on Eastern Europe* 1, no. 15 (April 13, 1990): 16–22; László Valki, "Hungary's Road to NATO," *Hungarian Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (Summer 1999): 1–18. For Soviet coverage of Horn's statements, see V. Gerasimov, "Raznorechivye otkliki," *Pravda*, February 24, 1990, p. 1; "Vengriya i NATO," *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, February 28, 1990, p. 5; "Vengriya: Zayavlenie D. Khorna," *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, March 6, 1990, p. 3.
15. For a transcription of the interview with Eagleburger, see "Eagleburger budapest tárgyalásal: Támogató magatartásával szolgálhatná Washington a stabilitás megőrzését," *Népszabadság* (Budapest), February 22, 1990, p. 1.
16. Jan Rylukowski, "Nowe wyzwania, stare odpowiedzi—remanenty polskiej polityki zagranicznej," *Tygodnik Solidarność*, no. 37 (September 14, 1990): 5. This proposal, like others, came after the signing of the Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany.
17. See Kramer, "NATO, Russia, and East European Security."
18. V. Dashichev, "Edinaya Germaniya v edinoi Evrope," *Svobodnaya mysl'*, no. 7 (July 1999): 119.
19. Sergei A. Karaganov, "The Year of Europe: A Soviet View," *Survival* 32, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 122.
20. "Zapis' obsuzhdeniya germanskogo voprosa na uzkom soveshchanii v kabinete General'nogo sekretarya TsK KPSS v zdanii TsK na Staroi ploshchadi, 26 yanvarya 1990 goda," Verbatim Notes (Secret), January 26, 1990, in AGF, Fond (F.) 2, Opis' (Op.) 1, Dokument (Dok.) 17814, Listy (Ll.) 1–5. All comments cited here and in the next three paragraphs are from this document. For memoir accounts of this meeting, see Chernyaev, *Shest' let s Gorbachevym*, pp. 346–347; Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody*, pp. 125–127; Falin, *Politische Erinnerungen*, pp. 489–490.
21. In December 1989, the SED had restyled itself as the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), but it kept both names as a hyphenated compound (SED-PDS) until February 4, 1990, when it dropped the SED portion altogether.
22. "Zapis' besedy M. S. Gorbacheva s Kh. Modrovym, 30 yanvarya 1990 goda," Transcript of Conversation (Secret), January 30, 1990, in AGF, F. 1, Op. 1, Dok. 16313, Ll. 1–13; "Niederschrift des Gesprächs von Hans Modrow mit Michail Gorbatschow, KPdSU-Generalsekretär und Vorsitzender des Obersten Sowjets der UdSSR, am 30. Januar 1990," Transcript of Conversation (Secret), January 30, 1991 in BAAP, DC 20, 4973. The Russian and German documents are essentially identical, and the quotations in this paragraph are from the latter.

23. For detailed coverage of the plenum and the subsequent debate in the USSR over policy in Eastern Europe, see Kramer, "Collapse of East European Communism and the Repercussions Within the Soviet Union (Part 3)," pp. 4–72.
24. "Rede des Bundesministers Genscher anlässlich der Tagung der Evangelischen Akademie Tutzing, 'Zur deutschen Einheit im europäischen Rahmen,' 31. January 1990," in *Der Bundesminister des Auswärtigen informiert*, Mitteilung für die Presse No. 1026/90. See also Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 174–176.
25. "JAB Notes From 2/2/90 Press Briefing Following 2-1/2 hr Mtg. w/ FRG FM Genscher, WDC," in James A. Baker III Papers (JABP), Series 12, Subseries 8c, Folder 14; Genscher, *Erinnerungen*, pp. 715–719; Baker, *Politics of Diplomacy*, pp. 145–146; Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 176–177; Thomas L. Friedman, "Baker and West German Envoy Discuss Reunification Issues," *New York Times*, February 3, 1990, p. A8; Serge Schmemmann, "Kohl Will Visit Moscow to Calm Soviets' Fears," *New York Times*, February 8, 1990, p. A5.
26. "Genscher bei Baker in Washington: 'Gespräche über NATO-Mitgliedschaft bisher zu statisch,'" *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 3, 1990, p. 2. See also "Genscher erläutert in Washington Vorteile des KSZE-Prozesses für die deutsche Einigung: Keine Einwände gegen Bakers Bedingungen," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, February 5, 1990, p. 4; "Genscher nach seinen Gesprächen in den USA: 'Deutsche sollen Grenze verbürgen,'" *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, February 5, 1990, p. 3.
27. See "GERMANY 2/8/90" in "JAB Notes from 2/7–9/90 Ministerial Mtgs. w/ USSR FM Shevardnadze, Moscow USSR, Moscow, USSR," in SGML, JABP, Series 12, Subseries 12b, Folder 13. See also Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 181–182; Shevardnadze, *Als der Eiserne Vorhang zerriss*, pp. 136–137; "Optimism at Arms Talks: Soviet Reforms Add to 'Elements of Trust,'" *Seattle Times*, February 8, 1990, p. 7A.
28. "Stenograficheskaya zapis' besedy M. S. Gorbacheva s Dzh. Beikerom, 9 fevralya 1990 g.," Transcript of Conversation (Top Secret), February 9, 1990, in AGE, F. 1, Op. 1, Dok. 19166, Ll. 1-14; "JAB Notes from 2/9/90 Mtg. w/ USSR Pres. Gorbachev & FM Shevardnadze, Moscow, USSR," in SGML, JABP, Series 12, Subseries 12b, Folder 12. See also Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 182–184.
29. The comments here and in the next sentence are from the Soviet transcript. Nearly identical phrasing is used in the U.S. document.
30. "Schreiben des Präsidenten Bush an Bundeskanzler Kohl, 9. Februar 1990," in Küsters and Hofmann, eds., *Deutsche Einheit*, Dok, no. 170, pp. 784–785.
31. "Schreiben des Außenministers Baker an Bundeskanzler Kohl, 10. Februar 1990," in Küsters and Hofmann, eds., *Deutsche Einheit*, Dok, no. 173, pp. 793–794.
32. Friedman, "Baker and West German Envoy Discuss Reunification Issues," p. A8.
33. For authoritative accounts, see Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War*, pp. 118–121; Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 184–186.
34. "Zapis' besedy M. S. Gorbacheva s G. Kolem, 10 fevralya 1990 goda," Transcript of Conversation (Secret), February 10, 1990, in AGE, F. 1, Op. 1, Dok. 19011, Ll. 1-21; "Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Kohl mit Generalsekretär Gorbatschow, Moskau, 10. Februar 1990," Transcript of Conversation (Secret), February 10, 1990, in Küsters and Hofmann, eds., *Deutsche Einheit*, Dok. No. 174, pp. 795–807.

35. Even after the Ottawa meeting of NATO and Warsaw Pact foreign ministers on February 11–12, 1990, Soviet officials continued for a while to use the designation they preferred, “4 + 2.” See “Vypiska iz protokola No. 178 zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS: P. III. O podgotovke predlozhenii k vstreche ‘Chetyre + dva’—SSSR, SShA, Velikobritaniya, Frantsiya, GDR i FRG,” Resolution from CPSU Politburo (Top Secret), February 13, 1990, in RGANI, F. 89, Op. 9, Delo 74, L. 1. However, by the time an interview with Gorbachev was published in *Pravda* on February 21, 1990, he had “conditionally” accepted the inverse “2 + 4.” See “Otvety M. S. Gorbacheva na voprosy korrespondenta ‘Pravdy,’” *Pravda*, February 21, 1990, p. 1.
36. “Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Kohl mit Präsident Bush, Camp David, 24. Februar 1990,” Transcript of Conversation (Secret), February 24, 1990, in Küsters and Hofmann, eds., *Deutsche Einheit*, Dok. No. 192] pp. 860–873; “Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Kohl mit Präsident Bush, Camp David, 25. Februar 1990,” Transcript of Conversation (Secret), February 25, 1990, in Küsters and Hofmann, eds., *Deutsche Einheit*, Dok. No. 194, pp. 874–877.
37. “Joint News Conference Following Discussions With Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the Federal Republic of Germany, 1990-02-25,” in *Public Papers of the President of the United States: George Bush, 1990*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991), bk. 1, pp. 293–296.
38. See Kramer, “Collapse of East European Communism and the Repercussions within the Soviet Union (Part 3).”
39. “Dokladnaya zapiska po Germanii (obsuzhdenie na Politbyuro),” Memorandum (Secret), May 4, 1990, from Chernyaev to Gorbachev, in AGF, F. 2, Op. 3, D. 41, Ll. 1-3.
40. For an interesting firsthand account of the continued resistance by Soviet officials that proved wholly futile, see Rodric Braithwaite, *Across the Moscow River: The World Turned Upside Down* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 130–134. Braithwaite was the British ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1990–1991.
41. “Paradoksy bezopasnosti,” *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, no. 21 (May 26, 1990), p. 7.
42. “Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Kohl mit Präsident Gorbatschow, Moskau, 15. Juli 1990,” Transcript of Conversation (Secret), July 15, 1990, in Küsters and Hofmann, eds., *Deutsche Einheit*, Dok. No. 350, pp. 1340–1348; “Gespräch des Bundeskanzlers Kohl mit Präsident Gorbatschow im erweiterten Kreis, Archys/Bezirk Stawropol, 16. Juli 1990,” Transcript of Conversation (Secret), July 16, 1990, in Küsters and Hofmann, eds., *Deutsche Einheit*, Dok. No. 353, pp. 1355–1367; “Zapis’ besedy M. S. Gorbacheva s G. Kolem, v Moskve, 15 iyulya 1990 goda,” Transcript of Conversation (Secret), July 15, 1990, in AGF, F. 1, Op. 1, Ll. 1-14; “Zapis’ besedy M. S. Gorbacheva s G. Kolem, Arkhyz, 16 iyulya 1990 goda,” Transcript of Conversation (Secret), July 16, 1990, in AGF, F. 1, Op. 1, Ll. 1-24.
43. Michael McGwire, “NATO Expansion: ‘A Policy Error of Historic Importance,’” *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 1 (1998): 26, 39.
44. It was republished as “Appendix,” with a brief introduction by Michael Clarke but otherwise intact: Michael McGwire, “NATO Expansion: ‘A Policy Error of Historic Importance,’” *International Affairs* 84, no. 6 (November 2008): 1281–1301.
45. For a reproduction of the nine points, drafted by Robert Zoellick, see Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, pp. 263–264.
46. Baker with DeFrank, *Politics of Diplomacy*, p. 251.
47. Gates, *From the Shadows*, p. 492.

48. Manfred Knapp, "Negotiating the Unification of Germany: International Dimensions," in *The Economics of German Unification* ed. A. Ghanie Ghaussy and Wolf Schäfer (New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 1–17; Randall E. Newnham, *Deutsche Mark Diplomacy: Positive Economic Sanctions in German-Russian Relations* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), pp. 227–289; Angela E. Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, the Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 151–184.