

EU ENLARGEMENT: A BROAD AND CREDIBLE SECURITY AGENDA

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ABSTRACT

EU enlargement cannot be halted or indefinitely postponed and the question is: what will be the key concept utilized in the enlargement policy. It will certainly be a combination of previous element; that is, the candidate countries need markets, democratization, peace, and the opportunity to become a part of post-bipolar Europe. In order to draft their agendas, southeastern European candidates must use already existing EU processes. Security is one such process and CFSP and ESDP are its pillars. The Fiera Council set a goal of a common police force of 5000 men by the year 2003. Aspiring countries must take concrete steps to build confidence, merge resources and knowledge, and harmonize doctrines and assets. Each country must also share information on crime cartels, transport routes, and potential threats in order to create stability and regional confidence.

A general framework for European integration

The year 2000 has been dedicated to deepening the meaning of "Ever Closer Union"; both before and during the Nice conference, scholars, diplomats, and politicians were absorbed with the issue of a future Europe with a "common destiny." This year's focus is on enlarging the Union. It is a time when decision makers can further integrate the continent, widen the areas of stability and prosperity and thus entice new members.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE FUTURE 1 -2(2) 2001, pp.19-22

Europe's immediate future is being planned now. For the present union of around thirty countries, the challenges are mountingly complex, particularly in defense and foreign policy. Defense now involves a "coalition of the willing," but nothing more.

But enlargement (i.e., integration into the EU) cannot be postponed or avoided. Because it must be so, let us make the transition successful. Knowledge of the past will ease this transition.

The noted Italian philosopher, Augusto del Noce, opined that our path to the future leads back through the past. We must, he said, "periodize the phenomena"; that is, examine the minutiae of the past if we wish to make inferences about the future. Simply put, his phrase, "periodizing the past," converts to "get the facts first; talk comes later."

But getting the facts (i.e. phenomena) is not a given. Ideally, one examines the non-verbal objects, people, happenings, and events of the period under scrutiny - in all their myriad, infinite details and characteristics; then, abstracting from this complex variety of life facts (that is, selecting, checking, inferring, making hypotheses), one might cautiously speculate that given X (the phenomenon), Y (talk about the future) may follow.

This said, why did these enlargements take shape? The first European bloc, the six taking the initiative at the Messina Summit and the Rome treaties, sought integration as a path to peace. This was to be enhanced by commercial, economic, and social measures, but the crucial point was to ensure peace.

This motive inspired the first act. The Europe of De Gasperi, Shuman, and Adenauer did not want to see again the "spectacle of ruins" or a repeat of the sufferings and violence of the previous decades. One of the "contemporary fathers," Helmut Kohl, used to repeat that "Europe is peace." We want the EU so that war will not be a common future experience. As Karl Schmitt once said, "The questions of war and peace are political... So Europe is a political issue, a political instrument to reach peace."

The priority of the second round of countries that integrated in the early seventies (the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark) was not peace as such (having lost less in World War II than the "founders") but market. Europe is first of all an exchange area for goods, persons, capital; it is the crossroad, the wealth-multiplier. Democratization was the impetus for the "southern enlargement" in the 1980s, meant to ease the political problems of the Iberian countries and Greece. The last "enlargement" responded to the needs of a post-bipolar Europe; neutral countries could now join the integration process. Each act of integration was another "brick" in the wall of "European construction."

A decade has passed since the collapse of the Soviet Union; we can now ask what the impetus for further enlargement will be, and not whether enlargement will take place. This stimulus may be a combination of the four: the candidate countries need market, as theirs has been a non-competitive, centralized economy. They need democratization to replace decades of rule by single parties. They need peace to recover from a decade of ethnic tensions and violence; and they need to enter bi-polar Europe, sloughing off in the process the hand-me-downs from the Iron Curtain era.

The way ahead: theories and tools.

After the decisions of the Luxembourg summit (December 1997) and the inauguration of the processes (March 1 1998)/ the enlargement policy has priority in two European Councils; in Nice (December 2000) and in Stockholm (March 2001). The Swedish Presidency has linked the "Enlargement" to Employment and Environment. The candidate countries must then deal with the delicate issues of national security and social security. Candidates must also focus on the existing processes in the Union when drafting their agendas.

EU's security agenda follows the Helsinki summit (December 2001) and the capability-commitment conference (November 2000). In 2002 the force will be available, but not fully operative. Decisive steps will occur in two fields of interest: the necessary tools and the political will and process.

Tools. The European countries are now focusing on Integration; that is, the pooling of resources and know-how. It includes setting priorities and common goals; coordinating production; sharing technology; agreeing on budgets and allocating defense quotas.

Political will and process. The Belgian defense minister, Mr. Andre Flahaut, is drawing up a White Paper on European Defense that includes a "common strategic concept for Europe." It will involve all the national "backgrounds" and the aspirant countries. Participation of the latter in the drafting process will allow them to take part in European actions in line with the Petersberg tasks.

Such a process opens a dialectic (NATO/EU) related to assets; it also increases the possibility of more non-NATO countries joining the Rapid Reaction Force. The existing Multinational Units now include several non EU countries.

One decision of the Feira council was to set up a common police force of 5,000 by 2003. A broad security plan is also part of the EU agenda and includes the following: controlling migration, high-tech hacking, international crime, money laundering, and the arms trade. It is very important for aspirant countries to join the "coalition of the willing," for every country will soon share information related to crime

cartels, traffic routes, and potential threats as part of a plan to create regional stability and confidence.

Conclusion

EU countries must have the will to create and extend stability and prosperity to a wide area. Aspirant countries must also be willing to make unpopular sacrifices to continue on the path. In conclusion, continuing on the path will benefit the whole continent, not just "both sides," for the current EU and the applying countries are pursuing the same ideal.

Italy looks ahead to the challenge. It has been a Euroconvinced pillar from the beginning and is highly visible -economically and politically - in this area. Achieving a stable and integrated southeastern Europe is a high priority in its national agenda.