

NATO and Weapons of Mass Destruction

Regional alliance, global threats

Eric Terzuolo

Contemporary Security Studies

NATO AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

NATO was hugely successful in facing off the Soviet Union during the Cold War. But has it been equally successful in addressing the “new threats” of the post-Cold War era?

This new study assesses how the organization’s political and military initiatives, and its outreach to Russia, Ukraine, and other countries in the Euro–Atlantic and Mediterranean regions, have devoted considerable attention to WMD proliferation risks. It also probes the political factors, both inside and outside NATO, as well as resource constraints, which have limited the alliance’s “added value” in the international community’s effort to combat proliferation.

The events of 11 September 2001 and bitter intra-alliance controversy over the 2003 Iraq intervention have highlighted questions regarding NATO’s future role, and even its continued viability. This book is a serious reflection on how the alliance should figure in the fight against WMD and terrorist threats and an examination of today’s key issues, including the use of force in international relations and the possibility of constructing new, post-Cold War collective security rules. This is the first study to evaluate, critically and in-depth, how a long-standing security organization has adapted – and must continue to adapt – to the global security challenges of our time.

Eric Terzuolo is a specialist in international security and arms control. Now retired from the US Department of State, he has taught in the Netherlands, Italy, and the United States. He is the author of *Red Adriatic: The Communist Parties of Italy and Yugoslavia* and numerous articles.

CONTEMPORARY SECURITY STUDIES

NATO'S SECRET ARMY

Operation Gladio and terrorism in Western Europe

Daniel Ganser

THE US, NATO AND MILITARY BURDEN-SHARING

Peter Kent Forster and Stephen J. Cimbala

RUSSIAN GOVERNANCE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Geo-strategy, geopolitics and new governance

Irina Isakova

THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND FINLAND 1938-1940

Diplomatic sideshow

Craig Gerrard

RETHINKING THE NATURE OF WAR

Edited by Isabelle Duyvesteyn and Jan Angstrom

PERCEPTION AND REALITY IN THE MODERN YUGOSLAV CONFLICT

Myth, falsehood and deceit 1991-1995

Brendan O'Shea

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PEACEBUILDING IN POST-DAYTON BOSNIA

Tim Donais

THE DISTRACTED EAGLE

The rift between America and Old Europe

Peter H. Merkl

THE IRAQ WAR

European perspectives on politics, strategy, and operations

Edited by Jan Hallenberg and Håkan Karlsson

STRATEGIC CONTEST

Weapons proliferation and war in the Greater Middle East
Richard L. Russell

PROPAGANDA, THE PRESS AND CONFLICT

The Gulf War and Kosovo
David R. Willcox

MISSILE DEFENCE

International, regional and national implications
Edited by Bertel Heurlin and Sten Rynning

GLOBALISING JUSTICE FOR MASS ATROCITIES

A revolution in accountability
Chandra Lekha Sriram

ETHNIC CONFLICT AND TERRORISM

The origins and dynamics of civil wars
Joseph L. Soeters

GLOBALISATION AND THE FUTURE OF TERRORISM

Patterns and predictions
Brynjar Lia

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND STRATEGY

The evolution of American nuclear policy
Stephen J. Cimbala

NASSER AND THE MISSILE AGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Owen L. Sirrs

WAR AS RISK MANAGEMENT

Strategy and conflict in an age of globalised risks
Yee-Kuang Heng

MILITARY NANOTECHNOLOGY

Potential applications and preventive arms control
Jürgen Altmann

NATO AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Regional alliance, global threats
Eric R. Terzuolo

This page intentionally left blank

NATO AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Regional alliance, global threats

Eric Terzuolo

First published 2006
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
270 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group

Transferred to Digital Printing 2006

© 2006 Eric Terzuolo

Typeset in Times by Wearset Ltd, Boldon, Tyne and Wear

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN10: 0-415-37963-6 (hbk)

ISBN10: 0-415-40797-4 (pbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-37963-2 (hbk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-40797-7 (pbk)

TO DEBORAH AND CHIARA

This page intentionally left blank

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xii
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xv
Introduction	1
1 A new cognizance of the WMD threat	10
<i>The new policy and institutional framework</i>	10
<i>The initial work programs, 1994–96</i>	13
<i>The Madrid Summit and its aftermath</i>	22
<i>NATO outreach and WMD issues</i>	25
<i>The broader arms control and nonproliferation context</i>	39
<i>Conclusions</i>	46
2 The Washington Summit initiative on WMD	49
<i>The new alliance Strategic Concept</i>	49
<i>The WMD Initiative</i>	52
<i>The “Options” paper</i>	56
<i>The defense dimension</i>	59
<i>NATO outreach and WMD issues</i>	65
<i>The broader arms control and nonproliferation context</i>	71
<i>Conclusions</i>	77
3 From 11 September to the Prague Summit	80
<i>NATO and the “WMD terrorism” threat</i>	82
<i>NATO outreach and WMD issues</i>	94
<i>The Prague Summit</i>	107
<i>Clouds gather</i>	114
<i>Conclusions</i>	115

CONTENTS

4	NATO and the Iraq intervention	117
	<i>Conflict within the alliance</i>	118
	<i>Getting back to business</i>	120
	<i>NATO, the European Union and WMD</i>	132
	<i>NATO outreach and WMD issues</i>	138
	<i>New approaches to WMD threats</i>	148
	<i>Conclusions</i>	158
5	NATO's future in an age of new threats	160
	<i>The search for a new mission</i>	161
	<i>A renewed transatlantic dialogue?</i>	164
	<i>Use of force and post-Cold War collective security</i>	172
	<i>A continuing (growing?) challenge</i>	175
	<i>Notes</i>	178
	<i>Selected bibliography</i>	227
	<i>Index</i>	237

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study is based on the research I conducted as NATO's 2003–04 Manfred Wörner Fellow, and indeed has been possible only thanks to that fellowship. My special thanks go to the Public Diplomacy Division at NATO headquarters, notably to Deputy Assistant Secretary General for External Relations Jamie Shea, to Despina Afentouli, the Information Officer responsible for the Wörner Fellowship program, and to Ioanna Synadino, who has been unfailingly helpful to me. Nicola de Santis, responsible for Mediterranean Dialogue activities in the Public Diplomacy Division, also has been a source of friendship and support.

My partners in this venture have been Mladen Staničić, Director of the Institute for International Relations (IMO) in Zagreb, and Giorgio Dominese, Director of the Center for North East and Adriatic Studies (CNEAS) and Coordinator of the Central Eastern European University Network, based in Venice. My deep thanks go to them personally, and to Vlatko Cvrtila, who collaborated on the IMO contribution to this study, which focused on defense economics aspects of WMD proliferation and the efforts to combat it.

Many people at NATO headquarters, in other international bodies, national governments, universities, and think tanks have been kind enough to discuss this project with me and share their insights. With very few exceptions, I have followed a non-attribution policy in the following pages. The opinions and judgments expressed should be considered solely those of the author. In no way should any of those mentioned below be held responsible for errors or questionable judgments on my part.

I am grateful to the following people at NATO headquarters: Deputy Secretary General Alessandro Minuto Rizzo; Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Air Defence and Airspace Management Javier Criado; Deputy Assistant Secretary General for WMD Policy Robert Irvine; Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Civil Emergency Planning and Exercises Stephen Orosz; Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Security Cooperation and Partnership Robert Simmons; Axel Angely, WMD Centre; Deniz Beten, Coordinator, New Threats and Challenges, Public

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Diplomacy Division; Giorgio Cioni, Head of the Airspace Management Section, Defence Investment Division; Col. John Culclasure, Chief of the NBC Policy Branch, International Military Staff; Paul Fritch, Section Head, Russia and Ukraine Relations, Political Affairs and Security Policy Division; Olivier Landour, Regional Affairs and Mediterranean Dialogue Section, Political Affairs and Security Policy Division; James Lovell, Head of the Air Defence Section, Defence Investment Division; Michael Miggins, Section Head, Arms Control Policy, Political Affairs and Security Policy Division; Lt. Col. Axel Schneider, WMD Centre; Jaroslaw Skonieczka, Director for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Partnership, Public Affairs and Security Policy Division; Wiebe Van Der Ree, Secretary of the NATO Special Committee. Thanks go also to Robert Bell, formerly Assistant Secretary General for Defence Investment.

Ambassador Curtis Ward, Adviser to the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council, was gracious with his time and insights, as were Silvana Fonseca da Silva and her colleagues in the Weapons of Mass Destruction Branch at the UN Department of Disarmament Affairs, and the NATO Liaison Officer at the United Nations, Col. Manlio Silvestri.

Thanks go also to my former counterparts in other national delegations to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague and members of the OPCW Technical Secretariat. In particular, Peter Kaiser, Head of Media and Public Affairs at the OPCW, supported this project from the very outset. Ralf Trapp and Serguei Batsanov, formerly Director of Special Projects, also deserve special mention, as do Ambassador Alexander Olbrich, Gennady Lutay, Mark Matthews, and Sophie Moal, representatives respectively of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and France.

A number of current and former US government officials have been kind enough to share their insights and recollections with me. In particular, I would like to thank Robert Joseph, National Security Council Senior Director for Proliferation Strategy, Counterproliferation and Homeland Defense, and his colleague Dave Stephens, who was present at the birth of many of the initiatives discussed below. Lisa Bronson, Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Technology Security and Counter Proliferation, and her colleagues, were of great assistance, as was Scott Schless, Acting NATO Office Director at the Department of Defense. Thanks also to Ambassador Donald Mahley, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, and to James Timbie, aide to Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton, and Doug McElhaney, US Consul General in Milan. Deputy Chief of Mission Patrick Moon and the staff of the US Embassy in Zagreb were most helpful, as were Craig Karp of the US Embassy in Brussels and Susanne Rose of the US Embassy in Rome.

Former Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control Avis Bohlen was

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

very generous with her time and insights, as was her former deputy, J. Michael Lekson. Three former National Security Council officials – Gary Samore (currently at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London), Elisa Harris (currently at the University of Maryland), and Anne Witkowsky (now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies) – also deserve thanks.

I have benefited as well from conversations with a number of British government officials: Neil Holland, Freya Jackson, and Colin Smith of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; James Harrison and Michael Sherratt of the Ministry of Defence. All were extremely generous and helpful, as was William Hopkinson, formerly Assistant Under Secretary of State (Policy) at the British MoD. At the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Giovanni Brauzzi and Filippo Formica offered stimulating perspectives and direction in the early phases of my research. Alessandro Politi, advisor to the Italian defense ministry and a prescient student of “new threats” also provided important insights.

Long-time students of security policy and WMD proliferation from several educational and research institutions have helped shape my research, shared their insights, and provided needed tutorials on issues that were new to me: former US Secretary of Defense William Perry, George Bunn, and Dean Wilkening of the Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University; William Potter, Jeffrey Bale, and Nikolai Sokov of the Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies; Ambassador James Dobbins, Bruce Bennett, and Ron Fricker of RAND; David Yost and James Russell of the Naval Postgraduate School, where I had the opportunity to preview my conclusions; Wayne Glass and Todd Sandler, University of Southern California; Michael Intriligator, UCLA and the Milken Institute; Christopher Coker, London School of Economics; Chris Wright, Royal Institute of International Affairs; Paul Walker, Global Green USA; John P. Caves, Jr., Center for Counterproliferation Research, National Defense University; James Bergeron, Visiting Fellow, Lauterpacht Research Centre for International Law; Gerrard Quille, International Security Information Service, Europe. Special thanks go to Ambassador John Tefft, National War College, to Richard Nelson, my former colleague at the Atlantic Council of the United States, and to Bruce Jackson of the Project on Transitional Democracies. The National Defense University and the Arms Control Association organized impressive conferences in late January 2004, which, in different ways, provided a major stimulus to my work.

Without moral support, any long research project would become unbearable. Kristen Miquel, Libby McDaniel, and Phil Kellogg, friends and former colleagues at the US Permanent Delegation to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, all helped make this work possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Family members are the unsung heroes behind any major research project. My wife Deborah has been my most faithful reader and critic, and has worked hard to keep my obsessive streak in check. She and our daughter Chiara have put up with my absences and the many hours I have spent locked away. To them I dedicate this all too modest product, with love and gratitude.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile (Treaty)
ACT	Allied Command Transformation
AFSOUTH	Allied Forces Southern Europe
AG	Australia Group
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BTWC	Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and their Destruction
BW	Biological weapons
CBRN	Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
CBW	Chemical and biological weapons
CCMS	Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society
CD	Conference on Disarmament
CEP	Civil emergency planning
CFE	Conventional Forces in Europe (Treaty)
CIMIC	Civil-military cooperation
CJTF	Combined Joint Task Force
CMX	Crisis Management Exercise
CNAD	Conference of National Armaments Directors
CPC	Civil Protection Committee
CSBM	Confidence and security building measure(s)
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
CW	Chemical weapons
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
DCI	Defence Capabilities Initiative
DGP	Senior Defence Group on Proliferation
DPC	Defence Planning Committee
EADRCC	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre
EADRU	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Unit
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
FMCT	Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty
HLG	High Level Group

ABBREVIATIONS

IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IFOR	Implementation Force (Bosnia)
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
JCP	Joint Committee on Proliferation
MD	Mediterranean Dialogue
MTCR	Missile Technology Control Regime
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NACC	North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NADC	NATO Air Defence Committee
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBC	Nuclear, biological, chemical
NMD	National missile defense
NPG	Nuclear Planning Group
NPT	Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty
NRC	NATO–Russia Council
NRF	NATO Response Force
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NSNF	Non-strategic nuclear forces
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OPCW	Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
PCC	Prague Capabilities Commitment
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PJC	Permanent Joint Council
PNIs	Presidential Nuclear Initiatives
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SCEPC	Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee
SFOR	Stabilization Force (Bosnia – successor to IFOR)
SGP	Senior Politico-Military Group on Proliferation
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SORT	Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions
STANAG	Standardization Agreement
START I	Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms
START II	Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms
TMD	Theatre missile defense
TNW	Tactical nuclear weapons
UNSC	UN Security Council
UNSCR	UN Security Resolution
WMD	Weapons of mass destruction

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 2003, weapons of mass destruction were at the top of NATO's agenda. Divisions among the allies over how to deal with Iraq, and what roles NATO should play, were unusually open and bitter. Sympathetic commentators worried that the very future of the alliance was at risk. Others let frustration get the better of them and declared that NATO's time was over. Two years later, the alliance was still standing and the future seemed to be brightening somewhat. But many questions remained regarding NATO's ability to address WMD proliferation threats, and more generally the new security challenges of the post-Cold War era.

In fact, weapons of mass destruction, the nuclear ones in particular, had preoccupied NATO since its earliest days. Only a few months after the signing of the alliance's founding treaty in April 1949, the Soviet Union successfully tested its first nuclear weapon, raising the prospect of nuclear confrontation. US strategic nuclear commitments to the defense of Western Europe immediately came to be seen as a "decisively important element of deterrence."¹

Cooperation in nuclear matters between the United States and the other allies helped address European anxieties that the US, protected from sub-strategic attack by two oceans, might hesitate to expose itself to strategic nuclear attack in order to defend Western Europe. A consensus evolved that the credibility of US "extended deterrence" depended, among other things, on the transatlantic security linkage coming from having US nuclear weapons stationed in Europe.²

The overwhelming conventional superiority of the Soviet Union and its allies was a basic postulate of NATO defense planning. This encouraged reliance on nuclear weapons as a way of compensating, and of containing costs. In Washington, for example, the Eisenhower administration's "New Look" policy emphasized strategic and tactical nuclear weapons over conventional forces. An April 1953 test in Nevada convinced the US military that nuclear weapons could be exploded in the presence of ground troops, and in September of that year the US stationed heavy guns capable of firing nuclear shells in Germany.³

INTRODUCTION

The Sputnik launch in October 1957 caused concern in NATO capitals regarding the US deterrent, calling into question US technological superiority and suggesting that the Soviet Union had developed an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). The US sought to reassure nervous European allies by offering several squadrons of Jupiter intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs), capable of striking targets in the USSR, for deployment in NATO countries. Great Britain and Turkey quickly accepted the offer, and in February 1958 the Italian Chamber of Deputies also approved the IRBM deployment.⁴

NATO governments varied in their views on nuclear weapons. West German leaders, for example, worried that their territory would become the battleground in any conflict with the Soviet Union and its allies. They emphasized the importance of “forward defense” and argued that a credible threat of almost immediate use of nuclear weapons was the best deterrent. In 1954, as it was preparing to enter NATO, the Federal Republic of Germany renounced the manufacture of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and the means for their delivery. It did not, however, renounce either the possession or use of nuclear weapons. The Federal Republic then agreed in 1958 to equip its army with the means of delivering tactical nuclear weapons.⁵

Germany strongly supported the US plan for a Multilateral Force (MLF) of naval vessels armed with nuclear weapons, with crews from participating NATO countries and under NATO command. The proposal, however, did not win French or British support. In the negotiations resulting in the 1968 Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), the United States definitively abandoned the MLF, to help convince the Soviets to drop their insistence on prohibiting deployment of US nuclear weapons in other NATO countries. (The Soviets agreed that such deployments were acceptable, as long as the weapons remained under sole control of US personnel.)⁶

Over the long haul, the presence of US nuclear weapons in Europe provided security guarantees sufficient to dissuade Germany from embarking on any effort to acquire nuclear weapons of its own. Another NATO ally that some believe could have gone down the nuclear road, absent the US deterrent, was Turkey.⁷

Two other NATO countries – the United Kingdom and France – did acquire their own nuclear capabilities. The British nuclear weapons program actually had antedated the better-known Manhattan Project in the US, and the decision to make a British bomb came in January 1947, well before NATO’s creation. In 1962, however, the UK committed its nuclear forces to NATO planning, though retaining national command and the option of independent use in defense of supreme national interests.⁸

The French government decided to develop nuclear weapons in 1958, before Charles De Gaulle assumed the presidency. But it was De Gaulle who established an independent French strategic deterrence policy that

INTRODUCTION

would remain largely intact. In 1959 the French government advised NATO that nuclear weapons no longer could be stationed in France unless French authorities were associated with their control. And De Gaulle announced France's withdrawal from NATO's integrated military structure in March 1966.⁹

This was at least in part a response to US efforts to move the alliance from the doctrine of massive nuclear retaliation to the doctrine termed "flexible response," which entailed a spectrum of conventional and nuclear options for responding to a Warsaw Pact attack. The NATO Military Committee's proposal for adoption of the new strategy (MC 14/3) went through five years of debate prior to ministerial-level approval in December 1967. The European allies were concerned that flexible response implied a costly build-up of NATO conventional forces and increased the prospects for conventional warfare that would destroy Western Europe, but leave the superpowers intact. They were hesitant to raise the threshold for use of nuclear weapons.¹⁰

What greatly facilitated political approval of flexible response, on the other hand, was the establishment, in 1966–67, of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group (NPG). This collective decision-making mechanism gave non-nuclear NATO countries more of a voice on nuclear issues, promoting cohesion and fostering confidence in the genuineness of US commitments.¹¹

That is not to say, however, that concerns about decoupling of US and European security disappeared. Soviet deployment of SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles, which could strike Western Europe but not the United States, created a risk of decoupling. The NATO allies responded with the December 1979 decision to deploy Pershing II missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles in Europe. The so-called "Dual-Track Decision" included an arms negotiation component as well, resulting finally in the US–Soviet Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed at the end of 1987. It eliminated the entire category of ground-launched missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers, and was a significant success for arms control.¹²

In December 1979, the allies also had agreed to withdraw from Europe 1,000 warheads for older systems. At its October 1983 meeting, the Nuclear Planning Group noted that those withdrawals had been completed, and agreed to remove a further 1,400 warheads over the next few years.¹³ After 1985, weapons such as Lance missiles, artillery-fired atomic projectiles and nuclear depth bombs left Europe.¹⁴ The reduction in overseas storage sites for US nuclear weapons was dramatic. Between 1985 and 1992 the number went from 125 to 16.¹⁵

The overarching category of "weapons of mass destruction" did not figure heavily in the policy formulations of the Cold War era, although the term

INTRODUCTION

was used at times in reference to nuclear weapons. In the United States, it was the Clinton administration, in September 1993, that formally laid out a nonproliferation agenda uniting nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, plus the ballistic and cruise missiles that could deliver them, under the rubric of “weapons of mass destruction.”¹⁶ Some understanding of chemical and biological weapons (CBW) developments during the Cold War era is necessary, however, to understand the subsequent formulation of NATO WMD policy.

Briefly stated, NATO CBW policy was almost purely defensive. NATO doctrine did not foresee “first use” of chemical or biological weapons, relying instead on the alliance’s flexible response capabilities, conventional and nuclear, to deter CBW use by Warsaw Pact forces. The international convention banning possession and use of chemical weapons entered into force in 1997, with all the NATO countries joining. Before then, some allies had reserved the right to retaliate in kind against a chemical attack, while others had renounced that option or put stringent legal conditions on retaliation. Postwar treaties prohibited the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy from producing or possessing chemical weapons, and in 1982 the Dutch government foreswore use of chemical weapons by its own forces and the storage of such weapons in the Netherlands. Under such conditions, NATO could not evolve formal procedures regarding use of chemical weapons in warfare.

But Germany was not averse to having its allies retain some retaliatory capability, even if it meant storing chemical weapons on German soil. “NATO’s” offensive deterrent came to rest on an aging US stockpile, not assigned to NATO, and with only about 10 percent of the stockpile deployed in West Germany as of the early 1980s. The US had ceased production of chemical (and biological) weapons in 1969, and a significant share of its stockpile was stored in bulk containers that could not easily be converted into filled munitions. There were serious grounds to question the utility of this CW stockpile as a deterrent.¹⁷ In the mid-1980s, the Reagan administration started production of binary chemical weapons, considered safer to store and more useable, but production stopped for good in the early 1990s.

NATO policy did recognize the need for *defenses* against chemical and biological weapons, and the alliance took a common approach in setting standards for protective equipment, training, organization, and procedures, formalized in NATO Standardization Agreements (STANAGs). But provision of defensive equipment was the province of national governments, and historically had difficulty competing for scarce resources. Defensive measures thus varied considerably from one country to another.¹⁸

There was never a biological retaliatory capability under NATO responsibility. But a number of future NATO countries – the United States, Great Britain, Canada, France, and Germany – had conducted

INTRODUCTION

research on potential biological weapons during World War II. Justified concerns regarding Soviet biological weapons encouraged continued work in the US. By the late 1960s, the US had developed two lethal microbial agents (anthrax and tularemia bacteria), produced limited quantities of biological and toxin agents, and loaded them into munitions and spray tanks. But public outcry in the US and abroad, following a 1968 sheep kill near Dugway Proving Ground in Utah and use of defoliants and tear gas in Vietnam, had a political impact with respect to both chemical and biological weapons. In November 1969, US President Richard Nixon renounced possession and use of biological weapons even for retaliatory purposes, and ordered the entire US stockpile of such weapons destroyed. The biological research program henceforth would be confined to defensive measures.¹⁹

The US decision opened the way for negotiation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), completed in 1972. The BTWC did not include, however, effective mechanisms for monitoring and enforcing compliance. States parties did have the option of bringing alleged violations to the UN Security Council, requesting an investigation, but the five permanent members of the UNSC had the right of veto. Suspicions regarding a 1979 outbreak of human anthrax in the Soviet city of Sverdlovsk (later confirmed to have been caused by a biological weapons facility) did not even result in a request to the UNSC to launch an investigation.²⁰

In sum, during the Cold War, NATO WMD policy was basically a nuclear weapons policy. There was genuine cooperation within NATO on nuclear policy, and the alliance saw first use of nuclear weapons as an option, to counter presumed Warsaw Pact conventional superiority. NATO policy regarding chemical and biological weapons was strictly defensive, with limited options for retaliation in kind left strictly to national assets and national decision-making, basically that of the United States. Proliferation to states outside of Europe and to non-state actors did not figure significantly in NATO's hierarchy of threats for the first forty-plus years of its history. But the end of the Cold War, in particular the disintegration of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991, necessitated a major reassessment of risks and NATO's potential responses.

Weapons of mass destruction were not, admittedly, NATO's top priority in the heady days following the collapse of Soviet control and of communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Building relations with the newly democratic states and with a changing USSR understandably topped the agenda. At NATO's London Summit in July 1990, the heads of state and government confirmed that sub-strategic nuclear systems would have a reduced role in the new European strategic context and committed themselves to negotiations with the Soviet Union on reductions. At Germany's

request, and over British and French objections, the United States pushed through summit language stating that, following withdrawal of Soviet forces stationed in other countries and the implementation of a treaty on conventional force reductions, NATO would be able to adopt a new strategy “making nuclear forces truly weapons of last resort.”²¹

There was no reference in the summit document, however, to “weapons of mass destruction” and proliferation-related threats. NATO’s focus was on the consequences of a drastically diminishing Soviet and Warsaw Pact threat. In December 1990, however, NATO foreign ministers, meeting as the North Atlantic Council (NAC), declared that “proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the spread of destabilizing military technology have implications for Allies’ security and illustrate that in an ever more interdependent world, we face new security risks and challenges of a global nature.”²²

The Gulf War of 1990–91 and its aftermath focused the security policy community on proliferation threats. A review of five leading foreign policy journals in the US, for example, found only seven articles on proliferation between 1985 and 1989, nine articles between 1989 and the Gulf War, but fully fifty-six articles in the three years following the Gulf War.²³

Though not a NATO operation as such, the expulsion of occupying Iraqi troops from Kuwait in 1991 involved forces from many NATO countries. Operation Desert Storm was devastatingly effective, but Iraq was able to use ballistic missiles against coalition forces and against cities in Israel and Saudi Arabia. It threatened use of chemical and biological weapons. This focused attention in NATO capitals on WMD risks. The work of UN inspectors in Iraq following the war revealed the unexpectedly great extent of Saddam Hussein’s program to develop NBC weapons and means of delivery. A nuclear capability had been much closer than Western intelligence agencies had believed.

NATO’s November 1991 Rome Summit drew lessons from the Gulf War. It stimulated attention to proliferation threats in alliance intelligence groups. Conceptual work began on extended air defense and theatre missile defense (TMD) requirements. The allies stepped up consultations regarding potential proliferant countries and possible preventive measures. The work of NATO technical committees on passive defense, especially protection of soldiers against chemical agents, continued.²⁴

The new alliance “Strategic Concept” approved at the Rome Summit gave WMD and ballistic missile threats a clearer and more visible place in NATO strategy. It underlined that the remaining risks to allied security were “multi-faceted in nature and multi-directional.” It explicitly stated that stability and peace on the “southern periphery of Europe” were important for alliance security, “all the more so because of the build-up of military power and the proliferation of weapons technologies in the area, including weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles capable of

INTRODUCTION

reaching the territory of some member states of the Alliance.” WMD proliferation was included among “risks of a wider nature,” on a par with “disruption of the flow of vital resources and actions of terrorism and sabotage.” In discussing the future requirements for NATO conventional forces, the Strategic Concept argued for giving “special consideration” to WMD and ballistic missile proliferation threats.²⁵

That said, the 1991 Strategic Concept still saw the most likely risk for allied security as coming from instability in Central and Eastern Europe, for example ethnic tensions and territorial disputes. It also stated clearly that “Soviet military capability and build-up potential, including its nuclear dimension” were still the “most significant factor” for NATO when it came to “maintaining the strategic balance in Europe.”²⁶

It took more than two years before NATO leaders, at the highest level, mandated development of a comprehensive alliance policy framework to address the growing proliferation threat. After the revelations regarding Iraq came International Atomic Emergency Agency (IAEA) suspicions that North Korea had reprocessed plutonium from fuel rods for a nuclear weapons program. In March 1993, the Pyongyang government announced its intention to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

Concerns in the early 1990s also focused on Iran, thought to be producing chemical weapons, to be capable of producing biological agents, seeking help in acquiring nuclear capabilities, and in possession of enhanced missile capabilities. Libyan investments in chemical weapons production and ballistic missiles also were increasing. The dissolution of the Soviet Union raised the prospects of leakage of sensitive materials.²⁷ By 1993, more than twenty-five countries, including many in proximity to NATO territory, were seriously suspected of having nuclear, biological, or chemical capabilities. At least half of these had operational ballistic missiles, while additional countries were seeking to acquire them.²⁸

Among the NATO allies, the United States was the most concerned about WMD. Experience in the Gulf War had demonstrated gaps in US capabilities to find and destroy mobile missile launchers and to attack biological weapons facilities while minimizing collateral damage. The 1993 *Bottom-Up Review* of post-Cold War US security requirements identified the need to fight and win two regional conflicts simultaneously. US analysts considered that, in such conflicts, use or threatened use of nuclear, biological, chemical (NBC) weapons was likely.

This is not to say that European allies were insensitive to proliferation-related risks. France and the United Kingdom were perhaps most attuned. The French official *White Paper* published in spring 1994 considered NBC weapons from the former Soviet Union and (in the future) from the Mediterranean area as direct threats to French territory, and to future interventions by French forces in strategic areas outside Europe. British officials as well were concerned about NBC threats to their deployed

INTRODUCTION

expeditionary forces. Italy and Spain were quick to focus on proliferation risks in the southern Mediterranean, and the Netherlands also was attentive to such threats. Germany was grappling with the issue of military participation in peacekeeping activities outside the NATO area. This led German military leaders to focus increasingly on potential NBC and missile risks to deployed forces. In sum, in the two years following the Rome Summit, a consensus was growing in allied capitals that protective measures would be vital in meeting the NBC threat, and that established nonproliferation measures were not enough.²⁹

A significant push came from the US in the form of the Defense Counterproliferation Initiative (CPI), which Secretary of Defense Les Aspin announced in December 1993. US President Clinton had “quietly” adopted the principle of counterproliferation as US policy in June 1993.³⁰ The main thrust was on developing military capabilities, both material and conceptual, to protect US forces from NBC threats and ensure they could defeat an adversary equipped with such weapons.

The CPI, or at least its public presentation, caused considerable confusion and some acrimony between the US and its NATO allies. Specifically, there was concern, notably in Germany, that counterproliferation was intended to supplant traditional nonproliferation policy, transferring the lead from diplomatic to military hands. Similar concerns were manifest within the US government, especially at the Department of State and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). The National Security Council sought to resolve the matter through a memorandum of “Agreed Definitions,” issued in February 1994, defining counterproliferation as

the activities of the *Department of Defense* across the full range of US efforts to combat proliferation, including diplomacy, arms control, export controls, and intelligence collection and analysis, with particular responsibility for assuring that US forces can be protected should they confront an adversary armed with weapons of mass destruction or missiles.³¹

This wording effectively placed counterproliferation within broader US nonproliferation policy, and officially resolved the matter within the US government. It addressed internal US differences by establishing an *institutional* definition of counterproliferation, rather than a conceptual one. Counterproliferation was what the Department of Defense (DoD) did. But this hardly could be expected to resolve matters with the European allies and Canada, who would remain concerned that the US was seeking to accentuate military measures and de-emphasize political and diplomatic measures in the alliance approach to proliferation.

The timing was also problematic. Rhetoric abounded in Washington regarding the US role as the sole remaining superpower, and some called

INTRODUCTION

for seizing the “unipolar moment.” This prompted concern elsewhere about US temptations to act unilaterally and preemptively against suspected possessors or proliferators of WMD. The situation with respect to North Korea remained particularly tense, until conclusion of the US–North Korean framework agreement in October 1994 appeared to move Pyongyang off the track toward nuclear weapons.³²

In sum, as 1993 was ending and 1994 was beginning, NATO faced a complex situation. Fear of massive conventional war on the European continent was gone. Among the remaining threats to the populations and armed forces of NATO countries, nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons had a comparatively high profile, albeit a profile that was not very crisply defined. The fate of former Soviet weapons, plus the related research and production capabilities, was far from clear. In the cases of Iraq and North Korea, most notably, the limits of traditional nonproliferation regimes had been demonstrated. At the same time, there was little political will to simply discard arms control and nonproliferation as tools of international relations. A heightened consciousness of WMD threats and the need to do more was becoming visible in European allied capitals. But the perception of threat and of the requirement for action was by far strongest in Washington. As the US pressed to make a WMD initiative part of NATO’s January 1994 Brussels Summit, some differences of approach, emphasis, and presentation among allies already were starting to emerge. NATO’s subsequent policy on WMD proliferation would reflect a careful balancing of the political and defense dimensions, which begged the question as to where the alliance’s greatest “added value” could lie in addressing WMD threats.