

mon enemy. But if our common adversary has vanished, we know our common dangers have not.

With the cold war over, we must confront the destabilizing consequences of the unfreezing of history which the end of the cold war has wrought. The threat to us now is not of advancing armies so much as of creeping instability. The best strategy against this threat is to integrate the former Communist states into our fabric of liberal democracy, economic prosperity, and military cooperation. For our security in this generation will be shaped by whether reforms in these nations succeed in the face of their own very significant economic frustration, ethnic tensions, and intolerant nationalism.

The size of the reactionary vote in Russia's recent election reminds us again of the strength of democracy's opponents. The ongoing slaughter in Bosnia tallies the price when those opponents prevail. If we don't meet our new challenge, then most assuredly we will once again, someday down the road, face our old challenges again. If democracy in the East fails, then violence and disruption from the East will once again harm us and other democracies.

I believe our generation's stewardship of this grand alliance, therefore, will most critically be judged by whether we succeed in integrating the nations to our east within the compass of Western security and Western values. For we've been granted an opportunity without precedent: We really have the chance to recast European security on historic new principles, the pursuit of economic and political freedom. And I would argue to you that we must work hard to succeed now, for this opportunity may not come to us again.

In effect, the world wonders now whether we have the foresight and the courage our predecessors had to act on our long-term interests. I'm confident that the steel in this alliance has not rusted. Our nations have proved that by joining together in the common effort in the Gulf war. We proved it anew this past year by working together, after 7 long years of effort, in a spirit of compromise and harmony to reach a new GATT agreement. And now we must do it once again.

To seize the great opportunity before us, I have proposed that we forge what we have all decided to call the Partnership For Peace, open to all the former Communist states of the Warsaw Pact, along with other non-NATO states.

The membership of the Partnership will plan and train and exercise together and work together on missions of common concern. They should be invited to work directly with NATO both here and in the coordination cell in Mons.

The Partnership will prepare the NATO alliance to undertake new tasks that the times impose upon us. The Combined Joint Task Force Headquarters we are creating will let us act both effectively and with dispatch in helping to make and keep the peace and in helping to head off some of the terrible problems we are now trying to solve today. We must also ready this alliance to meet new threats, notably from weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them.

Building on NATO's creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council 2 years ago, the Partnership For Peace sets in motion a process that leads to the enlargement of NATO. We began this alliance with 12 members. Today there are 16, and each one has strengthened the alliance. Indeed, our treaty always looked to the addition of new members who shared the alliance's purposes and who could enlarge its orbit of democratic security. Thus, in leading us toward the addition of these Eastern states, the Partnership For Peace does not change NATO's original vision, it realizes that vision.

So let us say here to the people in Europe's East, we share with you a common destiny, and we are committed to your success. The democratic community has grown, and now it is time to begin welcoming these newcomers to our neighborhood.

As President Mitterrand said so eloquently, some of the newcomers want to be members of NATO right away, and some have expressed reservations about this concept of the Partnership For Peace. Some have asked me in my own country, "Well, is this just the best you can do? Is this sort of splitting the difference between doing nothing and full membership at least for the Visegrad states?" And to that, let me answer at least for my part an emphatic no, for many of the same reasons President Mitterrand has already outlined.

Why should we now draw a new line through Europe just a little further east? Why should we now do something which could foreclose the best possible future for Europe? The best possible future would be a democratic Russia committed to the security of all of its European neighbors. The best possible future would be