UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

# THE CULTURE OF NATIONAL SECURITY IN SLOVAKIA 1993 TO 1998: THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG NORMS, IDENTITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

By

Eva Strelka Jenkins

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty

of the University of Miami

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

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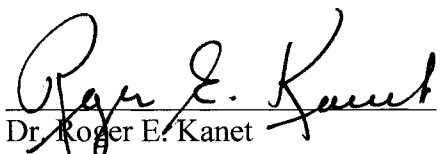

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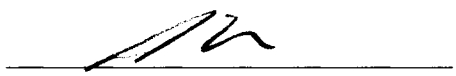

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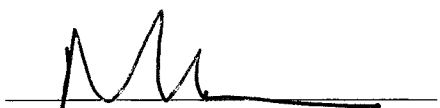

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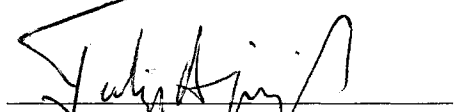

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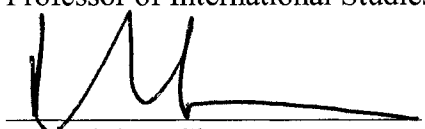

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JENKINS, EVA STRELKA (Ph.D., International Studies)
The Culture of National Security in Slovakia 1993 to 1998: The Relationship Among Norms, Identity and National Security (August 2003)

Abstract of a dissertation at the University of Miami.

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On 1 January 1993 the Republic of Slovakia became a sovereign state and the Slovak's finally achieved their independence. Slovakia desired to integrate into Euro-Atlantic institutions and declared its aspiration to join a collective defense organization, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). However, NATO did not extend an invitation to Slovakia in 1997 during the Alliance's first post-Cold War round of enlargement. In this study I explored the reasons that NATO did not invite Slovakia to join NATO along with the other new members. I employed a qualitative methodology, which included research trips to Slovakia, interviews with political actors and intellectuals, firsthand observations, historical analysis, content analysis of documents, results of opinion polls, and inference. First, I surveyed Slovakia's history. Second, I explored Slovakia's domestic environment, the identity of Slovaks, the background of the dominant political actor—Prime Minister Vladimir Mečiar, the concept of Mečiarism, and the people's struggle for democracy. Third, I reviewed NATO's history and investigated the culture of national security in Slovakia, its post-communist path, political events beyond 1998, and conducted a brief comparative analysis with other post-communist states. I concluded that Slovakia's historical experiences, such as repeated invasions, external domination, authoritarian rule and ongoing struggles to maintain a language and a separate identity shaped the behavior of Slovakia's people and political actors, its interests and policies

and constructed the state's national identity. This identity influenced voters to support political actors who pursued increased autonomy and independence in the post-communist period. These political actors—primarily Mečiar and his key supporters—desired to maintain the state's absolute sovereignty thereby preserving their authoritarian control of the state. This authoritarian control between 1993 and 1998 resulted in Slovakia displaying an institutionalized pattern of domestic behavior that was deficient in democratic principles, human rights, and the rule of law and was inconsistent with international norms of behavior. Thus the overall culture of the domestic environment and of national security in Slovakia was such that Slovakia was not invited during NATO's first round of post-Cold War enlargement.

# DEDICATION

To my daughter, Katarina Eloise, born on 2 June 2001. It is my hope that when she grows up she will be as interested in learning about and exploring our heritage as I am.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe my sincerest gratitude to many people their support throughout this research project. They include my family, members of my dissertation committee, UM faculty, and those individuals who gave up their valuable time to speak with me about Slovakia's national security.

Credit for completing this dissertation is not mine alone. I am compelled to share this credit with members of my family for without them this project would not have been possible. First and foremost, I am compelled to convey my utmost gratitude to my husband, Robert Steven, and my daughter, Katarina Eloise. My heart aches for time that I was unable to spend with them while I worked long hours into the night during the week after work and on entire days on the weekends on this project. But I am comforted by the realization that our combined sacrifices will pay off. Credit is most certainly due to Robert. From day one he believed that I had what it takes to complete this degree, assumed many household and family responsibilities to ensure that I had the time to dedicate to this dissertation, and was (and continues to be) the best father to our daughter that a mother could ever ask for. Katarina is two years old and we have ensured that she has been and will continue to be immersed in the Slovak language and culture so that she may expand her intellectual horizon in the future. Our families will encourage her to be proud of her heritage and to achieve her lifelong dreams. Generous credit goes to my mother, Kamila Kay Strelka Kankova. Her endless love of our homeland, Slovakia, sparked my interest in our heritage and birthplace. Her lifelong tenacity and perseverance fueled my resilience. For the past seven years she has served as my

personal assistant, consultant, secretary, and research partner in Slovakia and the Czech Republic, and transcriber, translator, and so much more in the United States. I am eternally indebted to her for helping to make this dream come true. And finally, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to my father, Ladislav Strelka, for his persistent encouragement not only in the completion of this project but for his unfaltering love and support throughout my life.

I wish to thank Professor Roger E. Kanet, my dissertation chair, for not giving up on me, even during the toughest of times. He truly deserves a gold medal for his steadfast patience, insightful guidance, and enduring persistence. His contributions enabled me to transform this dissertation from a passionate interest to a full-fledged doctoral research project. I wish to acknowledge Professors Ralph S. Clem and Vendulka Kubálková for remaining on my committee until the very end and Professor Felipe Agüero for contributing at such a late stage of this project.

I would like to make special mention of a few administrators who provided guidance and friendship through my entire graduate experience at the University of Miami: Steven Ralph and Louis Oliver (current Department of International Studies staff) and Carmen Bradley and Angie Perez (former Department of International Studies staff). I also wish to express my thanks to Wanda McSwiney and Daniel Potoczniak from the Graduate School for their assistance in the final stages of this project.

And last, but certainly not least, I wish to express my utmost respect for and gratitude to the kind people who agreed to speak with me formally and informally, on- and off-the-record about Slovakia, its history, people, politics, defense, economy, culture, identity, national security and so much more. This substantial group, consisting of over

one hundred Slovaks, Czechs, and Americans, includes: the previous and current president of Slovakia; former and current prime ministers of Slovakia; chairmen, deputy chairman and members of major Slovak political parties; select chiefs and key leaders of the Slovak and Czech militaries; former and current Slovak and United States ambassadors and deputy chiefs of mission; Slovak, Czech and United States defense attachés; leaders of Slovak and Czech nongovernmental institutions and academic and research institutes; Slovak, Czech and American academic faculty; representatives from the media; fellow doctoral candidates; and so many more. This project would certainly not have been possible without their time consuming contributions.

I thank all of you from the bottom of my heart.

# PREFACE

Monumental changes of the late 1980s and early 1990s dramatically altered the European geopolitical landscape. East-West relations warmed up, Gorbachev withdrew Soviet troops from Central Europe, the Berlin Wall fell, East and West Germany reunified, the Warsaw Treaty Organization disbanded, the Soviet Union disintegrated and the Cold War ended. These were some of the events that transformed Europe's security architecture at the end of the 20th century.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), arguably the most successful collective defense organization ever, established a new policy of enlargement and shifted its focus from the center of the European continent to its periphery and beyond. Twelve post-communist states knocked on NATO's door and declared their aspiration to join the Alliance. In 1997 NATO invited Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic—three of the four members of the original Višegrád Group—to join and they officially became members in 1999. Slovakia, often called the fourth member of the Višegrád Group (as part of former Czechoslovakia), was excluded from NATO during this first round of enlargement.

For the first six years of its existence Slovakia and its politics were dominated by a single man–Vladimír Mečiar, the only politician in post-communist Central Europe to have been elected to power three times and removed from office twice. His authoritarian style of leadership and undemocratic form of politics not only polarized Slovakia's political landscape and its people, but they also tarnish the state's international image. During Mečiar's tenure as Prime Minister, Slovakia was repeatedly criticized by the West

for its domestic deficiencies in institutionalizing democracy, respecting human rights, and upholding the rule of law—all inconsistent with the norms of international behavior. Why did Slovakia display such behavior? The answer to why this geopolitically and geographically significant state displayed behavior that ultimately led to its exclusion from NATO's first round of post-Cold War enlargement lies in the historical experiences and how those past events shaped Slovakia's people, politicians, interests, policies, and ultimately its identity.

MAP OF EUROPE

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# I.
# INTRODUCTION

## Research Focus

The Republic of Slovakia became a sovereign, democratic state on 1 January 1993, and the Slovaks finally attained independence. The state of Slovakia emerged after a period of over 1,000 years during which its people endured domination by various empires and a period of more than 70 years of coexistence in the 20th century with the people of the Czech Republic. Geographically situated in Central Europe, Slovakia is, and has always been, comprised mainly[1] of people who claim Slovak origin—a people who have been able to retain their language, national identity, and culture despite seemingly insurmountable odds. Today the Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, Ukraine, and Poland surround this relatively small, but geopolitically significant, state. These Central European states, including Slovakia, have much in common. They have experienced ideological, political, and economic turmoil throughout history—most notably during World Wars I and II and during the collapse of communism.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet-led Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO)—also known as the Warsaw Pact, leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) took a momentous step towards building a broader, undivided, democratic and peaceful Europe. Alliance leaders paved the way for NATO expansion into what was previously considered enemy territory—states formerly

[1] Slovaks made up 85.7 percent of the population in 1998. Hungarians comprised 10.7 percent, Romanys 1.5 percent (or higher), Czechs 1 percent. Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Germans, Poles made up the remainder.

dominated by the Soviet Union.[2] Many states had hoped to become members of the

[2] Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Lawrence J. Korb, *American National Security, Policy and Process*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989); Gary Buzan, "Is International Security Possible?" in *New Thinking About Strategic and International Security*, ed. Ken Booth (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991); Andrew M. Doorman and Adrian Treacher, *European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner, 1995); Kim Edward Spiezio, *Beyond Containment, Reconstructing European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1995); Colin S. Gray, "NATO: In Trouble at the Crossroads Again," *Strategic Review* (summer 1995); Stephen J. Cimbala, "NATO Enlargement and Russia," *Strategic Review* (spring 1996); Jeffrey Simon, "Post-Enlargement NATO: Dangers of 'Failed Suitors' and Need for A Strategy," in *From Madrid to Brussels: Perspectives on NATO Enlargement*, ed. Stephen J. 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Michta, ed., *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO (*Seattle-London: University of Washington Press, 1999); Roger E. Kanet and Nouray V. Ibryamova, "La sécurité en Europe centrale et orientale: un system en cours de changement," [Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A Changing System], *Revue d'Études comparatives Est-Ouest,* vol. 33, no. 1 (2002): 179-203. A somewhat different version of the article has appeared in English as Nouray V. Ibryamova and Roger E. Kanet, "NATO, the European Union, and European Security," in *The United States and Europe: Policy Imperatives in a Globalizing World, ed.* Howard M. Hensel (London: Ashgate Publishers, 2002) 99-122; Jeffrey Simon, "Post-Enlargement NATO: Dangers of 'Failed Suitors' and the Need for A Strategy," in *From Madrid to Brussels Perspectives on NATO Enlargement* ed. Stephen J. Blank (US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 15 June 1997); Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald, ed. *Enlarging NATO* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001); Michael Brenner, ed., *NATO and Collective Security* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1998); Niels Helveg Petersen, "Towards a European Security Model for the 21st Century," *NATO Review,* vol. 45, (November/December 1997); Michael Ruhle, "Imagining NATO 2011," *NATO Review,* vol. 49 (autumn 2001); Lloyd Axworth, "NATO's New Security Vocation," *NATO Review,* vol. 47 (winter 1999); Andrei Zagorski, "Great Expectations," *NATO Review,* vol. 49 (spring 2001); Jan Arveds Trapans, "National Security Concepts in Central and Eastern Europe," *NATO Review,* vol. 45 (November/December 1997); Stuart Croft, Jolyon Howorth, Terry Terriff and Mark Webber, "NATO's Triple Challenge," *International Affairs,* vol. 76, no. 3 (2000); Fergus Carr and Paul Flenley, "NATO and the Russian Federation in the New Europe: The Founding Act on Mutual Relations," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics,* vol. 15, no. 2 (1999): 88-110; Gülnar Aybet, *A European Security Architecture after the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); Charles-Philippe David and Jacques Levesque, ed., *The Future of NATO: Enlargement, Russia, and European Security (*Montreal-Kingston-London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999); Carl C. 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Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security (*Washington, D.C.: The United States Institute for Peace, 1998); Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman

Euro-Atlantic security organization and twelve declared their aspiration to join NATO in the mid 1990s.[3] However, during the July 1997 Madrid Summit NATO leaders invited only the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to complete actions necessary for membership in the Alliance. These three states officially entered into the collective defense organization in March 1999. Slovakia, geographically situated southeast of the Czech Republic and Poland and north of Hungary, was initially identified as a possible candidate for Alliance membership; however, Slovakia was not invited into NATO and did not become a member in 1999.[4] Slovakia's exclusion left Hungary without a bordering NATO member state.

NATO is the most prominent and the most successful Western security organization. This Euro-Atlantic Alliance was originally established in 1949. It brought together 12 independent states whose common interest was to maintain peace and defend their freedom through political solidarity and adequate military defense to deter, and if necessary, repel all possible forms of aggression against them – particularly from the Soviet Union. Since its inception NATO has reacted and adapted to a changing European security environment by adopting new member states. The Alliance added members on several occasions in the past, such as Greece and Turkey in 1953, the Federal Republic of Germany in 1955, and Spain in 1980. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic –

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& Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998); Charles Krupnick, ed., *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security* (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2003), 47-82; Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis in association with The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, *European Security Institutions: Ready for the Twenty-First Century?* (Everett, MA: Fidelity Press, 2000); and Stanley Sloan, "An Alliance Transformed: NATO Prepares for the Challenges of the 21st Century," in *50 Years of NATO: 1949-1999* (North America: Faircourt International Inc, 1999).

[3] NATO, *NATO Handbook,* (NATO Office of Information and Press: Brussels, October 1995): 11-21.

[4] Although not central to my study, Slovakia was also excluded from the European Union (EU) invitation list in 1997. The European Commission recommended that the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland (as well as Slovenia, Estonia, and Cyprus) enter into negotiations for EU membership but excluded Slovakia.

original members of the Višegrád Group[5] – were added in 1999. NATO contended that of the twelve aspirants these three states were the only states that met the criteria for Alliance membership; a relatively strong economy, adherence to the rule of law, a stable democracy, a demonstrated commitment to resolving disputes with neighbors, civilian control of their military, and the ability to share the responsibility of collective defense.[6]

In size, geostrategic importance, and armed forces, Poland outweighed the other aspirants. Prospects for continued and sustained economic growth and the potential for Poland to make significant contributions to the Alliance were likely strong factors in its selection. Hungary, which is much smaller in geographic size and military strength than Poland, but is also geographically important, was likely selected because it had the potential to make a valuable contribution to NATO in the future. And finally, led by Václav Havel, a charismatic and world-famous dissident, the uniquely situated Czech Republic was almost assured a place in this round of NATO expansion.[7] Although Slovakia is geographically situated amidst these three new members and was an original member of the Višegrád Group (as part of Czechoslovakia), it was not included on NATO's 1997 invitation list. This decision left Hungary without a NATO member state on its borders and had a profound effect on the national security of Slovakia and the state's domestic environment.

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[5] In the 14th century, the kings of Poland, Hungary and Bohemia met at Višegrád on the banks of the Danube (now on the Territory of Hungary) and agreed to cooperate on various issues including economic matters. In February 1991, the presidents of Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia met in Višegrád again to announce their intention to cooperate in rejoining Europe. Adrian Hyde-Price, *The International Politics of East Central Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 79.

[6] NATO, *Study on NATO Enlargement,* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, September 1995).

Why was Slovakia excluded from NATO? What impact did the exclusion have on Slovakia? What was the culture of Slovakia's internal domestic environment during this period? How did the identity of the Slovak people compare to the identity of their dominant political leader—Vladimír Mečiar? What was the culture of national security in Slovakia during its first six years of existence? What were Slovakia's significant historical experiences and events and how did they influence Slovakia and its government during the state's first six years of independence?

I answer these and other questions in this dissertation. I contend that Slovakia's historical experiences, such as repeated invasions, external domination, authoritarian rule and ongoing struggles to maintain a language and a separate identity, shaped the behavior of Slovakia's people and political actors, its interests and policies, and constructed the state's national identity. This identity influenced voters to support political actors who pursued increased autonomy and independence in the post-communist period. These political actors—primarily Mečiar and his key supporters—desired to maintain the state's sovereignty thereby preserving their authoritarian control of the state. This authoritarian control between 1993 and 1998 resulted in Slovakia displaying an institutionalized pattern of domestic behavior that was deficient in democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law and was inconsistent with international norms of behavior. Thus the overall culture of the domestic environment and of national security in Slovakia was such that NATO declined to invite Slovakia during NATO's first round of post-Cold War enlargement. Ultimately, Slovakia's domestic environment was the reason that the state was excluded.

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[7] Daniel N. Nelson and Thomas S. Szayna, "NATO's Metamorphosis and Its New Members," *Problems of*

This study focuses on the time period from 1993 to 1998 and addresses various themes such as national identity, domestic politics, democratization, and international norms. It examines why Slovakia was excluded from NATO from a domestic cultural-institutional context by examining how the constructed, collective identities of Slovaks and their political leaders affected the state's national interests and policies.

Slovakia's efforts to obtain NATO membership make for a very interesting story.[8] On one hand, all of Slovakia's official government documents and the rhetoric of the leading politicians specified that NATO membership was a primary goal of the state as was in the best interest of Slovakia's national security. But, on the other hand, the actions of the political elite and the behavior of the state between 1993 and 1998 suggested that Slovakia did not want to become a member of NATO but rather desired to serve as a bridge from the East to the West in the post-communist environment. I discuss this unique issue of "double talk" in chapter four.

There are many things that this dissertation does not address or accomplish. I do not address the issue of the impact of NATO's actions or decisions on Slovakia or NATO's role in the exclusion of Slovakia.[9] Nor do I not conduct an in-depth comparative analysis of the historical influences on identity, domestic policies or political

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*Post-Communism,* vol. 45, no. 4 (July/August 1998): 32-43.

[8] Zlatko Šabič and Ljubica Jelušič contend that Slovenia's efforts to join NATO make an interesting story because on one hand, an early consensus was reached among major political parties that Slovenia should enter NATO as soon as possible, but on the other hand, this consensus was not always respected in public sentiment. Zlatko Šabič and Ljubica Jelušič, "Slovenia and NATO Enlargement: Twists, Turns, and Endless Frustrations," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security*, ed. Charles Krupnick (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2003), 84.

[9] NATO's role in Slovakia's exclusion is explored in Ronald Linden, ed., *Norms and Nannies: The Impact of International Organizations on the Central and East European States* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).

leaders on other post-communist states; however, I do provide some comparison between Slovakia and similar post-communist states later on in this dissertation.

This study is not an all-encompassing work on the intricacies of Slovakia's history or all of the various aspects of its economic, political, military or cultural environments. Nor is it an in-depth analysis of the national security posture of Slovakia after gaining independence. There are many other Slovak experts and Western scholars far more knowledgeable than I am who have analyzed and written about precisely these topics, and I have cited several of them throughout this dissertation. Rather, my intent at the start of this project was to explore the various domestic aspects that influenced Slovakia's post-communist security environment as it relates to NATO and investigate why Slovakia was excluded from the Alliance in 1997. My hope is that this dissertation will provide the reader an overview of the Slovak people's history to include their struggles to maintain a language and a national identity and achieve independence and that it will offer a brief glance at the state's transition to democracy during its turbulent first six years of existence. It is also my hope that at the end of this dissertation the reader will have acquired a better understanding of the people of Slovakia and their sovereign state.

I initially explored questions about the national security of Slovakia using a theoretical framework that examines norms, identity, and the culture of national security. Peter J. Katzenstein and Noboi Okawara first applied a version of this framework in their book *Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms and Policy Responses in a Changing World* in 1993. The framework was later expanded and clarified in a 1996 book edited by Katzenstein and titled *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World*

*Politics*.[10] The second book points to analytical gaps left by neorealism and neoliberalism, the predominant perspectives of international relations, and focuses on what effects culture and identity have on national security and the notion that the neorealism and neoliberalism do not address these effects.[11] I provide an in-depth review of Katzenstein's work in the theoretical framework section of this chapter.

Neorealism and neoliberalism fail to explain the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the end of the Cold War, and events in the post-Cold War era. The relative peaceful dissolution of the Soviet bloc and the collapse of the Soviet Union shook the international relations community when scholars were unable to predict those events or explain why the occurred. Neorealism and neoliberalism also fail to answer the question of Slovakia's exclusion from NATO in 1997. In the simplest terms, neorealism and neoliberalism expect NATO expansion, they expect states to know what they want, and they expect states will do everything in their power to join the Alliance. Neorealism and neoliberalism expect the Alliance to increase its military power in every way it can and expect Slovakia to do everything in its power to increase its own security. But in this case, Slovakia did not do everything in its power to join NATO. I was unable to answer why Slovakia failed to become a NATO member by applying the dominant perspectives of neorealism and neoliberalism. Therefore I turned my focus to the analysis of Slovakia's identity throughout history, its domestic political and national security environments with respect to international norms, and its transition from communism to democracy in the post-Cold War period.

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[10] Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).
[11] Ibid., 17.

Many recent scholarly works examine the security of Slovakia and its post-communist transition from a wide variety of perspectives and some compare Slovakia's experience to that of other Central European states. A few additional books mention Slovakia's exclusion from NATO; however, none approach the question specifically from a perspective such as the one that I have selected. [12]

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[12] Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security*, ed. Charles Krupnick (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2003), 47-82; Philippe David and Jacques Levesque, ed., *The Future of NATO: Enlargement, Russia, and European Security* (Montreal-Kingston-London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999); Anton A. Bebler, ed., *The Challenge of NATO Enlargement* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999); Andrew A. Michta, ed., *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO* (Seattle-London: University of Washington Press, 1999); James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether But When: The US Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999); Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2002); Konrad Adenauer Foundation, *Nová Bezpečnostná Architektúra Európy* (Bratislava: Nadácia Konrada Adenaura, 1996); Michael P. Auerbach, "A Partnership for a New Era: Addressing Security in Post-Cold War Europe," (master's thesis, Boston College, 1999); Janusz Bugajski, *Nations in Turmoil: Conflict and Cooperation in Eastern Europe, 2nd ed.*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995); Hank Brown and Carter Pilcher, "No Veto Over Central Europe," *National Security Studies Quarterly*, vol. 3 (summer 1997): 43-58; Kristin J. Broderick, "Economies, Political Culture, and Democratic Support in the New Democracies of Central and Eastern Europe," (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 1998); Martin Bútora and František Šebej, ed., *Slovensko v Šedej Zóne? Rozširovanie NATO, Zlyhania a Perspecktívy Slovenska* (Bratislava: Inštitute Pre Verejné Otázky, 1998); Sharon J. Cohen, *Politics without a Past: The Absence of History in Postcommunist Nationalism*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Andrew Cottey, *East-Central Europe after the Cold War: Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary in Search of Security* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1995); Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Andrew M. Dorman and Adrian Treacher, *European Security: An Introduction to Security Issues in Post-Cold War Europe* (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, 1995); Roger East and Jolyon Pontin, *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Pinter Publishers Ltd., 1997); Jon Elster, Claus Offe, and Ulrich K. Preuss, *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Earl F. Gibbons Jr., "Return to Europe: Czecho-Slovak Foreign Policy Since the Velvet Revolution: European Community, NATO" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1993); John K. Glenn III, "Framing Democracy in Eastern Europe: Civic Movements and the Reconstruction of Leninists States," (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1997); Minton F. Goldman, *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1997); Minton F. Goldman, *Slovakia Since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy* (Westport: Prager Publishers, 1999); Karen Henderson, ed., *Back to Europe: Central and Eastern Europe and the European Union* (London: UCL Press Limited, 1999); Christian Haerpfer, "Old and New Security Issues in Post-Communist Eastern Europe: Results of an 11 Nation Study," *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 51 (1999): 989-1011; Adrian Hyde-Price, *The International Politics of East Central Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998); Emil Kuchar, "Slovakia: Looking West and East" in *Restructuring Armed Forces in East and West*, ed. Jan Geert Siccama and Theo van den Doel (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994); David S. Mason, *Revolution and Change in East-Central Europe*, 2nd ed., (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996); Alexander Moens and Christopher Anstis, *Disconcerted Europe* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994); James A. Norris, "Competing Democracy: Party Systems and Democratic

Of the works that are most closely related to my study six stand out because their approach to the political and security struggles of post-communist states is comparable to mine. Ted Hopf focuses on Soviet foreign policy in 1955 and Russian foreign policy in 1999. He attempts to show how a state's collection of identities, how it understands itself, can affect how that state, or more precisely its decision makers, understands other states in world affairs.[13] Ilya Prizel's analysis begins with the premise that the foreign policy of any country is heavily influenced by a society's evolving notions of itself and applies that premise to Russia, Poland and Ukraine. He argues that national identity is an ever-changing concept, influenced by internal and external events and by the manipulation of a polity's collective memory. He concludes that the interaction of the narrative of a society and its foreign policy is paramount.[14] Adrian Hyde-Price analyzes the changing nature of international politics in Central Europe since 1989 and the influence that history, national identity and geopolitics has on it. He concludes that

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Consolidation among Mass Publics in East-Central Europe," (Ph.D. diss., Texas Tech University, 1999); Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Sabrina P. Ramet, *Whose Democracy? Nationalism, Religion, and the Doctrine of Collective Rights in Post-1989 Eastern Europe* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997); Sharon Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997); Gabriel Palacka, *Fakty a Ilúzie O Neutralite* (Bratislava: Inštitute Pre Verejné Otázky, 1997); Stephen Peltz, "The Case for Limiting NATO Enlargement: A Realist Proposal for a Stable Division of Europe," *National Security Studies Quarterly,* vol. 3 (summer 1997): 59-72; Ivo Samson, *Integrácia Slovenska do Bezbečnostiného Systemu Západu* (Bratislava: Výskumné Centrum Slovenskej Spoločnosti Pre Zyhraničnú Politiku, 1997); Jeffrey Simon, *NATO Enlargement & Central Europe: A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996); Richard Smoke, ed., *Perceptions of Security: Public Opinion and Expert Assessment in Europe's New Democracies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996); Eric Stein, *Czecho/Slovakia: Ethnic Conflict, Constitutional Fissure, Negotiated Breakup* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997); Sona Szomolanya and John A. Gould, *Slovakia: Problems of Democratic Consolidation* (Bratislava, Slovak Political Science Association, 1997); Minton F. Goldman, *Slovakia Since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy* (Westport: Prager Publishers, 1999); Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998) and others.

[13] Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2002).

political democratization, institutional integration, and globalization have had an impact on international politics in contemporary Central Europe.[15] Minton Goldman's book is on Slovakia's struggle for democracy since 1993. He stresses the theme of nationalism throughout his book and contends that Slovakia's political conservatism, economic poverty, multinational society, and desire for international recognition have shaped its development since independence. Goldman examines Slovakia's post-independence foreign policy from a domestic context in two of his chapters and discusses Slovakia's quest for NATO membership. While he describes the historical events leading up Slovakia's exclusion and the discourse that occurred between Slovakia and the West, he does not analyze what domestic factors led to Slovakia's exclusion from NATO.[16] Martin Bútora and František Šebej edited a book published in Bratislava entitled *Slovakia in the Gray Zone? NATO Enlargement, Slovakia's Failures and Perspectives*. Their book covers the events between 1993 and 1997 related to Slovakia's application to and exclusion from NATO and the European Union (EU). Thirteen contributing authors provide a chronology of the domestic and international events, summarize the public discourse, examine public opinion polls, view American and Russia perspectives, and summarize the views of foreign and domestic actors of Slovakia's future security.[17] They conclude that Slovakia disqualified itself from NATO (and the EU) and that domestic political actions were the reason Slovakia was not invited into NATO. Their

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[14] Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[15]Adrian Hyde-Price, *The International Politics of East Central Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).
[16] Minton F. Goldman, *Slovakia Since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy* (Westport: Prager Publishers, 1999).
[17] Martin Bútora and František Šebej, ed., *Slovensko v Šedej Zóne? Rozširovanie NATO, Zlyhania a Perspecktívy Slovenska* (Bratislava: Inštitute Pre Verejné Otázky, 1998).

work, however, does not address or analyze historical factors that influenced domestic behavior nor does it address why Slovakia was excluded. And finally, the most recent look at the security of Slovakia can be found in Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson's chapter on "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe" in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security.* Their work examines the "legacies of the Slovak state, the Mečiar era, the country's shift to the West, its contemporary economic and political circumstances, and the prospects for successful integration into Western institutions." The authors conclude that "Mečiar's domestic and foreign policies and wavering attitude toward the Alliance precluded consideration" from NATO membership and Slovakia was not welcomed into the first round of expansion.[18] However, their conclusion does not address the underlying causes for the exclusion.

My study is unique because these and other works do not focus on the historical factors that influenced domestic behavior to examine why Slovakia was excluded from NATO. United States Ambassador to Slovakia Ralph Johnson wrote in a 1998 letter to me, "In my view, the topics on which you are writing have not been well covered yet – there is an obvious need for more intellectual effort."[19] I approach this study from an international relations perspective that is rooted in the domestic security debate and further refined via concepts of norms, culture, identity, nationalism and democratization.

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[18] Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security*, ed Charles Krupnick (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2003): 47-82.

[19] Letter to the author dated 21 January 1998, from Ralph R. Johnson, United States Ambassador to Slovakia, in appendix I of this study.

## Literature Review

The debate about security can be traced back to the writings of Thucydides (471-400 B.C.), Hobbes, Kant, and De Grotius. However, the most salient contemporary debate has occurred between two major international relations paradigms—neorealism and neoliberalism. Both begin by specifying the relevant actors, the capabilities of those actors, and their preferences. Both then illustrate international interactions as the result of actors using capabilities to pursue preferences. According to Martha Finnemore, the discourse between these two schools is primarily over the content of assigned preferences such as the pursuit of economic versus military power or absolute versus relative gains, and the nature of the anarchy.[20]

Realism, which paints a fairly grim picture of world politics, is based on several key assumptions: states are sovereign; they are the principal or most important actors; they are unitary actors; they are instrumentally rational; and they place national security at the top of international issues with power (military or strategic) serving as the overriding principle. Power, therefore, is a key concept and international relations is a process of relentless security competition with the possibility of war. Cooperation among states is limited, and genuine peace is not likely.[21] The more recent paradigm – structural realism or neorealism creates incentives for states to behave aggressively. Neorealism's five assumptions about the international system are as follows: the international system is anarchic; states inherently possess some offensive military capability; states can never be

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[20] Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, "Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies: Politics and Methods," *International Security,* vol. 40 (1996); and Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996): 9.

certain about the intentions of other states; the most basic motive driving states is survival and retention of sovereignty; and states are instrumentally rational.[22] As a result, states fear each other, they aim to protect their own survival and they aim to maximize their relative power positions over other states. Relative gains, concerns and cheating inhibit cooperation among states. Because of structural constraints that dictate states' interests, international organizations cannot get states to stop behaving as short-term power maximizers and states will not risk cooperation because they fear that other states will cheat. Neorealists see international organizations as playing a minimal if not inconsequential role in world politics.[23]

When the assumptions of neorealism are applied to the case of Slovakia one would expect NATO to invite Slovakia (and other geopolitically significant aspirants) into the Alliance to increase its military power. In addition, one would expect Slovakia to do everything in its power to join NATO, in order to increase its own security. Following this assumption, Slovakia should have launched a national effort and expended the required resources to meet NATO's membership criteria. Leaders should have placed a robust economy, the rule of law, human rights, a stable democracy, and the resolution of

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[21] Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace,* 3rd ed. (New York: Albert A. Knopf, 1960); and Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi, *International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism and Globalism,* 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993).

[22] Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security,* vol. 19, no. 3 (winter 1994/1995): 5-49; and Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979).

[23] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979); Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986); Stephen M. Walt, *The Origin of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival,* vol. 35 (1993); Richard Schultz, Roy Godson, and Ted Greenwood, ed., *Security Studies for the 1990s* (New York: Brassey's, 1993); John Mearsheimer, "A Realist Reply," *International Security,* vol. 20 (1995); John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security,* vol. 19, no. 3 (winter 1994/1995): 5-49; Joseph Grieco, *Cooperation Among*

neighborly disputes above all else. These actions could have ensured that Slovakia would be competitive for NATO membership. While neorealists see international organizations as playing a limited role, one could argue that NATO would be inclined to expand to continue its mission of power balancing. By gaining new member states and territory close to the former Soviet Union NATO would increase its size and, eventually, its military might. NATO would be in a better position to influence and promote cooperation among the new member states and thereby decrease the probability of conflict among its members. According to this neorealistic perspective, NATO's primary purposes are to increase the Alliance's sphere of influence in order to a balance against an outside threat and promote cooperation among its members. After World War II the Soviet Union posed an ever-emerging threat and was the principal peril to the United States, Western Europe, and NATO from the late 1940s to the late 1980s. By increasing its military might, the Soviet Union consolidated its gains through the forced establishment of puppet regimes throughout Central Europe. Western Europeans began to fear that a Soviet backed communist influence could further destabilize their own tenuous economies and militarily weak states.[24] While many factors contributed to NATO's formation, the increasing power of the Soviet Union and its subsequent expansion into Central Europe was the primary threat facing NATO throughout the Cold War.

Central European states escaped from the grips of Soviet domination in the late 1980s and early 1990s and the Soviet Union collapsed under its own weight in 1991. As a result, some security experts have argued that the former Soviet Union, now Russia, lost

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*Nations: Europe and America, and Non-tariff Barrier to Trade* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990); and Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

its superpower status and is no longer a threat. Many contend that the Russian military is weak, the state has a declining birth rate, its economy is still very dependent on the state, and it faces an ever-expanding threat of organized crime. Some experts even claim that it is improbable that Russia might be a serious direct threat over the next 10 to 15 years to any state or organization.[25] However, if this were the case, NATO would be no longer required. NATO would have no need to expand and would not need to promote cooperation among member and non-member states. But the expansion effort has continued and cooperation among member and non-member states has increased dramatically since the early 1990s. NATO's primary function transitioned from collective defense for its members to collective defense for its members and the regions immediately surrounding it.[26] According to Gülnar Aybet by the end of 1995 "the European security architecture had come to evolve around NATO and its military structures" and NATO enlargement "contributed to the enhancement of [this] central role."[27]

European security experts and most members of the Euro-Atlantic organization vividly recall the devastating events that had occurred in the 20th century. They believe that Russia has the potential to again become a serious menace precisely because Russia's superpower status has been diminished so dramatically. A lesson in history shows that Russia is able to return back to superpower status even after it has suffered serious

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[24] Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998): 13.
[25] Anatol Lieven, "The Future of Russia: Will It Be Freedom or Anarchy?" *Current,* vol. 391 (March/April 1996).
[26] Gülnar Aybet, "NATO's New Missions," *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs,* vol. 4, no. 1 (March-May 1999); and Gülnar Aybet, *A European Security Architecture after the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

setbacks. Russia's internal weaknesses already present a major threat to the world and could lead to its resurgence to its former superpower status. Russia may consider itself excluded from Europe and feel bound to "make [its] own way." Furthermore, a backlash may promote "autocracy, anarchy, and closer relations with China." Richard Pipes, a professor of Russian history at Harvard University, believes that Russia's weakness is in itself a major threat to the world and NATO enlargement may only antagonize Russia further. [28] Others contend that the consequence of the Soviet Union's collapse may be the emergence of a new, revolutionary ideology in Russia.[29] While this is certainly a possible outcome, issues of Russian military power compound the threat. The Russian military has weakened but Russia, nonetheless, still possesses very powerful nuclear weapons, which could cause catastrophic devastation to the European continent and abroad. Furthermore, Russia's political leadership must deal with internal structural and systemic problems as well as retain political and military power over the state. The resignation of President Boris Yeltsin and popularity of President Vladimír Putin, a former KGB chief who some believe has the ambition to return Russia to a superpower status, indicate that all is not serene in Moscow. Russia's potential resurgence as a world military power could quickly become a threat once again to NATO, Europe, and the United States. Therefore, one could conclude that a neorealist would expect NATO to expand and incorporate many new states—to include Slovakia—into its security organization and Slovakia would place the goal of NATO membership above all else and would take all

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[27] Gülnar Aybet, *A European Security Architecture after the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).
[28] Comment by Richard Pipes, Professor of Russian history at Harvard University in a policy paper, IREX, *New NATO, New Challenges (*Washington: IREX, 1998): 6.
[29] Ibid.

necessary actions to receive an invitation.[30]

But how does neoliberalism address this issue? Neoliberalism or neoliberal institutionalism accepts neorealism's five main assumptions but differs in some ways. While neorealists assert that international organizations play a limited role in world politics, neoliberals believe that international organizations provide a mechanism for cooperation. Neoliberals assert that international organizations reduce transaction costs, increase transparency among states (by reducing the opportunity to cheat), and institutionalize reciprocity. In effect these three functions change states utility calculations so that they value long-term gains through cooperation over short-term gains through cheating. Neoliberals see cooperation as more likely than neorealists do with international organizations playing a central role in facilitating this cooperation. This is the basis of their power and influence.[31]

When the assumptions of neoliberal institutionalism are applied to the case of Slovakia the outcome is not so clear. Neoliberals have a great deal to say about why states value institutions and about how international organizations help promote cooperation. However, they do not address the reasons for the expansion of international organizations. Neoliberals could predict that NATO would expand so that member states could share the cost of maintaining the security burden over the long term and that aspirants, such as Slovakia, would do everything in their power to join this cooperative

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[30] In either case, realism or neorealism does not adequate explain why NATO expanded following the collapse of the Soviet Union and permitted three new states to join while not including Slovakia.

[31] David Baldwin, *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993); Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory," *International Security,* vol. *20 (1995);* and Paul R. Viotti and Mark V. Kauppi, *International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism and Globalism,* 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993).

security organization. Or, conversely, they could argue that NATO would not allow new states to join because it would be far too costly for member states in the short term, i.e., increased cost of language training, equipment interoperability and compatibility, standardized operating procedures, etceteras despite the desires or preferences of aspirant states. However, it is more likely that neoliberals would predict that NATO would expand to include all new aspirant states and that those states would do everything possible to become collective members.

Ultimately, neorealism and neoliberalism fail to answer adequately the question of Slovakia's exclusion in 1997.[32] Neorealism and neoliberalism expect NATO expansion, if there is a threat, and expect states to know what they want and to do everything in their power to join. Much of international relations theory rests on the assumption that states know what they want. Preferences are treated as inherent in states; they come from within the state as a result of material conditions and functional needs. During the Cold War neorealists could argue that basic security interests were obvious and avoiding nuclear war was the primary concern. However, the end of the Cold War brought about international changes that made defining security interests much more difficult.[33]

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[32] For an extensive theoretical debate on NATO expansion see Robert B. McCalla, "NATO's Persistence after the Cold War," *International Organization,* vol. 50, no. 3 (summer 1996): 445-75. McCalla contends that to understand NATO's persistence after the Cold War, a nonrealist argument must be used. He concludes that neorealistic theories are weak, but if supplemented by organizational theory and bounded by the institutional theories, a fuller understanding of NATO after the Cold War can be developed. He also finds that international institutionalist approaches to security are worthwhile. See also Gulnur Aybet, *A European Security Architecture After the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); and Gülnar Aybet, "NATO's New Missions," *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs,* vol. 4, no. 1 (March-May 1999).

[33] According to Martha Finnemore preferences may not be inherent in states and may not be wedded to material conditions. Instead states preferences may be malleable. States may not always know what they want and are receptive to teaching about what are appropriate and useful actions to take. Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996): 11.

The international stage has changed, and the United States and Russia have entered a new phase in their relationship through their increasing cooperation efforts such as the NATO-Russia Charter. Nonetheless, Russia continues to exhibit signs of severe economic weakness, political instability, and military uncertainty, which may potentially lead to its resurgence as a threat to Europe and the United States. In response to this changing environment, NATO has been forced to transform. NATO's new charter is to build a broader, undivided, democratic and peaceful Europe. NATO leaders maintain that the enlargement process will help deter potential threats to Europe, deepen the continent's stability, bolster its democratic advances, erase its artificial divisions, and strengthen an Alliance that has proven its effectiveness both during and since the Cold War.[34] In light of these changes, a new way of thinking about issues of international relations and security studies is needed. Instead of applying neorealism or neoliberalism to explore my question concerning the reasons that Slovakia was excluded from NATO, I took a closer look at Slovakia's history and its national identity and culture, its domestic political and national security environments, and its transition to democracy in the post-communist period. Although historical experiences serve as a basis of my study I also focus on the Slovak national identity and Slovakia's democratization process. There is a plethora of works on precisely these two topics.[35] I address some of the pertinent literature on

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[34] Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (Landham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998); NATO, *NATO at a Glance: A Factual Survey of Issues and Challenges Facing the Alliance at the End of the 1990s* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 1996); NATO, *NATO Handbook* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 1995); Congress, *Report to the Congress on the Military Requirements and Costs of NATO Enlargement*, February 1998; and David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998)

[35] Brian Jenkins and Spyros A. Sofos, *Nation and Identity in Contemporary Europe* (London: Rutledge, 1996); Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), Charles A. Kupchan, ed., *Nationalism and*

nationalism and national identity as well democratization in the following pages.

While some might contend that the age of nationalism is a bygone, leading experts disagree. Rogers Brubacker contends that modern nationalism and the concept of the nation-state is far from over. He points out that "Europe has been moving *back* to the nation-state, most spectacularly with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia into a score of nationally defined successor states."[36] Along those same lines Brian Jenkins and Spyros Sofos believe that the end of the Cold War and collapse of the Soviet bloc has produced the most dramatic resurgence of the nationalist phenomenon.[37]

Ernest Gellner agrees that nationalism has become pervasive. He believes that nationalism is primarily a "political principle" or a theory of "political legitimacy" that can be a sentiment or a movement. He writes

> nationalism is a very distinctive species of patriotism, and one which becomes pervasive and dominant only under certain social conditions, which in fact prevail in the modern world, and nowhere else.

He contends that the key traits of nationalism are cultural homogeneity, literacy, and

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*the New Nationalities in the New Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), George W. White, *Nationalism and Territory* (Lanham, NC: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc, 2000), John Morrison, "Nationalism in Czechoslovakia," in *Contemporary Nationalism in East Central Europe*, Paul Latawski, ed., (New York: St. Martin Press, 1995); Graham Smith, et al., *Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983); Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999 (*New York: Cornell University Press, 2002); Rodney Bruce Hall, *National Collective Identity: Social Constructs and the International System* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Sharon J. Cohen, *Politics without a Past: The Absence of History in Postcommunist Nationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); among others.

[36] Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[37] Brian Jenkins and Spyros A. Sofos, *Nation and Identity in Contemporary Europe* (London: Rutledge, 1996).

anonymity (no nested sub-groups).[38] One can argue that these traits also can be found in the Slovak nation. Benedict Anderson agrees that nationalism is not dead. He accurately assesses that "...the 'end of the era of nationalism,' so long prophesized, is not remotely in sight. Indeed nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time."[39] But do nationalism or national identity just appear or are they a product of historical experiences?

Ilya Prizel writes that "a polity's national identity is very much a result of how it interprets its history."[40] This concept forms a basis of this dissertation and it is a point that I hope this study makes. In his typology of nationalism Prizel categorizes Central and Eastern European states among those that are emerging from imperial or colonial domination. He believes that

> such nations express a strong sense of cultural and political resentment directed at the intruding entity" which "produces an intense feeling of political and social injustice inflicted on the indigenous peoples, profound cultural defensiveness, and a fascination with the past.[41]

While I believe that the Slovak people, in general, do not harbor this strong a resentment against intruding entities such as the Hungarians, Nazis, Soviets, or the Czechs, I do believe that the identity of the Slovaks is influenced of their historical experiences and the struggles they had to endure while under the domination of others. The Slovaks do possess a strong sense of "nation-ness,"[42] which arose from their history and this nation-ness is an integral part of their identity.

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[38] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 1, 138-139.
[39] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), 3.
[40] Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); 14.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983).

Nationalism cannot be understood without discussing identity and vice versa. Charles Kupchan defines nationalism as "an ideology that calls for the merging of the sentimental nation with the functional state" with the state functioning as the administrative entity and the nation functioning purely as the emotive entity. He says that nationalism engenders a common political identity that is usually territorial and often rooted in "a shared ethnicity, lineage, language, culture, religion or citizenship." Partially based on shared historical experiences nationalism elevates the nation-state to a place of primacy. And ultimately "nationalism is about identity."[43] George White contends that "identity is intimately bound up in 'place' and 'territory.'"[44] This is true in the case of the Slovaks as their identity is closely linked to their historical experiences and the challenges they experienced in the center of Europe in their quest to maintain their language, their identity, and ultimately an independent statehood.

There has been a tendency to avoid the issues of nationalism, national identity, and the power of ethnicity in shaping politics according to Prizel. In his book *National Identity and Foreign Policy* Prizel insists that "the interaction between national identity and foreign policy...is particularly important in newly emerging or re-emerging states since nationalism and national identity are often the main, if not the sole force binding these societies together."[45] To that end I believe that the interaction between national identity and domestic politics (which in-turn influences and impacts foreign policies) is also and important factor in newly created states as is the case in Slovakia.

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[43] Charles A. Kupchan, ed., *Nationalism and the New Nationalities in the New Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 1-14.
[44] George W. White, *Nationalism and Territory* (Lanham, NC: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc, 2000), 249.
[45] Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.

Along similar lines Hopf's book on *Social Construction of International Politics* shows "how a state's collection of identities, how it understands itself, can affect how that state, or more precisely its decision makers, understands other states in world affairs."[46] His empirical focus is on Soviet foreign policy in 1955 and Russian foreign policy in 1999; however, his basic premise—that a state's identity can affect its decision makers—can be applied to the case of Slovakia. Specifically, Slovakia's identity, constructed by the Slovaks' historical experiences, shaped the behavior of Slovakia's political actors and ultimately led to Slovakia's exclusion from NATO during the Alliance's first round of post-Cold War enlargement. I focus on Slovakia's post-communist period primarily after achieving independence in 1993 through 1998—a critical period of its transition to democracy.

The literature on democratic transition was originally developed to understand transitions from authoritarian rule in Southern Europe and Latin America.[47] The extensive literature on democratization has been used to analyze recent events such as the consolidation of new democracies in the post-communist period and has been expanded and refined to focus on Central Europe and the Soviet Union.[48]

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[46] Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999 (*New York: Cornell University Press, 2002).

[47] Guellermo O'Donnell and Phillipe Schnitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Guellermo O'Donnell, Phillipe Schnitter, and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Adam Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy," in Guellermo O'Donnell, Phillipe Schnitter, and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandoruros, and Hans-Kurgen Puhle, ed., *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press: 1995); among others.

[48] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1991); Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America (*Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Adam Przeworski, "Democracy as a Contingent Outcome of Conflicts," *Constitutionalism and*

Samuel Huntington surveyed democratic change from 1974 through 1990 in his book *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* and classifies the post-Cold War events of the late 1980s as being part of a third wave of democratization, which was precipitated by a military coup in Portugal. This third wave was preceded by two waves of democratization and two reverse waves.[49] Klaus von Beyme offers a different typology and classifies democratization after 1989 as the fourth wave, which was preceded by three waves. He contends that this fourth wave was initiated by a secular event—the decline of a world power, the Soviet Union, in his book *Transition to Democracy in Eastern Europe.*

In a recent article, "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience," Valerie Bunce employs twenty-seven post-communist cases from Central Europe and the former Soviet Union to rethink the concept of democratization.[50] She contends that research on democratization, particularly the

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*Democracy,* ed. Jon Elster and Rune Slagstad (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 59-80; Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience," *World Politics,* vol 55, no 2 (January 2003) ;167-192; Steven Saxonberg, "Regime Behavior in 1989: A Comparison of Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland," *Problems of Post-Communism,* vol. 47, no. 4 (July – August 2000): 45-58; Fritz Plasser and Andreas Pribersky, ed., *Political Culture in East Central Europe,* (England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1996); B Crawford and Andrew Lipjhart, "Explaining Political and Economic Change in Post-Communist Europe," *Comparative Political Studies,* no. 2 (1995); David Olson and Philip Norton, ed., *The New Parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe,* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited: 1996); Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters and Kris Deschouwer, ed., *Social Democracy in a Post-Communist Europe* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited: 1994); Klaus von Beyme, *Transition to Democracy in Eastern Europe* (London: MacMillan Press Limited: 1996); Sona Szomolanya and John A. Gould, *Slovakia: Problems of Democratic Consolidation* (Bratislava, Slovak Political Science Association, 1997); Sabrina P. Ramet, *Whose Democracy? Nationalism, Religion, and the Doctrine of Collective Rights in Post-1989 Eastern Europe* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997); David Stark and Laszlo Bruszt, *Postsocialist Pathways: Transforming Politics and Property in East Central Europe,* (England: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Jon Elster, Claus Offe, and Ulrich K. Preuss, *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); among others.

[49] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1991).

[50] Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience," *World Politics,* vol 55, no 2 (January 2003), 170.

founding and performance of new democracies, is largely about the choices political leaders make, their preferences, their power, their actions and the consequences.[51] She adds that different countries had difference experiences, exist in different environments and their leaders have different menus from which to make choices; therefore, the states' transitions to democratization will not all be the same. Slovakia is a classic example—Mečiar and his allies had certain preferences (maintain authoritative control) and made clear choices (deficient in democratic principles) that led to specific regional and international consequences (such as exclusion from Višegrád, NATO and the EU).

In his analysis of the Czechoslovak, East German, Hungarian, and Polish transitions to democracy in 1989, Steve Saxonberg believes that "a nuanced consideration of conditions in specific countries and their proclivities of their leaders help fine-tune the script for democratic transition."[52] I translate this to mean that while the process of democratization may be similar among states in transition from authoritarian rule the unique experiences and situations of each state, to include its leaders, must be taken into consideration.

Jan Vermeersch contends in a 1994 study of social democracy in the Czech Republic and Slovakia that "the prospects for social democracy are bleak everywhere in Eastern Europe except for the Czech Republic." In his analysis of Slovakia he maintains "the social-democratic potential had still not found its institutional form."[53] But this analysis is dated. Since 1994 Slovakia has experienced three free democratic elections

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[51] Ibid.
[52] Steven Saxonberg, "Regime Behavior in 1989: A Comparison of Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland," *Problems of Post-Communism,* vol. 47, no. 4 (July – August 2000): 45-58.

(1994, 1998 and 2002) to include two regime changes (1994 and 1998) and is now well on its way toward completing its democratization process.

In a 1998 work, *Institutional Design in Post-communist Societies: Rebuilding the Ship at Sea,* Elster, Offe and Preuss study the interrelations of national identities, economic interests, and political institutions with the democratic transformation process in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia. The book contends that these transitioning states encountered three phenomena: a breakdown of a past regime, a turbulent configuration of political actors and opportunities, and a new consolidated institutional order at some point in time.[54] This premise is still applicable to Slovakia today. Slovakia did break free from a communist regime in 1989, experienced a tumultuous period in its domestic political development from 1993 to 1998, and is working toward a consolidated and institutionalized order (1998 to present). My study focuses on this chaotic domestic environment from 1993 to 1998.

One can take a structure to agent (top-down) or agent to structure (bottom-up) approach to study this six-year period. A top-down approach would examine how NATO influenced Slovakia during the expansion and invitation process. While the top-down approach is valid, I believe this played a lesser role in Slovakia's exclusion. My study takes a bottom-up approach and examines how Slovakia's domestic environment led to its exclusion from NATO. Specifically, I examine Slovakia's domestic institutional context and how the constructed, collective identities of the Slovak people and the

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[53] Jan Vermeersch, "Social Democracy in the Czech Republic and Slovakia," in *Social Democracy in a Post-Communist Europe,* Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters and Kris Deschouwer, ed. (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited: 1994): 119-135.
[54] Jon Elster, Claus Offe, and Ulrich K. Preuss, *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

political leaders affected the state's interests and policies. I do not differentiate between the state of Slovakia and Slovak interests from political actions because the actions of the politicians are what the international community sees as the actions and behavior of the state. Thus, the politicians in power and their actions represent Slovakia and its interests. Through this approach I have gained a better understanding of why Slovakia was excluded from NATO.

My research shows that Slovakia's historical experiences shaped the behavior of the voters, state actors, the state's identity, and its national security policies. The historical experiences are the critical aspects of this analysis. Theo Farrell notes that "...approaches to security studies require considerable sensitivity in historical analysis to deconstruct the processes whereby actors, agency, and structures are constituted."[55] Thus, analyzing historical experiences helps us understand how those events shaped the behavior of state actors. The purpose of my study is not to disprove the structural approaches of the main theoretical perspectives on international relations, namely neorealism and neoliberalism, but rather to determine why Slovakia was excluded by analyzing state behavior and the domestic environment through an understandable bottom-up approach.[56]

In this study I concentrate on the events and issues of the culture of national security in Slovakia from January 1993 to September 1998. However, in order to examine how past events affect the collective identities of political actors, I take a step back and review historical events that led up to the independence of Slovakia, to include

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[55] Ibid.

[56] Berger's also contends that his article does not attempt to disprove structural approaches to analyzing state behavior.

the origins of the Slovak people and their challenges throughout history. By analyzing Slovakia's history I found that, as a result of its historical experiences and the domestic interpretation of those experiences by the leading political actors, Slovakia displayed state behavior that disqualified it from NATO membership and impacted the state's national security situation.

## Description of Study

Slovakia's identity was formed, in part, by its past experiences. The history of the Slovak people dates as far back as the 5th and 6th century AD.[57] But most historical references begin their accounts of Slovak history early in the 9th century when the Slovaks were conquered by the Magyars of Hungary and lived under Hungarian rule for nearly a millennium. Despite repeated invasions, territorial disputes and Magyarization that occurred during this period, the first significant Slovak national movement emerged in the 18th century and began to promote a more formal sense of Slovak identity among the people. Key factors were the emergence of a Slovak literary language and the establishment of a national cultural society called the Slovak Learned Guild.

The foundation for a Slovak or Czechoslovak state was not conceived until the end of the World War I. The collapse of the Habsburg empire and the spread of Western influence in Central Europe ultimately led to the creation of Czechoslovakia. The new democratic republic of Czechoslovakia, with its capital situated in Prague, was established as a result of agreements made at the Paris Peace Conference on 28 October 1918.

Democracy flourished in Czechoslovakia during the inter-war period and the state prospered economically and politically. Despite its successes, one of Czechoslovakia's central problems was its ethnic heterogeneity: Czechs constituted approximately half the population, Slovaks 35 percent, Germans 10 percent, and Hungarians and Romany comprised the remainder. Another problem was the Slovak desire for autonomy from the Czechs, particularly during the 1930s. Different religious convictions,[58] in addition to uneven economic development and disparate educational opportunities – both of which favored the Czech Republic – coupled with failed promises of autonomy and economic and political independence from Prague, produced displeasure among Slovaks and fostered feelings for greater autonomy.

Slovakia did gain independence during a brief separation from the Czechs during World War II, albeit under the authoritarian rule of a Nazi puppet regime. The separate Czech and Slovak states incurred relatively little material damage during that war and, after a short time, were once again united as one state. However, significant ideological changes were about to occur. Following the war Moscow precipitated a "Prague Coup" in 1948 and communists seized all political power. Shortly thereafter Czechoslovakia was forced to adopt a Soviet-oriented foreign and domestic policy.

The late 1940s through the early 1960s were very difficult years for the Slovaks. Despite the fact that the communists remained in power, the early to mid 1960s brought about a gradual transformation in Czechoslovakia in the economic, political and social

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[57] Stanislav J. Kirshbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996).

[58] There are religious differences between the Czechs and the Slovaks. In a 1991 census the majority of Czechs, 56.1 percent, claimed to be atheist or unknown. During that same census, the majority of Slovaks, 60.4 percent, claimed to be Roman Catholic. Milan Kucera and Zdenek Pavlik, "Czech and Slovak

area. A significant downturn in the economic situation was the leading catalyst for change.

It was not until the 1968 "Prague Spring" that the hard-line Soviet domination began to loosen. It was Czechoslovak leader Alexander Dubček, a Slovak reform-minded communist, who encouraged political pluralism and greater individual freedom in what was referred as "socialism with a human face"—a movement that concerned the Soviets. But Czechoslovakia was not the only state that troubled Moscow. Fearing that these and other Warsaw Pact states might concede to reforms similar to those implemented in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet regime forced the Warsaw Pact allies to "invade" Czechoslovakia in August 1968.[59] Moscow thus halted the potentially destabilizing experiment in order to "save socialism" within its borders and, just as importantly, in its tightly controlled satellite states.

It was not until the late 1980s that the economic situation in the Soviet Union started to deteriorate and Soviet-style socialism began to collapse under its own weight. Indicators of deterioration in Central Europe such as economic problems led to frustration, dissatisfaction, and dissent. When Gorbachev implemented glasnost and perestroika, changes began to happen in Poland, then Hungary then East Germany. Czechoslovakia followed suit. The Warsaw Pact dissolved and the Soviet Union imploded in 1991.

Led by the original signatories to Charter 77—a document that attracted international attention to the civil rights abuses in Czechoslovakia—popular protest

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Demography," in *The End of Czechoslovakia,* ed. Jiri Musil, (Budapest: Central University Press, 1995), 33.

[59] Some leaders in the German Democratic Republic and Poland strong supported the invasion.

unseated the communists from power in Czechoslovakia during the "Velvet Revolution" in 1989 with Moscow discretely signaling it would not intervene. Václáv Havel became the first non-communist president of Czechoslovakia in over four decades. But relations between Czech and Slovak political leaders were strained. Despite seven decades of unity and popular opposition by a majority of both Czechs and Slovaks, different historical backgrounds, economic policies, and political cultures—among other factors—Czechoslovakia dissolved on 31 December 1992 and two separate republics were created on 1 January 1993. Tumultuous changes in a post-communist world, a continued desire for autonomy and independence, and a ripe political situation led to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and the creation of two separate states.

Since the fall of communism and the creation of an independent Slovakia, Bratislava's post-communist path and process of democratic transition had diverged somewhat from that of Prague, Budapest, and Warsaw. While leaders in these three capitals promoted their state's foreign policy of assimilation into the European mainstream and successfully oriented their security perspectives toward the West, leading politicians of the ruling coalition in Slovakia only expressed a desire between 1993 and 1998 to assimilate Slovakia into the European mainstream and join Western security institutions. As a result of the actions of Slovak political leaders in power, internal political instability, controversial domestic policies, and questionable market reforms, Slovakia projected a very negative image to the international community. Thus, Slovakia was excluded from NATO in 1997 (and the EU) and the national security of the state was impacted. This exclusion from both NATO and the EU has often been called Slovakia's "double failure."

My argument in this dissertation is structured in a threefold manner. First, I provide a historical survey of Slovakia and analyze how the historical experiences constructed the collective state identity and set the stage for future state behavior. Second, I examine Slovakia's democratization by looking at its domestic economic, societal, political, and defense posture during the first six years of independence, delve into the identity of Slovaks, explore Mečiar and Mečiarism, and recount the people's struggle for democracy in an effort to defeat Mečiarism. Third, I investigate the overall culture of national security in Slovakia. I review NATO and the Alliance's history through enlargement and delve into the national security of Slovakia, its defense establishment, civilian control of the military, the defense budget and contributions of the military. I evaluate Slovakia's post-communist path to determine whether it was leaning toward the East or the West, why it was excluded from NATO, and what impacts resulted from the exclusion. Before I conclude with a brief look at Slovakia's political, economic, societal and military issues beyond 1998, I provide a brief comparative analysis of similar post-communist states.

## Theoretical Framework

The goal of my study is to promote a better understanding of Slovakia's domestic environment during its first six years of independence as it relates to the culture of national security in Slovakia. To that end, my objectives are to determine whether Slovakia was leaning East or West, why NATO excluded Slovakia from membership in 1997, what caused Slovakia to behave in such a way that NATO dropped it from the list of candidates, what impact the exclusion had on Slovakia, and whether historical events

can explain the behavior of Slovakia during its first six years of independence. From the theoretical perspective, I initially employed an approach discussed in the orienting framework described in Katzenstein's book.

Katzenstein's book points to analytical gaps left by the predominant perspectives, neorealism and neoliberalism, and focuses on "the effects that culture and identity have on national security" and the fact that the predominant perspectives do not address these effects.[60] It does not ignore the predominant perspectives; rather it relaxes their core assumptions to help discern new aspects of national security. Ultimately, the book "seeks to redress the imbalance between structural and rationalist styles of analysis and sociological perspectives on the question of national security." Factors that result from social processes, political action, and differences in power. Katzenstein's book does not intend to offer a theory of national security rather it problematizes state interests that predominant explanations of national security, or more conventionally state security, often take for granted. [61]

Katzenstein contends that, after the Cold War, many factors affect national identity and national security and that this was a good time to rethink established approaches to national security. He argues that issues dealing with norms, identities, and culture have become more salient in the security debate. In his book authors of the various essays adhere to concepts such as norms, identity, and culture as summary labels to describe the social issues that they are examining. Hence, they offer a sociological

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[60] Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996): 17.
[61] Ibid., 5.

perspective on the politics of national security and maintain that actors who respond to cultural factors define security interests.[62]

Katzenstein focuses on the character of the state's environment and on the contested nature of political identities. The essays employ one of two main approaches. The first approach is from a cultural-institutional context of state action in which states and governments define their interests and act. Using this first approach, some of the essays pay close attention to the effects of the cultural-institutional context on national security policies. The second approach analyzes how constructed, collective identities of states, governments, and other political actors affect their interests and policies. Katzenstein contends that by focusing on political identity and the cultural-institutional context, one may find a "promising avenue" for examining the "changing contours of national security policy."[63]

From an analytic perspective security environments are important and the cultural environments affect the basic character of states – their identity. The essays "focus on the way in which norms, institutions, and other cultural features of domestic and international environments affect state security interests and policies."[64] Katzenstein positions the essays' viewpoints relative to those of realism and liberalism by using a map titled "Theoretical Imageries"[65] to categorize domestic and international theories of national security. The x-axis represents Unit and Environment Relations and the y-axis represents Cultural and Institutional Density of Environments.

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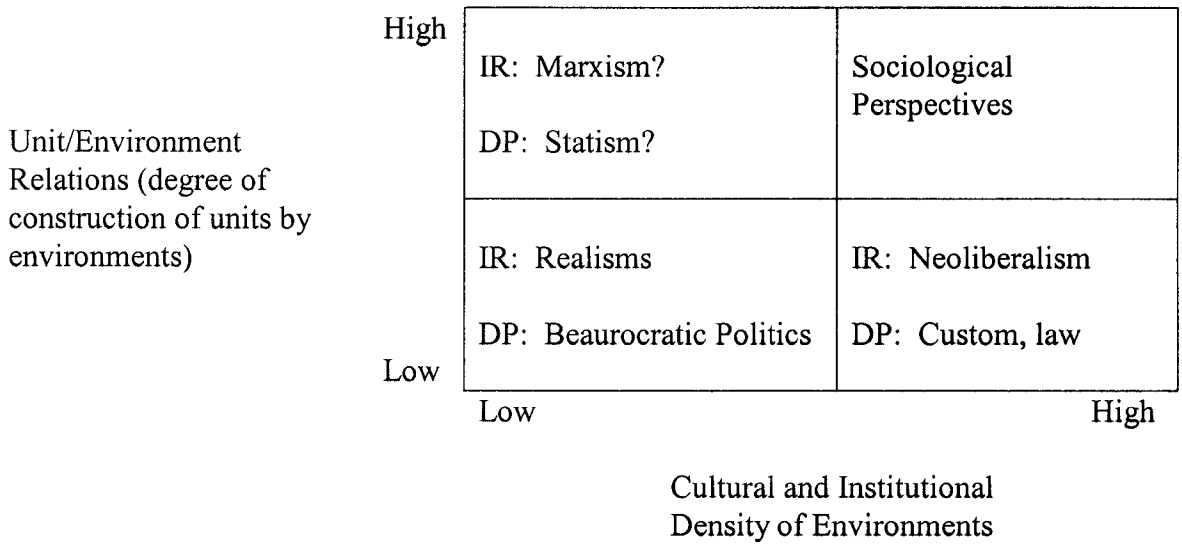
[62] Ibid., 1-3.
[63] Ibid., 32.
[64] Ibid., 37.
[65] Ibid., 38.




Realisms and Bureaucratic politics are in the bottom left quadrant. Neoliberalism and custom/law are in the bottom right quadrant. The top left quadrant depicts Marxism and Statism, albeit with question marks. It is the top right quadrant that includes sociological perspectives this book seeks to elucidate. The theories represented in this quadrant are precursors of current alternatives. They differ greatly and do not represent one intellectual position. However, they do provide a range of analytical perspectives that differ from the predominant theories.

Within this analytical context, the book presents five main arguments. They are as follows: "(1) *Effects of norms* (I) - Cultural or institutional elements of states' environments...(norms)...shape the national security interests or the security policies of states; (2) *Effects of norms* (II) - Cultural or institutional elements of states' global or domestic environments...(norms)... shape state identity; (3) *Effects of identity* (I) - Variation in state identity, or changes in state identity, affect the national security interests or policies of states; (4) *Effects of identity* (II) - Configurations of state identity affect

interstate normative structures, such as regimes or security communities; (5) *Recursivity* - State policies both reproduce and reconstruct cultural and institutional structure." Each of the essays present their own language and conceptualization but share a common expression. Together they "establish analytical perspectives" and "illuminate how empirical analysis of cultural content and constructed identities can contribute to the study of national security."[66]

As previously mentioned, Katzenstein's book focuses on two main approaches. The first is from a cultural-institutional context of state action. The second analyzes how constructed, collective identities of states, governments, and other political actors affect their interests and policies. I apply the latter. Specifically, I employ an approach similar to the one used by Thomas U. Berger in his chapter on "Norms, Identity, and National Security in Germany and Japan." Berger deals with Germany and Japan as two instances in which collective identities have been deeply transformed by the effects of World War II in a political process marked by political contestation and historical contingency. He claims that an adequate explanation of German and Japanese antimilitarism requires scholars to look beyond international material structures and examine the domestic cultural-institutional context in which defense policy is made. Berger's central thesis is that Germany and Japan, as a result of their historical experiences and the way in which those experiences were interpreted by domestic political actors, have developed beliefs and values that make them peculiarly reluctant to resort to the use of military force. After examining the shortcomings of structural approaches, Berger uses the concept of political-military culture to examine German and Japanese anti-militarism during the

[66] Ibid., 53-54.

immediate postwar period and subsequently during the Cold War. He concludes by examining the persistence of these two cultures of antimilitarism since 1989.

Berger employs the first, second, third and fifth argument in his essay. Using the first argument Berger demonstrates "how Germany's and Japan's anti-militaristic norms have made it very difficult for their governments to adopt more assertive national security policies since the end of the Cold War." Based on the second argument Berger describes how the post World War II era caused a period of "identity politics" in both countries "in which global models of legitimate states and national identities affected the domestic political process of reconstructing identity." With the third argument he shows how identity politics and change in collective identities can hasten change in state interest and policy. By using the fifth argument, Berger implies that the states enacting a particular identity have profound effects on the structure of the international system to which they belong.[67]

In Katzenstein's orienting framework, the concepts of norms, identity, and culture are used to examine national security. The concept of "norms" is used to describe collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity. For example, I maintain that Slovakia's behavior had an effect on NATO's expansion effort. NATO believed that Slovakia did not meet its expectation of the proper behavior necessary to become a member. These norms either define (or constitute) identities or prescribe (or regulate) behavior, or they do both. This process of construction typically is explicitly political and pits conflicting actors against each other. The concept of "identity" is used as a label for varying constructions of nation- and statehood. For

[67] Ibid., 54-65.

example, historical experiences constructed Slovakia's nation- and statehood. The dramatic political, economic, and ideological events that Slovakia experienced throughout its history had a profound affect on its identity. The concept of "culture" is used as a broad label that denotes collective models of nation-state authority or identity, carried by custom or law. Culture refers to both a set of evaluative standards (such as norms and values) and a set of cognitive standards (such as rules and model) that define what social actors exist in a system, how they operate, and how they relate to one another.[68] For example, Berger contends that noncultural factors can shape the evolution of culture. However, he also states that "cultural forces have a significant impact on how states respond to the structural conditions (the distribution of economic and military power, the density of international institutions) under which they operate."[69] Similarly I contend that cultural forces, such as historical experiences, had a significant impact on Slovakia's response to the structural conditions, specifically NATO. The central hypothesis of my study is similarly structured to that of Berger's.

Although historical experiences as a basis of my hypothesis my study further focuses further on the Slovak national identity and Slovakia's democratic transition. Nationalism is by no means passé. As laid out in the Literature Review section of this chapter "nationalism"—or the sense of nation-ness—is closely tied to history, territory, ethnicity, identity, language, culture, religion, and politics and is often a component of democratization. Democratization is also by no means passé whether we classify post-communist transition to democracy as part of the third or fourth wave. In this study "democratization" is the transition process from a system of authoritarian rule to a

[68] Ibid., 4-7.

democratic system. It is about the opportunities and choices that leaders make and the consequences of those choices. Slovakia's post-communist path is a perfect example of this. Slovakia experienced two breakdowns of regime—one from communism to democracy in 1989 and the other from a federal Czechoslovak state to an independent Slovakia in 1991. Slovakia encountered a turbulent domestic political environment from 1993 to 1998, which is the primary focus of this study. It is during this period that Slovakia displayed behavior that disqualified the state from the first round of post-Cold War NATO enlargement. And finally, Slovakia began to consolidate institutional order in 1998, which was later solidified by the elections of 2002 followed by an invitation from NATO to join its Alliance.

Conceptual Framework. My goal was to explore Slovakia's exclusion from NATO from a domestic cultural-institutional context using a bottom-up approach—agent to structure. To investigate my question why Slovakia was excluded from NATO in 1997, I reviewed the prevailing explanations for the exclusion and determined that Slovakia's domestic environment or its internal politics—the behavior of the ruling coalition government—was the likely cause. I selectively focused on Slovakia's political leaders and the domestic environment in which they led.

Next I reviewed Slovakia's history to analyze the events of the past. The historical events that transpired had a profound effect on the identity of the Slovak people and their political leaders. The historical events also predisposed the political leaders to press for Slovakia's increased autonomy from the Czech Republic and to preserve the state's independence. I then examined the behavior of those political leaders during the

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[69] Ibid., 319.

state's democratic transition period. Their behavior represented the government's behavior and ultimately represented the behavior of Slovakia.

I turned to the exploration of the identity of the Slovak people versus the identity of Slovakia's leading politician and overwhelmingly dominant leader during the six-year period following Slovakia's independence—Vladimír Mečiar. Mečiar was the key political figure who made the choices that characterized Slovakia's pattern of behavior (democratic deficiencies), shaped its identity during this period (as a state unwilling to fully transition to a democratic system), determined its goals (serve as a bridge between the East and the West), polarized the state (between those for and against Slovakia), and impelled NATO to disqualify Slovakia.

I surveyed the history of NATO and its evolution and its redefined purpose of existence following the end of the Cold War. Then I extended my conceptual framework to the culture (pattern of behavior and practices) of national security in Slovakia. I investigated Slovakia's patterns of behavior within the state's national security framework. I found that the government's institutionalized patterns of behavior and practices—specifically those of Mečiar—with respect to national security affairs were also inconsistent with the international norms of behavior thereby giving NATO ample reason to exclude Slovakia. And finally, I took a step back and reviewed Slovakia's post-communist path since gaining independence to find out whether Slovakia was really leaning East or West, what were the prevalent theories explaining Slovakia exclusion from NATO, and how did this exclusion impact Slovakia.

Slovakia's national security goal was to preserve its sovereignty and its official security orientation was to obtain membership in Euro-Atlantic structures—primarily the

NATO Alliance. Virtually all of the political leaders repeatedly reaffirmed this goal via their rhetoric; however, by way of their behavior and actions the political leaders of the ruling coalition made it clear to observers that Slovakia's NATO membership was not paramount because it did not serve in their political interest. Their interest was to maintain authoritative control over Slovakia and retain control over state.

Slovakia's institutionalized pattern of behavior in its first six years of existence is anomalous from the perspective of neorealism and neoliberalism, which see state behavior as being driven by the rational responses of state actors to pressures emanating from their international environments. While these schools of thought differ in the way they specify international structures, both perspectives would most likely predict that Slovakia would do everything in its power to increase its own safety by fulfilling NATO's membership criteria. Analysis of the state's identity and culture and process of democratization provides a way to examine how the constructed identities of actors shape and affect state interests and policies.

## Methodology and Limitations

I have employed a qualitative methodology in this study, which included research trips to Slovakia, extensive interviews with political actors and intellectuals, firsthand observations, historical analysis, content analysis of documents, opinion polls and inference. Using open and closed questions, I conducted interviews with key officials of the ruling elite, opposition parties and coalitions, military officials, intellectuals, the media, pressure groups and members of the public. My questions centered on the theme of national security and NATO membership but were tailored to the individual

interviewee's current and former positions, experience, and knowledge. Actual questions were based on the following themes: Why was Slovakia not invited into NATO? What is the impact on Slovakia? What is the impact on NATO and Europe? Are the citizens informed about NATO membership and national security issues? Is neutrality a potential solution? How are Slovakia's relations with neighboring states? How are relations with Russia? What is Slovak identity? What role did Mečiar have and what is "Mečiarism"? What is Slovakia's international image and how did the state acquire it? What role did internal domestic politics play? In addition to first-hand interviews, I conducted content analysis of newspaper articles, press reports, academic papers, military documents, and other various publications. I acquired secondary source information in articles, documents, publications, and books from Slovak and American academics, Slovak, American and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governmental institutions, defense establishments, and other private sources.

An initial six-week research trip to Slovakia and the Czech Republic in December 1997 and January 1998 led to 46 formal interviews and an equal number of informal discussions. I discussed various issues of Slovakia's national security with the previous and current president of Slovakia, former and current prime ministers, chairmen and deputy chairman of the major political parties, chiefs of the Army and Air Forces, former and current ambassadors and deputy chiefs of mission, defense attachés, leaders of nongovernmental institutions, academic and research institutes, academic faculty, representatives from the media, fellow doctoral candidates, as well as many others. In addition to these interviews, I gathered articles, books, military documents, research papers, and statistical data for analysis. My initial trip led to numerous additional

contacts in Slovakia, Europe and the United States—many of which have contributed to the development of this study. As a result of my research efforts, I was invited by the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attend a May 1998 conference titled, "Slovakia and Slovaks in the Third Millennium." During this conference, I was afforded access to fifteen additional elite interviews with then current and former ministers of foreign affairs, chairmen and deputy chairmen of the newest political parties and coalition groups, and several of the leading presidential candidates.

I realize that my study has numerous limitations. While the ultimate goal of any study is descriptive inference, the significance of my findings is limited and I am challenged with the fundamental problems of descriptive and causal inference because I evaluate only one case.[70] My qualitative data consist primarily of detailed descriptions of past events, situations, and behaviors and of citations from people about their experiences and beliefs. As a result, it is difficult to prove my data's overall reliability and internal and external validity.[71] I am also limited to inference and inductive reasoning to form my conclusions because it is difficult to show causal relationships in this type of study.[72] Although my access to elite interviews, expert opinions, pertinent documents and data in Slovakia was exceptional, I was only able to gather information that is representative of the data available and pertinent to my study. Finally, there is the challenge of overcoming the gap between theory and practice in foreign policy. In his

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[70] Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[71] Kenneth Hoover and Todd Donovan, *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking,* 6th ed. (New York: St. Martin Press, 1995).
[72] Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). No matter now perfect the study, we will never know causal inference for sure.
[74] Alexander George, *Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in Foreign Policy (*Washington D.C.:

book *Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in Foreign Policy* Alexander George attempts to "encourage better communication and closer collaboration between academic scholars who study foreign policy and practitioners who conduct it." He also contends that scholars need to "take a realistic view of the limited, indirect, and yet important impact that scholarly knowledge about foreign policy can have on policymaking."[74] I hope that I have written this study in a manner that will be useful to academic scholars and foreign policy practitioners alike.

Despite these limitations, I am confident that my findings are sound and that this project contributes to the study of international relations by providing a new way of examining Slovakia's exclusion from NATO and proposing this as a way to examine other states' exclusion from or inclusion in international organizations.

## Significance of Study

According to Ambassador Ralph Johnson my topic "is clearly of major importance to Slovakia, to Europe and the United States, and to the institutions that Slovakia aspires to join."[75] This study makes several contributions to the study of international relations and its approaches. First and foremost, it explains why Slovakia was excluded from NATO. It provides a review of Slovakia's historical experiences, the formation of Slovakia's national identity, and the influence of history and identity on the state's current security situation. It analyses Slovakia's post-communist development, transition to democracy, and recent progress on its return to Europe. It also provides a

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United States Institute of Peace, 1993).

[75] Letter to the author dated 21 January 1998 from Ralph R. Johnson, United States Ambassador to Slovakia, Appendix I.

case study evaluation of Katzenstein's and Berger's framework as it relates to the culture of national security in Slovakia by examining how the study of norms, culture and identity contribute to current national security theories. It shows how a bottom-up approach can be used to explore the behavior of states in order to examine why other states have been excluded from international organizations and to gain a better understanding of state national security issues. And finally, this study provides the basis to show how a similar top-down (vice bottom-up) approach could be used to investigate why certain states were included in international institutions.

I conclude that no other scholarly work explores these questions exactly as I do. Therefore, I am convinced that my project is original. This study makes a positive contribution to knowledge about the historical evolution of Slovak national security policy. Furthermore, it illustrates Slovakia's current national security dilemma in relation to its quest for Western integration and can contribute to the general discourse about national security and security studies in international relations. Finally, it deviates from the main theoretical perspectives of neorealism and neoliberalism and uses an approach rooted in the culture of national identity and process of democratic transition to shed some light on internal domestic factors such as norms, identity, and culture that have an impact on the national security of a state and on international organizations.

The next chapter analyzes how the history of the Slovak people has been marred by repeated invasions and periods of domination by other forces. Despite these lengthy and often difficult periods, the Slovaks maintained a strong desire to preserve their language and national identity, a hope for some type of autonomy, and later, a quest for independence. While internal political turmoil defined the newly independent state in the

early 1990s, Slovakia concurrently experienced an internal quest for freedom and democracy in a post-communist and post-Soviet European environment. Chapter two sets the historical stage, delineates those struggles, and provides a typology and basis for the rest of the study.

# II.
# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
# OF THE SLOVAK PEOPLE, NATION, AND STATE

Introduction. An independent Slovak nation or state did not appear on the European continent until 1993. But the Slovak people have always been involved in the European concept, its history and civilization.[76] The region that is now called Slovakia and inhabited by the Slovaks has a distinctive history. It is a history that has been marred by repeated invasions, domination, authoritarian rule, and the struggles of the people to retain their language and maintain a separate identity.[77]

Between the early 9th and 10th century the region was conquered and ruled by various leaders. After experiencing recurring attacks in the 10th century, the region was subsumed into the Kingdom of Hungary and ruled by the Magyars for over 1,000 years. Despite the repeated invasions, territorial disputes, and Magyarization that occurred during this period, the first significant Slovak national movement emerged in the 18th century and began to promote a more formal sense of Slovak identity among the people. After World War I the Slovaks were first afforded a state that reflected their identity, albeit under the leadership of the Czechs in the Republic of Czechoslovakia. But this state, comprised primarily of Czechs and Slovaks, lasted only two decades until Nazi Germany created what some call the first "Slovak" state under severe German influence. The state of Czechoslovakia was restored following the conclusion of World War II but

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[76] Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 9.

[77] Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, among others, have also experienced similar events in their histories. I provide a brief comparative analysis of these states in chapter four.

democracy did not return. Hard line communists seized power and ran a totalitarian state for the next 20 years. The early 1960s brought about positive change in Czechoslovakia and "Socialism with a Human Face." Fearing that this more open form of socialism would spread, the Soviet Union along with Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia crushing all aspects of reform. Following the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall in the late 1980s, Czechoslovakia became an independent, democratic state in 1989. Tumultuous changes in a post-communist world, a continued desire for autonomy and independence, and a tenuous political situation led to the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and the creation of two separate states.

Since 1993 the history of the independent Slovak state can be characterized not only by the ensuing internal political turmoil following independence, but also by an internal struggle to establish freedom and democracy in a turbulent post-communist Europe. Despite the continued regime changes the Slovak people were able to preserve their national identity, gain autonomy, and finally attain independence in 1993.

From independence in 1993 to 1998 Slovakia has had four different ruling governments—three of which were led by Vladimír Mečiar, an authoritarian leader whose nationalistic tendencies, democratic deficiencies, and questionable economic policies led to Slovakia's increasing international isolation. Despite Mečiar's continued popularity in the polls, democratic forces banded together and prevailed in the September 1998 national election. This was a critical turning point for Slovakia.

In this chapter I take a closer look at these events beginning with Slovakia's early history, including the predecessors of today's Slovaks, the creation of the first Czechoslovak Socialist Republic after World War I, and the 'so called' Slovak autonomy

under Germany control. The next section reviews events that occurred prior to and during the period of Soviet Domination throughout the Cold War. The third section looks at events leading up to and following the fall of communism such as the Velvet Revolution, Velvet Divorce and then Slovak independence. In the final concluding section I categorize these historical events into 12 separate periods or eras and identify some of the significant events that occurred in each. I use this typology as a basis for further historical analysis in the remaining chapters.

## Early History

Origins of the Slovak People. The territory now known as Slovakia was inhabited as early as 500 BC to 100 BC by Celtic tribes from Western Europe that settled in regions of Slovakia and Moravia. From 100 BC to 400 AD these tribes formed satellite states of the Roman Empire in a region north of the Limes Romanum, the Danube River.[78] The region, composed of many groups of peoples, was multi-ethnic. The term Slovakia—as a geographical and political concept—is relatively recent; it appeared for the first time in the 19th century, in a petition to the Habsburg emperor in 1849.[79]

The history of the Slovak people dates back to the 5th and 6th century AD with the migration of the first Slavic tribes into the area of present day Slovakia.[80] Early in the 9th

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[78] Jozef Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk. Professor RNDr. Komornik, DrSc. is a noted Slovak scholar in Applied Mathematics with profound interests in economy and history. He used this unpublished historical survey, which was based on results of Western historical research that are inaccessible in the East and often neglected in the West, to augment his lectures on Czechoslovak economy and its historical development.

[79] Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 9.

[80] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 8. This document was prepared for the Headquarters, United States Army, Europe and Seventh Army Regional Security Division by the Regional Security Division, National Security Studies and Strategies Group, Science Applications

century, Prince Pribina established the first church in Nitra. Pribina believed his people were cohesive and strong enough to engage in commerce and religious dialogue with the Franks. Some Slovak historians believe that these people "were conscious of their identity..." and are the true "ancestors of today's Slovaks."[81] Pribina was later driven out, and the region was ruled as a new state, the Empire of Great Moravia.[82]

In the middle of the 9th century, two missionaries from the Byzantine Empire, Cyril and Methodius, came to the area. Cyril and Methodius knew the language of the southern Slavs, invented a new alphabet for it, called glagolitic,[83] and translated important liturgical texts, thus bringing Christianity to the region.[84] An early form of the "cultural Slovak" language in various dialects began to emerge.[85]

The Empire of Great Moravia ceased to exist in the 10th century, when the kingdom was destroyed by a Magyar invasion after the Battle of Bratislava in 907. The tradition and spirit of Great Moravia survived and is now being revived again in the modern history of the Slovaks.[86] In the aftermath of the fall of the Great Moravia Empire, the region faced recurring attacks from the Magyars and Poles. The Magyars finally conquered the multi-ethnic territory, which included proto-Slovaks, early in the

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International Corporation; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

[81] Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 25.

[82] Ibid.

[83] The new alphabet was called glagolitic. In the 10th century a second alphabet was created in Bulgaria, probably by St. Konstantin, a pupil of Cyril and Methodius. The new alphabet used Greek letters whenever possible and adapted the glagolitic symbols for Slavic sounds. Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 30.

[84] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk and Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 8.

[85] Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 85.

[86] Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt, and Wauconda IL:

11th century and incorporated the land into the Kingdom of Hungary. Despite numerous instances of rebellion against Magyar rule, the region remained under Hungarian control, in various forms, for nearly 1000 years.[87]

For two decades in the 14th century a Slav warlord from Trečin, Matuš Čak, ruled much of the region that is now Slovakia. He was also known as the Lord of the Vah and the Tatras. Although he came from the Slovak region he was often called a Magyar oligarch. Toward the end of the 14th century Slovak writers began to use some of the Czech language, modified to suit their needs, which resulted in hybrid language.

In the early 14th century a Czech reformer, Jan Hus, believed that the Catholic Church was not a priestly hierarchy and came into conflict with church leaders. He refused to denounce his beliefs, was burned at the stake and became a martyr. Early in the 15th century during the Hussite Insurrection, so named after Hus, the Czechs led a rebellion against the Catholic Church and German nobility in Bohemia. Many Czech nobles fled the fighting and settled in the territory of Slovakia. Between 1438 and 1453 a Czech nobleman, Jan Jiskra, controlled much of southern Slovakia. In 1526 the Ottomans defeated Hungary at the Battle of Mohacs. While much of Hungary fell under Ottoman domination, Slovakia and the remaining parts of Hungary came under the control of the Austrian Habsburg dynasty. Slovakia became a center of Hungarian culture and politics,[88] with Bratislava (then called Pressburg or Pozony) serving as the capital of the Hungarian Kingdom.[89] The coronation of several Hungarian kings and queens took

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Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc, 1996), 50.

[87] Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

[88] Translyvania was also a center of Hungarian culture during this period.

[89] Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival*, (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 45. Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store, (n.p., n.d.), Available

place in Slovakia including the coronation of Empress Maria Theresa in Saint Martin's Cathedral.

Under Hungarian rule Slovaks were pressured to give up their language and cultural identity and become Hungarian. While a small Slovak elite influenced by the Protestant Reformation emerged, the majority of the mainly rural, landless peasants had few educational opportunities, little economic status, and virtually no upward social mobility or role in the political life of Hungary. During the 17th century the Slovak territory faced devastating attacks waged by the Hungarian nobility from Transylvania against the Habsburgs. With the Habsburg defeat of the Turks in 1683, the Hungarian capital returned to Budapest and Slovakia once again became a minor province of Hungary.[90]

During the 18th century Anton Bernolák codified the Slovak literary language, and a national cultural society called the Slovak Learned Guild was established.[91] In the following century L'udovit Štúr reformed the Slovak language and contributed greatly to a revolutionary fever that swept much of Europe by developing a Slovak literary language to replace Czech and thus making the written and spoken word more accessible to the Slovak people.[92] As a result a Slovak national movement emerged with the aim of fostering a sense of national identity among the Slovak people. The Slovak language

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from http://slovakia.eunet.sk; Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 8; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

[90] Komornik "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk; Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 8; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

[91] Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt, and Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc, 1996), 50.

gained momentum and was used increasingly in official documents, schools, churches, at the University of Trnava, and in private correspondence. In 1843 the language spoken in central Slovakia was legally adopted as the literary language, and a year later the Tatrín Society was formed with the aim of achieving national unity of the Slovaks.[93] In 1845 Štúr began to publish the *Slovak National Newspaper* with its supplement, *The Tatran Eagle*, which had a great influence on forming the national consciousness of the Slovaks. Advanced mainly by educated Slovak religious leaders, the national movement grew and in 1850 Štúr declared: "The Czechs are of a different stock from ours. Their history has nothing to do with us as we have had no participation in it."[94]

The Slovaks were aware they were a part of the Hungarian state politically; however, they also knew they had their own cultural history and language and a separate national identity.[95] In May 1848 Štúr and other representatives of the Slovak national movement drafted the *Demands of the Slovak Nation*, which contained conditions similar to those of other non-Magyar people living in the Kingdom of Hungary.[96] In the Slovak uprising of 1848 leading nationalists established the Slovak National Council at Myjava,

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[92] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk; Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 8; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

[93] Koloman Ivanička, *Slovakia Genius loci*, trans. Emma Nežinská (Bratislava: Korene Press, 1996), 38; and Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt and Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc, 1996), 50.

[94] Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt and Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc, 1996), 50; and Milan Hodža, *Československýrozkol* (Turčanský Svätý Martin, 1920), 189, quoted in Edita Bosak, "Slovaks and Czechs," in *Czechoslovakia 1918-1988: Seventy Years of Independence* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1991), 66.

[95] Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 87.

[96] Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt and Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc, 1996), 50.

the first political representative entity, and formed volunteer units to fight against the Hungarian forces. The council declared Slovakia's separation from Hungary and called upon the nation to join. This Myjava declaration sparked several military battles between the Slovak and Hungarian forces. But the Hungarians defeated the ill-fated Slovak revolt and Magyar control remained strict.[97]

After Austria lost the war against Prussia in 1866 a realignment of political power in the Habsburg Empire occurred. In 1867 an agreement known as the Austro-Hungarian Compromise was reached in Vienna. The Austrians and Hungarians joined in the dual monarchy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire under which Hungary continued to suppress Slovak national identity, including the formation of Slovak cultural associations. Although the Magyars constituted less than half the population, the Hungarian government adopted a policy that sought to 'Magyarize' the non-Magyar minorities and transform Hungary into an ethnically homogeneous Magyar state.[98] Magyarization[99] demanded that the only official language be the Hungarian language, all non-Hungarian school be closed, laws be passed renaming towns and villages, surnames be Magyarized as a qualification for entering state administration, and programs reinterpreting history and culture be introduced.[100] As a result, between 400,000 – 600,000 Slovaks fled to

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[97] Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 119; Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk; Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 8; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.
[97] Koloman Ivanička, *Slovakia Genius loci*, trans. Emma Nežinská (Bratislava: Korene Press, 1996), 38.
[98] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store, (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk; Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 8; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.
[99] Magarization is also called "Hungarianization." This term can be found in Martin Bútora and Zora Bútorová, "Slovakia After the Split," *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 4, no.2 (1993): 76.
[100] Koloman Ivanička, *Slovakia Genius loci*, trans. Emma Nežinská (Bratislava: Korene Press, 1996), 38.

North America at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Slovakia, along with Ireland, possessed the highest emigration rate in Europe during that time.[101]

First Czechoslovak Republic 1918-1938. In the latter part of the 19th century Tomaš G. Masaryk began to argue that linguistic similarities between the Czechs and the Slovaks made them kindred people.[102] Masaryk, along with others, demanded that the establishment of an autonomous, Western-oriented union of Czechs and Slovaks within the Habsburg Empire be established. During the final stages of the World War I, as the collapse of the Habsburg Empire became imminent, Masaryk and his supporters began to urge the Western allies to back the creation of a Czechoslovak state. Despite the lack of support in Slovakia for the concept of a Czechoslovak nation, the Western allies accepted Masaryk's arguments.[103] On 28 and 30 October 1918, in Prague and Turčiansky Svätý Martin respectively, Czechoslovakia, a state in which two nations would live together as equals, was declared.[104] The new republic included the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia, a small part of Silesia, and Slovakia. Within these boundaries were areas inhabited by hundreds of thousands of Hungarians as well. A parliamentary democratic government was formed and a capital was established in the Czech city of Prague.[105] From 1918 to 1938 Czechoslovakia functioned as a parliamentary democracy where free,

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[101] C.A. Macartney, *The Habsburg Empire 1790-1918* (London, 1969), 727, in Edita Bosak, "Slovaks and Czechs," in *Czechoslovakia 1918-1988: Seventy Years of Independence*, (New York: St. Martin Press, 1991), 69; and Koloman Ivanička, *Slovakia Genius loci*, (Bratislava: Korene Press, 1996), 41.
[102] This premise was by no means support by everyone.
[103] Roger East and Jolyon Pontin, *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1997), 78.
[104] Koloman Ivanička, *Slovakia Genius loci*, trans. Emma Nežinská (Bratislava: Korene Press, 1996), 42.
[105] Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

competitive elections were held every five years. The state was multinational; however, the power was very centralized with the decision-making residing in Prague.[106]

Despite arguments in favor of the union, the Czechs and the Slovaks differed in many ways. The Slovak economy was more agrarian and less developed, the people were more religious, were afforded limited educational opportunities, and were less experienced with self-government than the Czechs. These differences, compounded by failed promises of autonomy and economic and political domination from Prague, produced displeasure among Slovaks with the newly created federation and growing support for national movements. Father Andrej Hlinka, leader of the Slovak Peoples Party, and his successor Father Jozef Tiso, were joined by many Slovaks in calls for equality between Czechs and Slovaks and increased autonomy.[107]

Even though the state of Czechoslovakia already existed, Slovaks claimed that Hungary continued to have aims of reuniting Slovakia with Hungary. However, with the assistance of Western powers, Czechoslovakia was able to defeat an invasion by the Hungarian Army, and on 4 June 1920 a peace treaty was signed at Trianon in France. The internationally recognized Trianon Treaty confirmed the origin of the successor states after dissolution of the old Kingdom of Hungary, the frontiers between them, and the duties of the newly formed Hungarian state toward them.[108]

Democracy in inter-war Czechoslovakia is widely regarded as being the most steadfast and effective democracy in an unstable region, because of the relatively

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[106] Sharon Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).

[107] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 9; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

[108] Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander

sophisticated political culture of the Czech people and of the capability of the intellectual leaders in Slovakia. As the only true parliamentary democracy in Central Europe, the government was careful to uphold the Constitution and protect individual civil rights.[109] According to Sir Karl Popper

> Masaryk's Czechoslovakia was the most open of all societies ever to develop in Europe. It lasted for only 20 years. But what difficult and marvelous years! In the shortest time, this open society had built a solid economy and the most solid military defense system in Europe.[110]

Despite these successes, the Great Depression of 1929 through 1933 managed to have a severe effect on the nation – Slovakia experienced large-scale emigration, primarily to North America, for a second time in its recent history.[111]

Slovak Autonomy Under German Control 1939-1945. The rise of Nazi Germany in the 1930s and the aggressive policies of German dictator Adolf Hitler led to the breakup of the first Czechoslovak federation. In an attempt to avoid another war with Germany, leaders of Great Britain, France and Italy negotiated with Hitler in September 1938 at the Munich Conference. Because the Western Powers were unwilling to counter Hitler's aggressive politics, they forced Prague to cede the German part of Czechoslovakia known as the Sudentenland to Germany during the Munich Conference. As a result, the fate of Czechoslovakia was now perceived to be in Hitler's hands.[112] In November Germany and Italy signed the Vienna Arbitration decision according to which

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MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt and Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc, 1996), 51.

[109] East and Pontin, *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1997), 78.

[110] Quoted in Josef Novák, "The legacy of TGM," *The Prague Post*, 23-27 December 1997, B11.

[111] Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt and Bolchazy-Carducci: Wauconda IL Publishers, Inc., 1996), 51-52.

portions of Slovakia and Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia were ceded to Hungary and the border territory of Tešín was given to Poland.[113] One-third of Czechoslovakian territory containing some of the most important industrial centers and most fertile farmland was lost, thereby crippling the state economically and industrially. When Hitler was faced with the prospect of Czechoslovakia's being entirely divided among Germany, Poland and Hungary, he coerced Slovakia to withdraw from the federation and proclaim itself an independent state. On 14 March 1939 the first "independent" Slovak state was established, albeit under heavy German influence and protection. Father Tiso, the new Slovak president, allowed German troops to enter Slovakia in August 1939, and the state was compelled to enter World War II as Germany's ally. A Slovak underground resistance movement against the Germans developed, and on 29 August 1944 a Slovak National Uprising against German control was organized in Banska Bystrica.[114] The rebellion was headed by Slovak Army troops led by Generals Viest and Golian. Although the Germans defeated the uprising in just two months, this uprising remains a strong symbol of Slovak nationalism today;[115] as does Tiso, despite his fascist and anti-Semitic tendencies.

During the war Edvard Beneš, the Czechoslovak President from 1935 to 1938, set up a provisional government in exile in London. Following liberation from German rule by Soviet and Allied forces, Beneš returned and the republic of Czechoslovakia was resurrected in 1945 after World War II. All of the territory was returned, except for

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[112] Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 179.
[113] Ibid., 52.
[114] Ibid.

Ruthenia, a small area in the East, which was annexed by the Soviet Union. This area is now a part of Ukraine. Despite demands by Slovak party representatives that Slovakia receive an equal representation in the two-nation Czecho-Slovak Republic, an uneven relationship remained until 1968. Regarded as a true nationalist by some and a traitor by others, Father Tiso was hanged in 1947 for treason and collaboration with the Nazis, while a similar fate befell other government officials. Between 1945 and 1948 a coalition government made up of communists and representatives of other political parties governed Slovakia. Although the communists held important posts, the communist party had less support in Slovakia than in the Czech lands.[116]

## Soviet Domination

Czechoslovak Socialist Republic 1948-1968. The people of Czechoslovakia experienced an era of relative political freedom following the end of World War II. This serene era was crushed when the communists provoked a political crisis in February 1948 and seized control of the government in Prague thereby eliminating the influence of all non-communist parties and suppressing all religious institutions. Czech communist leader Klement Gottwald, later known as "the first proletarian president of Czechoslovakia," led the fateful events of early 1948. The communist leadership began to imprison its bourgeois foes by the thousands. This imprisoned group included future party leader Gustáv Husák, who contributed to the Slovak sentiment that "Czech communists were

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[115] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk; Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 8; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.
[116] Ibid.

just as bad as Czech democrats when it came to the Slovak question."[117] The communist party based the government and economy on the same totalitarian principles as those of the Soviet Union. The state forcefully took control of the country's factories and businesses, private properties were nationalized, and farmers were forced to join collective farms in which all land and equipment were jointly owned.[118]

After 1948 the Czechoslovak Communist Party began to institute a more Stalinistic form of government through its influence in political organization, social transformation, and economic development. The communist party began to increase its influence in the political realm by reducing the influence of non-communist political actors. Socially many associations such as trade unions and student groups were centralized under national organizations. A centrally planned economy was instituted, all private ownership was eliminated, and agricultural farmlands were collectivized. The communist party proceeded to promote Stalin's social values by controlling access to education, censoring the media, changing the role of women, mounting a campaign against religion, and influencing the arts, cultural life, and leisure activities.[119] The Stalinist system persisted in Czechoslovakia and this period of totalitarian rule was firmly entrenched by the Soviets until the early 1960s when a new form of socialism was implemented.

Between 1962 and 1968, international events, Czechoslovakia's failing economic performance, increasing tensions between the Czechs and Slovaks, growing public

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[117] Carol Skalnik Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia: The Making and Remaking of a State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 167-170.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Sharon L. Wolchik, *Czechoslovakia in Transition: Politics, Economy and Society* (London: Pinter Publishers Limited, 1991), 20-24.

impatience, burgeoning critical thinking among intellectuals and students, increasing division within the political party, and a changing relationship with Moscow brought about gradual but significant reform of the Stalinist system. Despite its positive performance in the previous decade, the economy experienced a negative growth rate and began to fail. The government's inability to resurrect the economy was likely one of the biggest catalysts for change. The intellectuals—such as philosophers, historians, and social scientists—challenged the regime and called for increased freedom of speech and expression; then student and women's organizations voiced their discontent. Slovak party leaders also expressed their dissatisfaction with the system and called for greater acknowledgment of Slovak interests and an increased role in the governance of the state.[120] The situation in Czechoslovakia, and even more so in Slovakia, was predisposed to change.

Prague Spring 1968. The considerable changes in the early 1960s culminated in the Prague Spring of 1968. Alexander Dubček, a leading communist from Slovakia, in concert with other party leaders and intellectuals in Czechoslovakia, responded to this growing discontent and created a unique movement to reform the communist system. On the basis of Slovak demands a document reorganizing the Czecho-Slovak federation based on equal representation was signed at the Bratislava castle in August 1968. Nevertheless, the majority of the constitutional powers still remained in Prague and equal representation was symbolic in form.[121]

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[120] Ibid., 26-31.

[121] Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt and Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc., 1996), 52.

Intellectuals and students were squarely behind Dubček – they dominated the media, mobilized the population with public meetings and demonstrations, and further radicalized the reform movement with their youthful spirits and impatience. While Dubček privately encouraged this return to democracy, publicly he was anxious to emphasize that his movement, "Socialism with a Human Face," was another uniquely Czechoslovak form of communism and that Czechoslovakia had no intentions of quitting the communist bloc.[122] The basic principles of the movement called for increased freedoms of press, travel, and personal thought.

The movement reached a pinnacle in January 1968 when Dubček became the head of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. The USSR feared that the innovative economic, social and political reforms threatened Soviet domination of Czechoslovakia, as well as Soviet control of other satellite states. On 21 August 1968 the Soviet military, along with troops from Warsaw Pact allies (Hungary, Poland, East Germany, and Bulgaria), invaded and occupied Czechoslovakia, effectively crushing all reform initiatives. Fearing the impending tightening of Soviet control and censorship of press, thousands of intellectuals fled Czechoslovakia. This large-scale emigration represented Slovakia's third major exodus to the United States, Canada, Australia and Western Europe states. Today over 1.2 million people of Slovak origin live in the United States alone.

On 28 October 1968, the 50th anniversary of the founding of Czechoslovakia, a new federal republic was established and two national republics, Slovak and Czech,

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[122] Joseph Bradley, *Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution: A Political Analysis* (Boulder: East Eurpoean Monographs, 1992), xviii-xix.

which were to enjoy equal, and wide, autonomy, were finally created.[123] Dubček, who was replaced as president by another Slovak, Gustav Husák, in April 1969, was ultimately expelled from the communist party. Dubček and his entire family were kept under close surveillance by the communist controlled secret police. The communist party purged one-third of party members and many intellectuals who supported liberalization. In 1970 most elements of the economic reforms from the second half of the 1960s were rescinded and Czechoslovakia became a rigidly neo-Stalinist state.[124]

Despite the crushing Soviet policies of normalization that followed, many dissidents who supported the Prague Spring remained active in Czechoslovakia. In 1977 their leaders, who included Václáv Havel[125] and Miroslav Kusy,[126] signed the "Charter 77" manifesto, demanding that the basic human freedoms articulated in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 be upheld.[127] Historically a religious people,[128] the Slovaks turned to Catholicism to express their opposition to the tightened communist regime. A number of mass pilgrimages and religious celebrations took place in Slovakia. Because these events brought large groups of people together, they effectively became demonstrations that brought attention to their national identity.[129]

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[123] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk

[124] Ibid.

[125] President of Czechoslovakia from 1989 to 1992 and the Czech Republic from 1993 to the present.

[126] Public Against Violence party member, activist and Rector of Comenius University in Bratislava.

[127] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk; Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998); and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

[128] As opposed to the Czechs who were predominantly atheist. In a 1991 census the majority of Czechs (56.1 percent) identified themselves as atheists while 60.4 percent of Slovaks identified themselves as Roman Catholic. Milan Kucera and Zdenek Pavlik, "Czech and Slovak Demography," in *The End of Czechoslovakia*, ed. Jiri Musil, (Budapest: Central University Press, 1995), 33.

## Fall of Communism

Velvet Revolution 1989. During the late 1980s it became clear that the economic situation in the Soviet Union began to deteriorate dramatically. Soviet style socialism began to collapse under its own weight and change was inevitable. A rapid succession of communist leaders and the accession of Mikhail Gorbachev to the position of General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1985 opened the way for liberalization and reform in the Soviet Union and in Central European states. As a result of the emerging economic and ideological deficits of the Soviet system, Gorbachev implemented policies of glasnost and perestroika, which eventually ended the era of the Brezhnev Doctrine. In Czechoslovakia, the communist government of Milos Jakes, who had replaced Husák as party leader in 1987, resisted early pressures to adopt reforms or enter into discussions with opposition leaders. During the spring of 1988, Slovak Christian leaders—such as Ján Čarnogurský—demonstrated in Bratislava against the brutality of the political system in Slovakia. The government ruthlessly suppressed the "candlelight demonstrations" that took place on Good Friday. Nevertheless, initial indicators of a collapse of totalitarianism began to surface.[130] Demonstrations continued and in August 1988 and January 1989 the communist government broke up protest rallies held in Bratislava and Prague and jailed organizers.[131]

In May 1989, as reform efforts gained momentum in other Central European states—such as the one led by Lech Wałęsa in Poland—the Czechoslovak government

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[129] Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.
[130] Oľga Drobná, Eduard Drobný and Magaléna Gocnícková, *Slovakia: The Heart of Europe*, ed. Alexander MacGregor, trans. Martin Clifford Styan and Zuzana Paulíková (Bratislava: Perfekt and Wauconda IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc., 1996), 52; and Martin Bútora and Zora Bútorová, "Slovakia After the Split," *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 4, no.2 (1993): 76.

released the leaders of the January rally from jail. However, government officials again suppressed another demonstration on the anniversary of the 1968 Soviet-led invasion. But the momentum of change pressed on. On 9 November 1989 East Germans tore down the Berlin Wall. Eight days later students at the Charles University in Prague organized a demonstration and marched toward Wencelas Square only to be attacked by riot police wielding shields and batons. This day officially marked the beginning of the "Velvet Revolution" and the period of post-communist democratization. Two days later, as news spread, a Czech opposition movement, the Civic Forum (OF), was founded. The following day the OF's Slovak equivalent, Public Against Violence (VPN), was formed in Bratislava under the leadership of Jan Budaj. The two organizations led progressively larger demonstrations each day and called for nationwide strikes. Within two weeks the communist government was forced to negotiate with the leaders of the reform movements. As peaceful opposition grew daily, the communist leaders were forced to step down and a new non-communist government, comprised largely of OF and VPN dissidents, was chosen. The Slovak VPN brought together political dissidents, intellectuals, and Catholics to lead the transition to an open democratic society. On 29 December Czechoslovak Federal Assembly representatives elected Václáv Havel as the first non-communist president of Czechoslovakia in over four decades and Marian Čalfa, a Slovak, became a new federal prime minister.[132]

A serious conflict unexpectedly arose when the Czechoslovak Federated Assembly discussed the proposal to drop the attribute "socialist" out of the name of the

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[131] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 10.
[132] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 11; and Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.

state and a so-called "Hyphen War"[133] emerged. Many Slovak deputies demanded that the state return to its original name, Czecho-Slovakia, adopted by the Treaty of Versailles in 1918; it wasn't until 1923 that the hyphen had been dropped. On 29 March 1990 an initial compromise was reached. Each side was authorized to use a different variation: "Czechoslovak Federative Republic" for the Czechs, and "Czecho-slovak Federative Republic" (albeit with a small "s") for the Slovaks. But three weeks later in April, after fierce discussions and increasing Slovak protest demonstrations, the parliament changed the name again to the "Czech and Slovak Federative Republic."[134] At the same time, the Slovak National Party (SNS), the only party officially advocating the independence of Slovakia, was established.[135] The other parties did not advocate independence but rather supported a continued union for economic and historic reasons. Furthermore, the majority of citizens of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic also supported a continued union.

The federation's first free election since 1946 was held in June 1990. The election was won by the VPN in Slovakia and the OF in the Czech lands most likely because they had the largest constituency in their respective federation and they represented a broad rage of views. There were no major political cleavages among all of the political parties. VPN and OF called for civil rights, multiparty democracy, the free-

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[133] Martin Bútora and Zora Bútorová, "Slovakia After the Split," *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 4, no. 2 (1993): 77; and Otto Ulč, "Czechoslovakia's Velvet Divorce," *East European Quarterly*, vol. XXX, no. 3 (September 1996), 339.

[134] *Narodna Obroda* (Bratislava), 24 July 1991, 3, trans. in FBIS, Daily Report (EE), 1 August 1991, 13; and Peter Martin, "The Hyphen Controversy," in RFE, *Report on Easter Europe* (20 April 1990), 14, both cited in Sabrina Petra Ramet, "The Reemergence of Slovakia", *Nationality Papers*, 22, no. 1(1994): 101.

[135] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store, (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk

market economy, and environmental protection.[136] The prime minister of the Czech Republic was Petr Pithard and Vladimír Mečiar served as the prime minister of Slovakia. This election was part of the regime change process and was in effect a referendum on the fall of communism. It was not an election that offered the people a wide variety of choices or programs rather it marked the end of the communist period.[137] The governments desired closer relations with the West but national security issues or integration into Western institutions such as NATO were not at the forefront of the election.

The first major task of the new government was to reestablish a free-market based economy. The leaders began a mass privatization program in an effort to shift hundreds of state-owned companies into private hands and to encourage foreign investment. However, as the reforms progressed, jurisdictional disputes emerged and tensions between the Czech and Slovak republics increased.[138] The conflicts included, but were not limited to, a dispute over a proposed "Slovak only" language law discriminating against national minorities; the division of powers between the republics and the federation; repeated attempts to get the Slovak National Council to adopt a "Declaration of Sovereignty;" and the question of which republic was financial disadvantaged by the federation.[139]

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[136] Minton F. Goldman, *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 123.
[137] David M. Olson, "Democratization and Political Participation: The Experience of the Czech Republic," in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, ed., *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 173.
[138] Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.
[139] Martin Bútora and Zora Bútorová, "Slovakia After the Split," *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 4, no. 2 (1993): 77-78.

As a result of this unstable political environment the Czech OF party split and a remaining majority formed the Civic Democratic Party (ODS) led by Václav Klaus. While in Slovakia Mečiar, a member of VPN, continued to head the Slovak government. The ODS and VPN contained members who held widely different views. Although they agreed on democratization and civil liberties, the argued over economic polices and Mečiar's increasing Slovak nationalism.[140] Mečiar alienated may former colleagues with his nationalistic tendencies and was accused of incompetence and of abusing access to secret police files. As a result, he was ousted from the VPN and replaced by Ján Čarnogurský in April 1991. This marked the first time that Mečiar was removed from political power. It was also a political defeat that Mečiar would never let his opponents forget. Mečiar and his closely allies then split from the VPN and established the Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) in June 1991.[141] Mečiar's new party supported a vaguely defined confederal scheme that would combine international sovereignty for Slovakia with the preservation of some loose form of common statehood with the Czech Republic. This was a scheme that Klaus did not support.

Under the overwhelming influence of Klaus, an obscure form of monetarism, opposed by the Slovak government, was proposed. Many felt that this radical economic reform would set the country up for a future economic crisis. The government's approach to privatization and unconventional economic measures provoked controversial debates both in Czechoslovakia and abroad.[142] Slovak officials opposed Klaus's reform

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[140] Roger East and Jolyon Pontin, *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe.* (London: Pinter Publishers Ltd., 1997), 92.
[141] Interestingly, that same month Soviet troops completed their withdrawal from Czechoslovak territory.
[142] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk; Martin Bútora and Zora Bútorová, "Slovakia After the Split," *Journal of*

because they felt that Slovakia required a slower paced and less ambitious economic plan. Because the Soviet Union industrialized Slovakia during the communist period, it inherited an inefficient, defense-oriented industrial base. The transition to a market economy resulted in greater unemployment and economic hardship in Slovakia than it did in the more economically advantaged Czech lands. As a result, the two sides held opposing views about the appropriate pace and nature of economic reform. When the radical economic reform plan was launched in January 1992, tensions heightened and the reform process was greatly complicated.[143]

Velvet Divorce 1992. In contrast to the 1990 election, which marked the end of communism, the June 1992 election in effect marked the end of the state. The results of this election found Klaus and Mečiar victors in the Czech and Slovak republics, respectively, and each leader became the prime minister of his own republic. The issues were different, as were the participants, and Klaus's and Mečiar's political parties could not agree on much. Klaus was committed to wholesale economic reform and tighter federation while Mečiar desired slower economic reform and a decentralized confederation. The two sides of the federation agreed only on two items: they agreed that they could not govern together and they agreed to split the state.[144] According to Klaus von Beyme "the new democratic elite had no blueprint for a new democratic civil society...[and] were unsure about which model of transition to market society they should

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*Democracy,* vol. 4, no. 2 (1993): 80; Roger East and Jolyon Pontin, *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Pinter Publishers Ltd., 1997), 99.

[143] Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu; and Martin Bútora and Zora Bútorová, "Slovakia After the Split," *Journal of Democracy,* vol. 4, no. 2 (1993): 78.

[144] David M. Olson, "Democratization and Political Participation: The Experience of the Czech Republic," in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, ed., *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 177.

adopt."[145] Anders Åslund's research on economic reform in post-communist states suggests that Russia's failure to undergo a thorough elite transformation was detrimental to the development of democracy in that state. Some of the authors admit the same actors of communist times are dominant in Russian politics but they are playing a new game and not entirely in accordance with democratic rules.[146] This state of affairs was likely similar in Slovak politics during period after communist. As in the election of 1990, integration into Western institutions, specifically NATO, was not a major political issue.

David Olsen contended that the structure of the parliament and the organization of the political parties within the ethnically regionalized federation of Czechoslovakia provided an opportunity for separatism to be expressed, but gave little opportunity for resolution of tensions. He suggested that the question of separate states was hard to

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[145] Klaus von Beyme, *Transition to Democracy in Eastern Europe* (London: MacMillan Press Limited: 1996). Extensive additional comparative literature on economic reforms during transitions to democracy is available. Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman conducted a survey of the economic reform of twenty-seven democratic transitions occurring between 1970 and 1990. They concluded that "economic conditions in both the long and short run [in] authoritarian regimes are more vulnerable to economic downturns in middle-income capitalist countries." They also addressed the centrality of poor economic performance in the transition process and the political and organizational capabilities of dominant parties. Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995). Other literature includes Sharon L. Wolchik, *Czechoslovakia in Transition: Politics, Economy and Society* (London: Pinter Publishers Limited, 1991), Carol Graham, *Safety Nets, Politics, and the Poor: Transitions to Market Economies (*Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1994); Guellermo O'Donnell and Phillipe Schnitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Guellermo O'Donnell, Phillipe Schnitter, and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Adam Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy," in Guellermo O'Donnell, Phillipe Schnitter, and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandoruros, and Hans-Kurgen Puhle, ed., *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press: 1995); Constantine C. Menges, ed., *Transitions from Communism in Russia and Eastern Europe,* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1994); among others.

[146] Anders Åslund, *Russia After Communism* (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999).

resolve in favor of continued federation and that a separation could be achieved by democratic and peaceful means.[147]

The 1992 elections reflected the growing fissure between the two lands. After a series of negotiations, the parties agreed to form a federal government on the principle of symmetric power-sharing. However, this mandate lasted only until the end of July 1992 after which disagreements intensified. ODS considered the symmetric power sharing unpractical and unprofitable as the Czech population outnumbered the Slovaks two to one.[148] ODS also refused the proposal of Slovak partners to transform the country into a loose federation based on the principle of the Treaty of Maastricht.[149] Klaus may have endorsed a common state but indicated that he would not pay any price to maintain one. Klaus's defensive move to prepare the Czech government for an eventual split seemed to deprive Mečiar of his leverage to extract a variety of economic and political concessions in return for remaining in the union.[150] Klaus calculated that the Czech Republic would be better off without the Slovaks and, in effect, "let them go." Initially shocked by the turn of events, Mečiar seized the opportunity to take control and lead Slovakia to its long awaited independence. This event alone was one of the major reasons why Mečiar was able to hold on to power and return after political defeat. He become known as the man who fought for Slovakia's autonomy and delivered its independence.

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[147] David M. Olson, "Federalism and Parliament in Czechoslovakia," in *Parliaments in Transition: The New Legislative Politics in the Former USSR and Eastern Europe,* ed. Thomas F. Remington (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994).

[148] There were approximately 10 million Czechs and 5 million Slovaks in Czechoslovakia.

[149] Komornik, "History of Slovakia," in Panorama: Slovak Document Store (n.p., n.d.), Available from http://slovakia.eunet.sk

[150] Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Human Rights and Democratization in Slovakia,* 1997, 7.

By the end of July 1992 Klaus and Mečiar reached an agreement to dissolve the federation. That month Slovakia declared itself a sovereign state, a state in which its laws took precedence over those of the federal government. Throughout the remainder of that year, Mečiar and Klaus negotiated the details for disbanding the federation. In November the federal parliament voted to dissolve the country officially on 31 December, despite the fact that no public referendum was held or that opinion polls between 1990 and 1992 indicated a clear majority of Slovak and Czech citizens opposed the split and favored some kind of union.[151] Without an instance of violence the Czecho-Slovak Federative Republic ceased to exist and Slovakia and the Czech Republic were formed on 1 January 1993. The Slovak parliament elected Michal Kovač on 15 February 1993 as the first president of Slovakia. This dissolution was very unique. In the words of Carol Skalnik Leff

> Czechoslovakia ended without a military battle, without an independence referendum, without a clear secession, and without even a widespread independence movement in either republic.

There are, in reality, many reasons for the break-up of Czechoslovakia and just as many, if not more, theories on the dissolution.[152] Leff contends that, when a dissatisfied group, such as the Slovaks, has an institutional base in the structure of power and when democratization permits the utilization of this power base, then the politicians have an official position from which to launch policy change. She argues that the communist federal solution to the problem of ethnonational diversity, such as in the former Soviet

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[151] Sharon L. Wolchik, a paper on Slovak history (n.p., n.d.) available from www.usca.colorado.edu.
[152] Sharon Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 126-145; Jiří Musil, ed., *The End of Czecholslovakia* (Budapest: Central European Press, 1995), 2; Sabrina Petra Ramet, "The Reemergence of Slovakia," *Nationality Papers*, vol. 22, no. 1 (1994); Otto Ulč,"Czechoslovakia's Velvet Divorce," East European Quarterly, vol XXX, no. 3 (September 1996); and

Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, allows for an arena for national reassertion, and it becomes a denominator for dissolution of the state. Leff adds that the interaction among the three components of what she calls "triple transition"—immature politics, unstable economics, and strong national identities—was part of the dynamic by which the Czechoslovak state fell apart.[153] The authors of *The End of Czechoslovakia*, edited by Jiří Musil, present what they believe are the most relevant reasons. The book concludes that the reasons were: differences in economic, social and cultural developments in the Czech Lands and Slovakia; differences in their value orientations; mutual misperceptions; and different attitudes toward the common state led to the division of the state.[154]

While numerous other academic studies have researched the causes, my research showed that the underlying reason why Czechoslovakia split is that the Slovaks and Czechs are different peoples and constitute two completely different ethnic nationalities. The Czechs and Slovaks existed separately for hundreds of years with relatively little in common until the early 20th century when they were artificially united in 1918.[155] But in addition there are many other reasons for the division such as historical, developmental, political, and economic. The Slovaks and Czechs had completely different historical experiences. Slovakia was forced to struggle to preserve its language, culture and

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others. Miroslav Wlachovský, Director of the Foreign Policy Research Center, Bratislava, Slovakia, noted that the question of dissolution would be a good topic for a dissertation after 20 to 30 years.

[153] Sharon Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 126-145.

[154] Jiří Musil, ed., *The End of Czecholslovakia* (Budapest: Central European Press, 1995), 2.

[155] Štefan Krištof, Colonel, Army of the Slovak Republic, Slovak Defense Attaché to the United States, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Embassy, Washington, D.C., 10 October 1997; Jan Čarnogurský, Chairman, KDH, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, 15 December 1997, KDH Headquarters, Bratislava, Slovakia; Bohumil Doležal, in *Snezi: Slovensko kdo to je, Co máme ešte společného ye Slováky* (Praha: Česka televize, 23 November 1997) television program; and Miro Wlachovský, Director, Research Center for Foreign Policy, interview by author, tape recording, 22 December 1997, Research Center for Foreign Policy, Bratislava, Slovakia.

national identity. Slovak political leaders desired some type of political independence or equal partnership within the Czechoslovak federation but the Czech political leadership did not agree to their demands. While equality was a large issue, uncompromising disagreements over general economic issues and the process of controversial economic reform emerged. And finally, personal ambitions of individual politicians and monumental bureaucratic miscalculations played the most pivotal role in the ultimate dissolution of Czechoslovakia.[156]

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[156] Dušan Švarc, Colonel, Army of the Czech Republic, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Prague Czech Republic, 8 December 1997; Ján Šulc, Czech business man, interview by author, tape recording, Prague, Czech Republic, 6 December 1997; Urban Juraj, Captain, Army of the Czech Republic, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Prague, Czech Republic, 8 December 1997; Ján Šmid, Czech author, interview by author, tape recording, Prague, Czech Republic, 7 December 1997; Pavel Štrubl, Major General, Advisor to the Minister of Defense of the Czech Republic, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Prague, Czech Republic, 9 December 1997; Miroslav Lehuta, Lieutenant Colonel, ASR, Defense Attaché, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Embassy, Prague, Czech Republic, 6 December 1997; David Easton Potts, Colonel, United States Army, Defense Attaché, interview by author, tape recording, American Embassy, Prague, Czech Republic, 6 December 1997; Jiří Šedivý, Ph.D., Deputy Director, Department of International Relations, interview by author, tape recording, University of Prague, Prague, Czech Republic, 8 December 1997; Hana Mottlova, Assistant to the Political Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prague, Czech Republic, 10 December 1997; Eugene Young, Economic/Commercial Officer, interview by author, tape recording, American Embassy, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 December 1997; Dušan Slobodnik, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 December 1997; Jan Čarnogurský, Chairman, KDH, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, 15 December 1997, KDH Headquarters, Bratislava, Slovakia; Magda Vášáryová, Board Chairman, Slovak Foreign Policy Association, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Bratislava, Slovakia, 19 December 1997; Veronika Lombardini, Foreign Policy Department, Office of the President of the Slovak Republic, interview by author, tape recording, Presidential Office of Foreign Policy, Bratislava, Slovakia, 22 December 1997; Ľudovít Černák, Deputy Chairman, DU, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997; Pani Kiripolska, Mayor, interview by author, tape recording, Plavetskz Mikulaš, Slovakia, 3 January 1998; Boris Zala, Intellectual, interview by author, tape recording, Bratislava, Slovakia, 16 December 1997; Peter Weiss, Deputy Chairman, SDL, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Slovakia, 17 December 1997; Elvira Chadimova, Slovak business woman, interview by author, tape recording, Hotel Echo, Bratislava, Slovakia, December 1997; Julia Kurilova, Slovak author, interview by author, tape recording, Bratislava, Slovakia, 2 January 1998; Ján Klíma, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Languages, Bratislava University, interview by author, tape recording, Bratislava, Slovakia, 2 January 1998; Štefan Gombík, Major General, Slovak Chief of Air Force and Air Defense Staff, General Staff of the ASR, interview by author, tape recording, Trenčín, Slovakia, 14 December 1997; Miroslav Wlachovský, Director, Foreign Policy Research Center, interview by author, tape recording, Foreign Policy Research Center, Bratislava, Slovakia, 22 December 1997; William P. Schofield, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the United States of America, interview by author, tape recording, American Embassy, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 December 1998; *Snezi: Slovensko kdo to je, Co má.me ešte spoločného ye Slováky* (Praha: Česka televize, 23 November 1997) television program.

When I asked both Czechs and Slovaks what feelings the division elicited in them, the most common responses were feelings of shock, sadness, and regret. Although some felt that the dissolution was a step backwards and a mistake, the majority of both Czechs and Slovaks felt that the break-up of Czechoslovakia was logical and ultimately best for both sides. Many agreed that the Czechs and the Slovaks are two different peoples, with different histories and identities. In the end many believe that it was a positive step, and that with independence, each state would experience greater happiness in the long term.[157] I believe that Ján Čarnogurský said it best. He stated the primary reason for the dissolution of Czechoslovakia was that in the state of Czechoslovakia "there were two nationalities—the Czechs and the Slovaks. *Czechoslovaks* never existed. A nation prefers to live alone."[158]

One final thought about the Velvet Divorce: had the state of Czechoslovakia not dissolved, the Slovaks, as part of the larger Czechoslovak federation, would already be NATO members and would have fallen under the security umbrella of this collective defense organization since 1999. The dissolution of Czechoslovakia altered the European political and security landscape and impacted the future of the Slovaks for several years to come.

Slovak Independence 1993-1998 and Beyond. The events that occurred during Slovakia's democratic transition are best described as tumultuous and turbulent. Mečiar's authoritarian style of leadership amounted to the gradual destruction of basic democratic principles in Slovakia during this period. Under Mečiar's rule Western leaders and

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[157] Ibid.

[158] Jan Čarnogurský, Chairman, KDH, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, 15 December 1997, KDH Headquarters, Bratislava, Slovakia;

institutions repeatedly criticized Slovakia for increasing deficiencies in democratic development, rule of law, and human rights. It was not until September 1998 when a newly elected democratic coalition government was official recognized and accepted by the West that Slovakia was back on the road toward democratization. The political events that occurred during Slovakia's first few years as an independent state, the base of Mečiar support and his remarkable political staying power, the ongoing struggle for democracy, and the results of the 1998 parliamentary election, which marked a critical turning point for the state on its journey toward democracy are explored in depth the next chapter.

## Conclusion

The intent of this chapter was to provide a brief historical perspective of the Slovak people, nation and state. I hope that I have not oversimplified Slovakia's complicated history; however, for the purpose this study, I carefully examined the events of the past and took the liberty of grouping Slovakia's past into 12 sections. My analysis shows that there were 12 significant periods or eras during Slovakia's history in which a variety of important and influential events occurred. In the following chart, I breakdown these periods, label them, and highlight some of the significant events that occurred.

SIGNIFICANT PERIODS & EVENTS

| # | PERIOD | NAME | EVENTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 500 BC to 9th C AD | Tribal Rule | - Slavic tribes settled in region |
| 2 | 9th & 10th C AD | Conquerors Rule | - 9th C: consciousness of Slovak identity possible; very early form of cultural Slovak language emerged |
| 3 | 10th to 20th C | Hungarian Rule | - 18th C: national movement promoted sense of Slovak identity; liturgical language codified; national society formed; first newspaper published<br>- 1848: struggle to maintain language, identity, culture very difficult; first political entity formed; Slovak Uprising against Hungarian rule defeated<br>- 1849: term 'Slovakia' first appeared as a geopolitical concept |
| 4 | 1918-1939 | Stable Democratic Rule | - 1918: democratic Czechoslovak state created; Slovak identity visible but struggle for equality, autonomy evident |
| 5 | 1939-1945 | Nazi Rule | - 1939: Slovak puppet state created under Nazi Germany<br>- 1944: struggle for autonomy evident; Slovak National Uprising defeated |
| 6 | 1945-1948 | Prosperous Democratic Rule | - 1945: democratic Czechoslovakia resurrected; struggle for increased autonomy evident |
| 7 | 1948-1962 | Totalitarian Stalinist Rule | - 1948: power seized by communists; struggle for identity, autonomy persisted despite severe Soviet suppression |
| 8 | 1962-1968 | Reformation of Socialist Rule | - mid 1960s: Socialism with a Human Face implemented; economic, political social reforms evident; freedoms increased; struggle for increased autonomy more visible |
| 9 | 1968-1989 | Soviet Normalization Rule | - mid 1968: Soviet-led invasion preceded Soviet hard-line rule<br>- late 1968: new federal republic with two national republics created; struggle for identity, autonomy persisted despite severe Soviet suppression<br>- 1977: Charter 77 - basic human freedoms demanded |

| # | PERIOD | NAME | EVENTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | 1989-1992 | Post-Communist Transition Rule | - 1989: collapse of Soviet socialism; Czechoslovakia broke away during Velvet Revolution; struggle for use of language, identity, equal division of power, increased autonomy, sovereignty, independence increasingly visible |
| 11 | 1993-1998 | Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule | - 1993: Slovakia and Czech Republic experienced a Velvet Divorce; independent, sovereign state created; gradual evolution of Mečiarism; struggle for identity, true democracy persisted |
| 12 | 1998-present | Democratic Rule | - 1998: democratic coalition government recognized, accepted by Democratic West; Slovak identity more obvious<br>- 2002: democratic coalition wins second election; democratization solidly on track |

The first period, *Tribal Rule,* was important because the area now called Slovakia was first inhabited sometime around 500 BC. Tribes ruled the region through the 9$^{th}$ century AD. During the next period, *Conquerors Rule*, the region was repeatedly conquered and ruled by others. It is possible that a very early form of cultural Slovak language emerged and the people began to have consciousness of their Slovak identity in the 9$^{th}$ and 10$^{th}$ centuries. For the next 1,000-year period the Slovak's were subject to repeated invasions and territorial disputes albeit all under various forms of Hungarian control thus I call this period *Hungarian Rule.* In the 18$^{th}$ century a national movement began to foster a sense of Slovak identity. Despite the fact that the Hungarians tried very hard to Magyarize the people, a Slovak liturgical language was formed, the first newspaper was published and a Slovak society was established. The Magyarization was

relentless and the Slovaks had to struggle to maintain their language, identity and culture. In protest, they created the first Slovak political entity, gathered what volunteer forces they could and lashed out against the Hungarians in what was the first Slovak Uprising. Although the Slovaks were defeated, this event remains a strong symbol of their fight for an identity.

It was in the next period, *Stable Democratic Rule*, that the identity of the Slovaks was recognized internationally in 1918 for the first time, albeit as the smaller and less significant part of the newly established democratic state of Czechoslovakia. This was known as one of the most stable and democratic periods in Slovak history. Although the state thrived, the Slovaks' were still not content because they were governed by yet another group, this time the Czechs thus the struggle for equality and increased autonomy continued. Some say the next period 1939 to 1945, labeled here as *Nazi Rule*, could be considered Slovakia's first statehood. Yes, a state of Slovakia was created in 1939, but it was puppet state of Nazi Germany and the people enjoyed no sovereignty or legitimate self-rule. The struggle for autonomy grew and culminated in the unsuccessful Slovak National Uprising of 1944 against the Germans. This is another very strong symbol of the Slovaks' struggle for their identity.

Following the end of World War II, the democratic state of Czechoslovakia was resurrected and the nation experienced great freedoms and successes. I label 1945 to 1948 as the period of *Prosperous Democratic Rule*. While the Czechoslovak state flourished once again, the Slovaks were unable to enjoy statehood of their own and continued their effort to achieve greater independence. Unfortunately, the prosperity was short lived. In 1948 communists seized power and instituted a totalitarian state. For the

next decade and a half, during the *Stalinist Totalitarian Rule* period, under severe Soviet suppression of personal and political freedoms, the Slovaks continued to strive for some autonomy and recognition of their identity. It was not until the early to mid 1960s that the Soviet repression began to loosen. During the *Reformation of Socialist Rule* period the movement "Socialism with a Human Face" brought about positive economic, political and social reforms to include increased personal freedoms. The increased openness made the Slovaks' struggle even more prominent. But all hopes faded in late 1968 when the Soviets, fearing the openness would spread to other satellite states, led an invasion of Czechoslovakia and installed another phase of its hard-line rule. At the onset of this *Soviet Normalization Rule* period a new Czechoslovak federal republic was formed. It was comprised of two national republics, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. With this action, the Slovaks achieved some increased autonomy from the Czechs but continued to be ruled and suppressed by a greater force for the next two decades, the Soviet Union.

The monumental changes of the late 1980s dramatically altered the European geopolitical landscape. The Berlin Wall fell, the Soviet Union disintegrated and the Cold War ended. Czechoslovakia became a free, democratic state for the third time. Political, economic and social turmoil was a bound during this period of *Post-Communist Transition Rule*. The Slovaks had the opportunity to make greater claims for equal division of power, increased autonomy and possible independence. This period came to an end in 1992 when the leaders of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic agreed to dissolve the federation in what became known as the Velvet Divorce. On 1 January 1993 Slovakia was created and the Slovak people finally had their own, independent, sovereign

state. The six years that followed this seemingly positive event was anything but positive. The Slovak people finally broke free from Hungarian, Czech, German, and Soviet rule; however, they began a politically tumultuous period labeled *Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule.* During this six-year period various political, intellectual, and public organizations continued the struggle to reveal Slovakia's real identity and institute a true democratic government. Their efforts were successful and the final outcome of the 1998 elections became another decisive turning point for the people of Slovakia, their nation and their state. A democratic coalition government was in place, their democratization was closer to being complete, and Slovakia was finally recognized and accepted by the West.

The Slovak people struggled to develop their own language and maintain their identity since the early 9$^{th}$ or 10$^{th}$ century. They desired and fought for increased autonomy in a variety of ways while under the rule or authority of the Hungarians, Czechs, Germans or Soviets. Even after gaining independence, their struggle was not over. The Slovaks had to fight internal forces in order to achieve freedom, democracy and international acceptance. My historical analysis showed that the Slovaks' experienced repeated invasions, domination and authoritarian rule and struggled to retain their language and culture, maintain their identity, and increase their autonomy. While these historical events constructed the identities of the state's agents, the events also predisposed the agents to press for Slovakia's increased autonomy from the Czech Republic. The politicians' pressure resulted in the Velvet Divorce and the Slovaks finally gained their independence, albeit inadvertently, after a 1,000-plus year struggle. The

events also predisposed the agents to preserve the state's independence, which, in turn, allowed them to remain in a position of political power.

The next chapter explores Slovakia's political, military, economic and social affairs, its national identity and the overarching culture during its first six years of independence – the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period. It delves into the identity and characteristics of the Slovaks, explores the life of Mečiar—the overwhelmingly dominant political agent during this period, his political persona, and the concept of Mečiarism, recounts the politicians' struggles to put into place a new democratic government in the 1998 parliamentary election, and highlights the new government's daunting challenges, many of which originated during the tenure of the previous Mečiar governments.

# III.
# FIRST SIX YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE
# (1993-1998)

Introduction. A critical period of Slovakia's transition to democracy was the six-year period after the state gained independence. In this chapter I explore the behavior of Slovakia's leading politicians. I delve into domestic issues and discuss Slovakia's economy, culture, internal and external political affairs, and the defense structure and look at Slovakia's transition to a democracy. I also explore the identity of the Slovak people in contrast to the life and identity of Slovakia's overwhelmingly domineering political leader—Vladimír Mečiar. I conclude with a review of the political challenges the new government faced once Mečiar was forced to take a back seat in the political arena.

## Internal and External Affairs

States that transition from communism to democracy experience a wide variety of political challenges in their domestic affairs and foreign relations. While the overall process of democratization may be similar among post-communist states each has to contend with unique factors. This section examines Slovakia's economic, societal, political and defense affairs. It looks at Slovakia's economic performance and addresses the weaknesses that became evident in 1997. It discusses Slovakia's nonprofit and non-governmental sector, educational system, media freedoms, cultural pursuits and religious institutions. It looks at Slovakia's internal political structure, its newly adopted Constitution, results of parliamentary and presidential elections, a failed 1997

referendum, indifference toward the rule of law, and shortcomings in democracy and human rights. The government's foreign policies, its relations with the Višegrád states (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic), Austria and the Ukraine, its arrangements with Russia, relations with the United States, and international relations in general are covered in the external politics section. One of Slovakia's greatest challenges was to establish an entirely new national security structure. This section briefly reviews Slovakia's national security policy and control of the armed forces. I provide a more detailed analysis of these and other security issues in the following chapter on national security.

Economy. Prior to the breakup of Czechoslovakia radical economic reform implemented after the fall of communism followed the classical transformation process. It included price liberalization, a three-step currency devaluation, the liberalization of trade regulations and tight money controls through credit restriction and high interest rates. State subsidies were cut and the cost of public utilities were increased. A market economy tax system was adopted and deregulation of state-owned property was implemented in several privatization stages. Slovakia was hit hard by the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the reforms, since its industrial structure was oriented more toward the East than the Czech Republic.[159] Following the split, Slovakia implemented an exchange rate-based stabilization program with very strict monetary and fiscal policies and a prudent income policy, which led to Slovakia's fast economic recovery.

According to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita calculated by purchasing power parity (PPP) Slovakia was and is the fourth wealthiest of the transition

[159] Zdenek Lukas, "Slovakia: Challenges on the path towards integration," Research Reports, The Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (WIIW), 261, (December 1999): 2.

countries, following Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary.[160] Slovakia's economy generally performed well through 1996 with many impressive macroeconomic indicators. In terms of economic growth, "Slovakia was one of the stars of the post-communist world" with GDP increasing 6.5 to 7 percent annually from 1995 through 1997 and a 6.1 percent increase in the first half of 1998. Exports of goods and services grew at an average annual rate of 2.8 percent from 1995 to 1997.[161] Real GDP growth in 1997 was 6.5 percent, slightly down from 6.9 percent in 1996. Inflation at the end of 1997 was 6.4 percent and rose only to slightly over 7 percent during the first half of 1998. Total foreign exchange reserves remained high in 1997 ending the year at $6.5 billion with about $3.3 billion in the National Bank of Slovakia. Unemployment remained at 13.4 percent in the early part of 1998 but varied greatly between regions. Slovakia's trade deficit declined to $1.4 billion from the 1996 level of more than $2 billion.[162]

Despite all of these positive signs, weaknesses in Slovakia's economic performance became visible in 1997. The specific areas that had contributed to a significant downturn in economic performance were: low levels of foreign direct investment; a banking sector with more than 30 percent classified loan portfolios; a questionable privatization process that excluded foreign investors and brought little new capital into former state enterprises; high inter-company debts and declining tax and social support payments; ineffective bankruptcy procedures; increased corruption and organized crime; an underdeveloped capital market; a rapidly increasing foreign debt; a

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[160] Ibid., 3.
[161] Michael Wyzan, "New Slovak Government Inherits Difficult Economic Situation," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* no. 235, part 2, (8 December 1998).
[162] U.S. Department of Commerce, National Trade Data Bank, *Slovakia Economic Trends and Outlook*, 19 February 1999.

state budget deficit over 5 percent of GDP financed largely by short-term borrowing; a heavy current accounts deficit; and a very small business sector thwarted by current conditions.[163] These economic deficiencies were due, in part, to Mečiar's delays in economic reform, shortcomings in the area of economic restructuring, and in the superficial and often contradictory institutional economic development under Mečiar's government, particularly during 1995 and 1996.[164] Failure to enact realistic and substantial economic reform ensured that a continued economic slowdown in the short term was inevitable. According to a February Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 1999 report, the large budget and current accounts deficits made it extremely difficult for Slovakia to sustain its previous growth rate without bank and enterprise restructuring, better coordination between central bank monetary polices and government policies.[165] In addition to the above, in order to retain his political support Mečiar intentionally delayed much needed economic restructuring until after the 1998 election because it was going to impact the populous negatively. In 1997 he introduced a large revitalization package of debt forgiveness and tax breaks to select companies to avoid worker layoffs and promoted unaffordable public works projects as publicity stunts right before the election.[166]

Despite encountering many of the same difficulties that other post-communist states experienced, Slovakia's overall positive economic performance was touted as one

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[163] Ibid.
[164] Ivan Mikloš and Eduard Žitňianský, "The Economy," in *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 114.
[165] Ron Synovitz, "Slovakia: Delayed Reforms A Setback For Economy," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, (26 February 1999).
[166] Mathew Rhodes, "Slovakia After Meciar: A Midterm Report," *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 48, no. 4 (July-August 2001), 3-13.

of the best in Central Europe during the Post-Communist Transition Rule period from 1989 to 1992 and the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period from 1993 to 1998.[167] Over the long-term Slovakia has the potential to be one of Central Europe's strongest performers. It has an educated workforce, a strategic location in the heart of Europe, an improving infrastructure, relatively open access to European Union markets, and an increasing number of companies that could compete in international markets.[168] According to the Western view of Slovakia in 1997, Slovakia's current and potential economic growth is positive and only political factors have kept the state out of NATO.[169]

Society. Slovakia boasted some of the most talented and imaginative leaders in the region in the realm of the non-profit and non-governmental sector. Aside from its diversity, sophistication, and relatively short existence, this influential sector was very cohesive and touted as one of the most dynamic and developed in Central Europe.[170] Extremely tight budgets and an unfavorable legal climate under Mečiar's rule made their task challenging, but their positive contribution to the development of a civil society was appreciated by many Slovaks.[171] NGO, religious, and union leaders played a pivotal role in the struggle for democracy and made a significant impact in the run up to the parliamentary election in 1998.

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[167] A brief economic analysis of key Central European states during the post-communist period is provided in the comparative analysis section of chapter four.
[168] U.S. Department of Commerce, National Trade Data Bank, *Slovakia Economic Trends and Outlook*, 19 February 1999.
[169] Michael Wyzan, "Slovakia: Dismal Economic Prospects Compound Political Failures," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* (4 November 1997).
[170] Congress, USAID Congressional Presentation, *Slovakia*, US FY 1999.
[171] Martin Bútora and Pavol Demeš, "Nonprofit Organizations and the Non-Governmental Sector," in *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 189.

Education in Slovakia was fundamentally sound, but governmental support for policies needed to promote reform was lacking. Mečiar's government publicly supported plans and programs required for the necessary reform, but failed to follow through with the promises. There was a decline in relative wages, while state control of local education programs increased through greater legislative control and budgetary constraints.[172]

Although freedom in media had dramatically improved since the period beginning with Totalitarian Stalinist Rule in 1948 and ending with the conclusion of the Soviet Normalization Rule in 1989, Slovakia could boast only partially free media during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period. According to a 1997 Survey of Press Freedom by Freedom House, Slovakia's press freedom rating was 49 within the range of 31 to 60 indicating that Slovakia's freedom of press was only partial. Media laws dating back to the 1960s required significant update, physical assaults and unfounded legal persecution of journalists were not investigated thoroughly, and official governmental bodies refused to provide accurate, timely and complete information to the public or media about governmental activities.[173] The media's ability to conduct their business freely without fear of persecution was increasingly impaired by the Mečiar government. According to Andy Hryc, General Manager of Radio TWIST, an independent radio station with no political affiliation, freedom of speech was becoming increasingly more difficult under Mečiar's government. He stated that, "the media that is primarily dependent on the government experienced terror, fear, censorship, and all those things. We can say what

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[172] Vladislav Rosa, "Education and Science," *Slovakia 1996,* ed. Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1996)

we want here...up to the point we have the money to pay for it [freedom of speech]."[174] In general most private media entities were independent, but the government strongly dominated and controlled public television.[175]

Ideally cultural issues should remain apolitical. However, since independence it became evident that culture in Slovakia began to diverge into two opposing camps: Mečiar's side and those desiring freedom of cultural expression. The first group of cultural leaders employed culture as a nationalistic ideology either to promote its political power or to enrich their own persons. The cultural leaders were in their positions because of their political support for Mečiar's ruling coalition. The other group, although it attempted to adhere to and promote democratic ideals, was ineffective largely due to a lack of hard-nosed political skills, which the first group possessed.[176]

While reform programs during the Post-Communist Transition Rule period helped promote freedom of speech, decentralization, and independent fundraising, signs of counter reform became evident under Mečiar's leadership as early as 1992. Dušan Slobodník, Mečiar's first Minister of Culture, instituted the gradual return to old authoritarian control in cultural institutions as was seen during the times of Soviet oppression. Slobodník was a proponent of "Slovakness" in all spheres of public life while limiting funding to cultural programs that did not follow Mečiar's political line. In a sense, culture was not based on national pride, but rather it was based on Slovak nationalism. Mečiar's next minister, Ivan Hudec, continued Slobodník's policies and

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[173] Ján Fule, "Media," in *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 186.
[174] Andy Hryc, Owner and General Manager Radio Twist, interview by author, tape recording, Radio Twist Headquarters, Bratislava, Slovakia, 19 December 1997.
[175] Ivan Vejvoda, "Finding Their Own Way," *Transitions* (June 1998): 80-81.

further undermined the legal autonomy of many cultural institutions. Artists became known as "good Slovaks" or "bad Slovaks," depending on their political affiliation.[177] Culture was again not an expression of artistic freedom but rather one of political Alliance under Mečiar's rule.

According to a 1991 census[178] over 70 percent of Slovakia's population was religious and confidence in religious institutions was, and continues to be, stable. Division of church and state was not possible because religious institutions were state regulated and financed since the Totalitarian Stalinist Rule period. But in early 1997 the state devised a set of principles to regulate church-state relations and eventually eliminate religious institutions' dependence on state financing. The principles, however, were not passed during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period as legislation and the state continued to fund and maintain some control religion in Slovakia. Despite this dependence religious institutions enjoyed the confidence of over two thirds of the population.[179]

Slovak society's reliance on government subsidies during this period was due, in part, to the legacy of socialism and communism dating back to the beginning of the Totalitarian Stalinist Rule period and due, in part, to Mečiar's desire to maintain control of the society and to promote his own political power.

Internal Politics. Slovakia was and continues to be a parliamentary democracy elected by universal suffrage for those 18 years and older with a unicameral legislature.

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[176] Ladislav Snopko, "Culture," *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 204.
[177] Ibid., 201-2.

The legislative branch, or parliament, is the 150-seat National Council or Narodna Rada. The parliament was charged with electing the president until May 1999 when the law was changed to allow the president to be elected directly by the people.[180] The Prime Minister serves as the Head of the Government, recommends Ministers to the President for appointment, has oversight of defense and security matters, and presides over the Council of Ministers, the supreme body of executive power. As the Head of the State, the President is the supreme commander of the armed forces, appoints the Prime Minister, can veto legislation, and can dissolve the National Council under limited circumstances. It is a system where the Prime Minister retains the greater powers. The 150-member National Council is elected by proportional representation from party lists for four-year terms. Individual parties must achieve a five-percent threshold of the national vote to gain representation in parliament. The threshold increases for coalitions of two or more parties. The National Council is the primary legislative body.[181]

According to Thomas Remington virtually all the former communist states have instituted some form of a presidential system, none have restored a monarchy, but the systems vary considerably in the relative powers of president and parliament. In general, parliaments predominate in Central Europe and strong presidents prevail in the former Soviet republics, but conflict between presidents and parliaments has been prevalent in

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[178] National Census of 3 March 1991 as reported in the Statistical Yearbook of the Slovak Republic, 1995, found in Miroslav Kollár, "Churches," *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 205.
[179] Ibid., 205-10.
[180] However, in May 1999 the new government changed the law and the second president, Rudolf Schuster, was elected for a five-year term directly by the people.
[181] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 28-30.

the post-communist environment.[182] A current debate among "transitologists" concerns the relative difference between presidential and parliamentary systems and the likelihood that the former will be more authoritarian. However, Slovakia seems not to fit the argument, since of all the Central European states it was the most authoritarian, while at the same time having a parliamentary system.

Slovakia has an independent judiciary system with the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court serving as the highest bodies. The Supreme Court is the highest appellate court for normal judicial matters, while the Constitutional Court has jurisdiction over constitutional issues, governmental disputes, election validity, and charges against the president.[184] Executive power is divided between the president and the prime minister, legislative power is exercised through the parliament, and judicial power rests with the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court. But the bulk of the political power is concentrated in the legislative branch thereby weakening the Presidency.[185]

The Slovak Constitution was adopted on 1 September 1992. Its predecessors were established under the auspices of a Czechoslovak state. The first Czechoslovak Constitution of 1920 was fashioned after the charter of the French Third Republic.[186] In 1948 the Czechoslovak Republic wad redefined as a single state comprised of two Slavic nations under provisions of a nationalized industry. Its Constitution established the National Assembly as the supreme authority of the people; however, there was a Slovak

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[182] Thomas F. Remington, ed., *Parliaments in Transition: The New Legislative Politics in the Former USSR and Eastern Europe* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994).
[184] Ibid., 30.
[185] Christopher Sartorius, "Democratic Control of Slovak Defense Forces: Structural Progress and Governmental Interference," (master's thesis, Joint Military Intelligence College Masters Thesis, August 1998), 50.
[186] Eric Stein, *Czecho/Slovakia: Ethnic Conflict, Constitutional Fissure, Negotiated Breakup* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 37.

National Council and a government for the Slovaks through a board of commissioners. In 1960 the state was renamed the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and its Constitution was modeled after the Soviet Union's Constitution. Slovakia's board of commissioners was eradicated and central powers were reinforced. In 1968 a change to a more federal structure was agreed upon and certain autonomy was returned to the Czech and Slovak National Councils. After the 1989 revolution a pluralistic political systems was passed via constitutional amendments and in 1990 the state was renamed the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic at first then the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic shortly thereafter. Differences over autonomy and the functions of a federal government loomed until the two became separate states with separate constitutions.[187]

The current Slovak Constitution is a document that concluded many years of political, intellectual, and personal struggles of the Slovak people. Some have contended that the Constitution was not well written with respect to the division of power between the government, parliament and the president. Numerous books and articles have addressed its weaknesses.[188] However, the Constitution is not the biggest problem in Slovak politics. The problem is that the politicians in power who swore to protect and uphold it have not always followed it.[189] According to Rudolf Schuster, Chairman of the Party of Civic Understanding (SOP), Mayor of Košice, and current Slovak President since in 1999, under Mečiar's rule

> ...the Constitution was not upheld... constitutional rulings were not abided by...democracy was explained differently and laws were followed

[187] Roger East, *Revolutions in Eastern Europe* (London: Pinter Publishers Limited, 1992), 44-45.
[188] Miroslav Wlachovský, Head, Department of Analyses and Policy Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, interview by author, Arlington, Virginia, 1 September 1999.
[189] Jana Pankovčinová and Juraj Hrabko, "'Ustava Slovenskej republicky: Yhasínajúci maják," *SME plus*, ročnik 50, (28 August 1997): 7.

> by some and not by others. The parliament, the government, or the leadership should not make decisions that are in conflict with the Constitution or with legislation.[190]

Although it is a political document, the Constitution does make note of the historical struggles of the Slovak people, which had occurred as far back as the beginning of the Conquerors Rule period in the 9th century. In the preamble the authors highlight the many challenges Slovaks faced throughout their history while endeavoring to maintain their own existence, language and national identity and ultimately achieve statehood. The preamble is as follows:

> We the Slovak people, bearing in mind the political and cultural heritage of our predecessors, the experience gained throughout centuries of struggle for our national existence, and statehood, mindful of the spiritual bequest of Cyril and Methodius, and the historical legacy of Great Moravia, recognizing the natural right of nations to self-determination, together with members of national minorities and ethnic groups living in the Slovak Republic, in the interest of continuous peaceful cooperation with other democratic countries, endeavoring to implement democratic forms of government, guarantee a life of freedom, and promote spiritual, cultural and economic prosperity, we the citizens of the Slovak Republic, have, herewith and by our representatives, adopted this Constitution.[191]

Note the reference to the Empire of Great Moravia, which was established in the early 9th century. The preamble also mentions the two missionaries from the Byzantine Church, Cyril and Methodius, who came to the area in the mid 9th century and invented a new alphabet for the language of the southern Slavs.[192] These references to early historical

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[190] Rudolf Schuster, Chairman, SOP, Mayor of Košice, interview by author, tape recording, 13 May 1998, Bratislava, Slovakia.

[191] This was taken from the Slovak government's translation of the Slovak Constitution as issued by the National Council of the Slovak Republic in The Constitution of the Slovak Republic (Slovakia: Pressfoto, n.d.). Another translated version by the Center for the Study of Constitutionalism in Eastern Europe at the University of Chicago Law School can be found in Mathew Rhodes, "National Identity and Minority Rights in the Constitutions of the Czech Republic and Slovakia," *East European Quarterly,* vol. XXIX, no.3, (September 1995), 359-360.

[192] The alphabet was called glagolitic. Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin Press, 1996), 30.

events dating back to the Conquerors Rule period evident in a national document, the Preamble to the Slovak Constitution, provide the basis for historical events to influence the Slovak government and its political affairs.

Between 1993 and 1998 Slovakia has had four different governments, two of which were led by Mečiar.[193] Following the 1992 elections Mečiar's HZDS party won 74 of the 150 legislative seats and formed a government consisting entirely of HZDS members and close allies. Kovač, a former HZDS member, was elected by the parliament as independent Slovakia's first president in March 1993.

The government's political instability became clearly evident when in the first six months of 1993 four government ministers from the ruling coalition quit or were fired and one minister formed an opposition group in the parliament.[194] Then in March 1994, after losing many other party members to opposing political parties, Mečiar's coalition lost its parliamentary majority and HZDS formed a coalition with the far right-wing SNS after it was unable to form a coalition with the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL). Due to the instability of the government, Mečiar's HZDS-led government was toppled as a result of a vote of no confidence in the parliament. This, coupled with Mečiar's ongoing conflicts with President Kovač, resulted in a regime change and marked the second time that Mečiar was removed from office. A broad coalition, led by Prime Minister Jozef Moravčik, a former foreign minister under Mečiar, was appointed by President Kovač and took over the government five days later. Praised by Western institutions for its

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[193] Mečiar led a previous Slovak government when he was elected prime minister in 1990. Mečiar's government fell in April 1991 when he was removed by the Slovak National Council's presidium for continued "political mistakes" and Jan Čarnogurský took over the prime minister's post.

[194] Minton F. Goldman, *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 147.

democratic rule, Moravčik's government increased the country's stability and proceeded with free market reforms. This six-month period was a time of great hope for the people of Slovakia and for international actors interested in the democratization process and future of Slovakia. This government made significant progress in dealing with Slovakia's problems, restarting economic reform,[195] promoting integration with Western institutions, and exhibiting a positive, democratic image to the international community. Slovakia was unable to sustain this positive progress for very long.

The 1994 parliamentary election campaign was Slovakia's first campaign since the state gained independence. Despite the brief success of Moravčik's government, Mečiar was still seen as a protector of Slovak interests, a political martyr, the most popular politician in Slovakia and the central figure of the 1994 campaign.[196] The core opposition parties, Christian Democratic Movement (KDH), Democratic Union (DU), SDL, and Coexsitence, were

> strange bedfellows...who could only cooperate by cobbling together compromises on the basic issues that divided them—including... privatization and the lustration law—or by postponing action altogether.[197]

Two of the issues that bound them concerned the fact that they all supported Slovakia's transition to a full-fledge democracy and they all opposed Mečiar.

Fueled by revenge, Mečiar took the offensive during the campaign and repeatedly challenged the constitutionality of his most recent ouster. In addition, he very skillfully told voters what they wanted to hear, such as no rapid economic transition, no loss of

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[195] Sharon L. Wolchik, "Democratization and Political Participation in Slovakia," in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott, ed., *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 233.
[196] Sharon Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 148.

valuable national property to greedy investors at home or abroad, and no conciliatory policy toward the Hungarian minority.[198] His tactics worked, and he and HZDS won the largest number of votes in the 1994 parliamentary elections with 61 seats.[199] After months of deal making HZDS formed a coalition government with the extremist far-right SNS and the far left-wing Association of Slovak Workers (ZRS). While his political tactics became increasingly harsh, Mečiar maintained a solid base of support due to his charismatic personality, which resonated among many Slovaks from different walks of life.[200] But his largest base of political support came from Eastern Slovakia, areas populated by less-educated rural elderly people, primarily female.

Mečiar allies acted quickly to undo the positive steps of the previous government and to "conduct massive purges of sensitive institutions such as the television and radio boards."[201] Mečiar returned as prime minister in December marking his second political comeback. Shortly after the election, he and his party unsuccessfully attempted to challenge DU's participation in the election, continued to threaten an investigation of Kovač's prerogative to call for a vote of no confidence earlier that year, continually looked for ways to discredit and remove the president and even called for Kovač's resignation.[202] HZDS and its allies abandoned their pro-Western attitude and began to change their rhetoric. They put less emphasis on Western integration efforts, such as

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[197] Ibid.
[198] Minton F. Goldman, *Slovakia Since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy* (Westport: Prager Publishers, 1999), 71.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid, 71.
[201] Sharon Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).
[202] Ibid.

joining the EU and NATO and placed a greater emphasis on nationalism verging on isolationism.[203]

Mečiar's political style—chauvinistic nationalism, endemic cronyism, and no-holds-barred vendettas—became increasingly more prominent. His form of leadership had two primary effects on Slovakia—it aggravated internal tensions and undercut efforts toward Western integration.[204] Mečiar remained in power until the September 1998 election, when Mikulaš Dzurinda, Chairman of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), formed a government with three other parties and took over as the prime minister.[205] I cover the 1998 elections in the last section of this chapter.

During the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period Western leaders and institutions repeatedly criticized Slovakia for its increasing deficiencies in democratic development. Mečiar's actions amounted to the gradual destruction of basic democratic principles and human rights. For example, Mečiar managed to politicize many government and private institutions such as the Slovak Information Service (SIS) and free press organizations; manipulated the Constitution for his party's benefit; controlled the corrupt privatization process of state-owned entities and enriched political allies; cancelled a referendum on NATO membership and direct presidential elections; illegally removed a parliamentarian from his seat; repeatedly violated minority rights; and was rumored to be involved in kidnappings and assassinations. Immediately prior to the 1998 election, Mečiar amended the Constitution, thereby changing the election law and media coverage guidelines in his

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[203] Martin Bútora, "Some Foreign Implications of Early Elections in Slovakia," in *Slovakia Parliamentary Elections 1994*, Sona Szomolanyi and Grigorij Meseznikov, ed., (Bratislava: Interlingua Publishing House, 1995), 60-85.

[204] Matthew Rhodes, "Slovakia After Meciar," in *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 48, no. 4 (July-August 2001), 3-13.

party's favor. Furthermore, he politicized the military by appointing a loyalist as the new Chief of the General Staff of the Army of the Slovak Republic (ASR) and initiated actions to take control of the most popular and only independent television station "Markiza" weeks before the parliamentary elections took place.

A case closely followed by the international community was the unconstitutional ouster of National Council Deputy Frantisek Gaulieder from Mečiar's own HZDS party. Parliamentary Chairman Ivan Gasparivoč, HZDS, expelled Gaulieder from his position as a parliamentary deputy in 1996, when Gaulieder left the HZDS party. Ranking HZDS members feared that if Gaulieder was reinstated to his deputy position as a member of an opposing party, other HZDS deputies and parliamentary members might follow his example. Gasparivoč claimed that he received a letter of resignation from Gaulieder, which Gaulieder claimed was a forgery. Despite protests, opposition members of parliament, the international community, and a ruling by the Constitutional Court declared the removal unconstitutional. The National Council controlled by Mečiar's HZDS party disregarded the Constitutional Court's ruling and never reinstated Gaulieder. This was a clear example of Mečiar's government's lack of commitment to constitutional democracy at the highest levels[206] and a blow to Slovakia's democratization.

Many other disturbing trends were evident in Slovakia under Mečiar's leadership, including serious animosities between Prime Minister Mečiar and President Kovač. Two of the main antagonistic issues were the failed referendum of May 1997 and the

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[205] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 30; and Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe, *The 1998 Parliamentary Election in Slovakia,* 5 October 1998.

[206] Christopher Sartorius, "Democratic Control of Slovak Defense Forces: Structural Progress and Governmental Interference, (masters thesis, Joint Military Intelligence College, August 1998), 70; Human Rights Watch, *Human Rights Watch World Report 1998* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1998), 277.

kidnapping of Kovač's son. Acting under his constitutional authority as president, Kovač called for a referendum in May1997 to determine the public's response to three questions on joining and participating in NATO. A fourth question on direct presidential elections was later added to the referendum. Mečiar's government opposed the fourth question and the issue went to the Constitutional Court. The Court issued a decision, and both sides argued that the verdict supported their point. A political battled between Kovač and Mečiar ensued. In the end Mečiar's government distributed the ballots with only the first three questions. The referendum results were declared invalid because less than 50 percent of eligible voters participated. In actuality, less than 10 percent of voters turned out, probably in protest of the government's actions. Each side blamed the other for anti-democratic, anti-constitutional behavior. Arrests and lawsuits ensued. The international community took note because "the referendum proved to be a non-event of the most dangerous sort which further damaged Slovakia's image abroad."[207] When Kovač's term expired on 3 March 1998, Mečiar assumed presidential powers and declared amnesty for all government officials involved in the failed referendum (and in other questionable activities) during his tenure.

In 1995 abductors kidnapped President Kovač's son and illegally transported him to Austria in the trunk of a car. Austrian authorities detained Kovač's son for months until they determined how to respond to an extradition request from German prosecutors,

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[207] Karen Henderson, "The Slovak Republic: Catching up in the Dual Expansion" (paper presented at the Dual Expansion Process in Europe Pane, British International Studies Association Conference, Brighton, England, 14-16 December 1998), 7.

who sought to question him about a financial scandal known as the Technopol case.[208] The President's son was eventually released and returned home. Some claim that the abduction was masterminded by Mečiar and executed by the SIS in an effort to discredit the president and solidify Mečiar's power base. Two police investigators in charge of the case were dismissed after raising allegations of SIS involvement. The third investigator closed the case due to insufficient evidence. To put the issue to rest Mečiar granted blanket amnesty to those involved in the kidnapping case.

There was another disturbing trend evident in Slovakia – a divergence from fundamental human rights for minorities.[209] Under Mečiar's leadership, the National Council declared in November 1990 that languages other than Slovak would be permitted only in official business in areas where 20 percent or more of the population spoke another language, thus establishing constraints when none were previously mandated.[210] In 1995 the government reduced subsidies for minority cultural associations and periodicals.[211] A year later another controversial law took effect requiring the use of Slovak in virtually all aspects of public life. In 1997 bilingual street signs were ordered removed and the Ministry of Education ended a practice of issuing bilingual student report cards replacing them with Slovak-only documents.[212] Several teachers were fired

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[208] Magda Vášáryová, Board Chairman, Slovak Foreign Policy Association, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Bratislava, Slovakia, 19 December 1997.
[209] U.S. Department of State, *Slovak Republic Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1998*, 26 February 1999; and Committee on Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Human Rights and Democratization in Slovakia*, September 1997; and Committee on Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Report on Human Rights and the Process of NATO Enlargement*, June 1997.
[210] Mathew Rhodes, "National Identity and Minority Rights in the Constitutions of the Czech Republic and Slovakia," *East European Quarterly,* vol. XXIX, No.3, (September 1995): 360.
[211] Martin Bútora and Peter Huncik, ed., *Global Report on Slovakia: Comprehensive Analyses From 1995 and trends from 1996 (*Bratislava: Sandor Maria Foundation, 1997), 73.
[212] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society (*Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 39-40; Andrew Ludanyi, "Confrontation on the Danube: Slovaks versus Hungarians," *Analysis of Current Events,* vol. 9, no. 10 (October 1997): 5, 8.

in early 1998 for issuing mid-year reports in Hungarian and Slovak.[213] These and other such legislative acts had a cumulative impact on minority and human rights issues by reducing governmental support and mandating restrictions the use of minority languages both spoken and in print. A Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) (also known as the Helsinki Commission) *Report on Human Rights and NATO Enlargement* noted that government officials displayed hostility and intolerance toward ethnic minorities. The report declared that Slovakia was not in substantial compliance with the provision relating to human rights, democracy and the rule of law.[214]

As a result of the failed referendum, the high-profile kidnapping case and other instances of disregard for justice, the West became increasingly concerned about the government's commitment to the rule of law.[215] In the words of President Kovač, if

> the government would change the politics of the future government, future parliament, and remove that which the West says is a deficit in democracy here...today's hurdles would be removed.[216]

The failed referendum, the abduction of Kovač's son, a failure to uphold the Constitution, and Mečiar's other questionable actions resulted in official demarches from the EU and harsh diplomatic words from the West.[217]

A 1997 Freedom House survey of 25 Central European and newly independent states showed that Slovakia was not classified as possessing a consolidated democracy or market economy such as the Višegrád states. Rather it was classified as having a transitional government and economy on the verge of consolidation and ranked below

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[213] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 31.
[214] Commission of Security and Cooperation in Europe, *Report on Human Rights and the Process of NATO Enlargement*, June 1997, 31-32.
[215] Ibid., 31.

Russia and others.[218] According to a 1998 Freedom House assessment of democratization and freedoms Slovakia did not fair very well either. They authors contend that

> the contrast between the leaders, the laggards, and the losers in the post-communist world of 27 states are very sharp indeed. Romania, Slovakia, and Bulgaria are among the laggards; the countries of former Yugoslavia, such as Serbia, Bosnia, and Croatia, respect democracy in words only.[219]

While the focus in the past has been on democratic transition in Latin America and Southern Europe, many scholars have recently written about post-communist transition to democracy in Central Europe and the former Soviet Republic.[220]

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[216] Michal Kovač, President of Slovakia, interview by author, tape recording, Presidential Palace, Bratislava, Slovakia, 16 December 1997.
[217] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 30.
[218] Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander Motyl, and Boris Shor, *Nations in Transit 1997: Civil Society, Democracy and Markets in East Central Europe and the Newly Independent States* (United States: Freedom House, Inc, 1997)
[219] Adrian Karatrnycky, ed., *Freedom in the World: The Annual Survey of Political Rights & Civil Liberties* (New York: Freedom House, 1998).
[220] Guellermo O'Donnell and Phillipe Schnitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Guellermo O'Donnell, Phillipe Schnitter, and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1986); Adam Przeworski, "Some Problems in the Study of the Transition to Democracy," in Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandoruros, and Hans-Kurgen Puhle, ed., *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press: 1995); Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press: 1991); Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America (*Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Adam Przeworski, "Democracy as a Contingent Outcome of Conflicts," *Constitutionalism and Democracy,* ed. Jon Elster and Rune Slagstad (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 59-80; Valerie Bunce, "Rethinking Recent Democratization: Lessons from the Postcommunist Experience," *World Politics,* vol. 55, no 2 (January 2003) ;167-192; Steven Saxonberg, "Regime Behavior in 1989: A Comparison of Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland," *Problems of Post-Communism,* vol. 47, no. 4 (July – August 2000): 45-58; Fritz Plasser and Andreas Pribersky, ed., *Political Culture in East Central Europe*, (England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1996); B Crawford and Andrew Lipjhart, "Explaining Political and Economic Change in Post-Communist Europe," *Comparative Political Studies*, no. 2 (1995); David Olson and Philip Norton, ed., *The New Parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited: 1996); Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters and Kris Deschouwer, ed., *Social Democracy in a Post-Communist Europe* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited: 1994); Klaus von Beyme, *Transition to Democracy in Eastern Europe* (London: MacMillan Press Limited: 1996); Sona Szomolanya and John A. Gould, *Slovakia: Problems of Democratic Consolidation* (Bratislava, Slovak Political Science Association, 1997); Sabrina P. Ramet, *Whose Democracy? Nationalism, Religion, and the Doctrine of Collective Rights in Post-1989 Eastern Europe* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997); David Stark and

External Politics. Since the beginning of the Post-Communist Transition Rule period in 1989, the central theme of Slovakia's foreign policy was integration with European institutions and improvement of bilateral relations with neighboring and nearby states.[221] In more specific terms Slovakia's most prominent foreign priorities were to strengthen relations, harmonize legislation, and obtain membership in the EU and other European institutions, improve national security through membership in Euro-Atlantic security structures, promote economic cooperation with neighbors, the EU and G-7 states, and the Russian Federation, become a reliable partner, and participate in resolution of human rights and national minority issues. Clearly Slovakia's foreign policy was influenced by its geopolitical location at the crossroads of various ethnic, cultural, and religious traditions in Central Europe.

The creation of the Višegrád Group in February 1991 occurred in reaction to the impending demise of the Warsaw Pact and the emerging security concerns of Central European states – Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Unresolved issues among the three (later the four members, following Czechoslovakia's split) and Slovakia's divergence from a path toward alternate security arrangements under Mečiar led to destabilization of the group. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic continued their

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Laszlo Bruszt, *Postsocialist Pathways: Transforming Politics and Property in East Central Europe* (England: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Jon Elster, Claus Offe, and Ulrich K. Preuss, *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, *The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995); Sharon L. Wolchik, *Czechoslovakia in Transition: Politics, Economy and Society* (London: Pinter Publishers Limited, 1991), Carol Graham, *Safety Nets, Politics, and the Poor: Transitions to Market Economies (*Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1994; Constantine C. Menges, ed., *Transitions from Communism in Russia and Eastern Europe* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1994); Thomas F. Remington, ed., *Parliaments in Transition: The New Legislative Politics in the Former USSR and Eastern Europe (*Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1994); among others.

[221] Ibid., 36.

relationship in the Višegrád Group and became members of NATO in March 1999. Slovakia, however, was excluded from Višegrád.

During the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period relations with neighboring states (Czech Republic, Poland, Austria, and Ukraine) were cool, but fairly stable except for relations with Hungary, which were often labeled contentious and "burdened" by historical events. While relations with Budapest were unresolved and had the potential to become increasingly conflict ridden this were not the main reason that NATO did not invite Slovakia as a member. Rather the reason for the non-invitation was the unwillingness and inability of Mečiar's government to ameliorate relations between the neighboring states, among other undemocratic practices. Relations with Russia were complicated by Russia's large debt to Slovakia and by the international perception that Bratislava was fostering a "special" relationship with Moscow. Relations with the international institutions and the West were often strained primarily due to the internal political situation.

While having the potential to be much stronger, relations with the Czech Republic were barely cordial. A seventy-plus year history together since the beginning of the Stable Democratic Rule period and extensive social, cultural and personal ties could have been the basis for a closer bilateral relationship. But under Mečiar's government political dialogue at the highest levels, especially at the prime minister level, was surprisingly rare and many issues involving the division of federal assets following the split were never resolved.[222] Mečiar's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Zdenka Kramplova, HZDS party member, explained that "the relations are in a way encumbered with unresolved issues of

the federal treasury..."[223] According to Mečiar's Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, HZDS party member Dušan Slobodník, relations were "correct... (and) maintained on a decent level."[224] Despite Mečiar's policies, traditional ties were renewed between the Czech Republic and Slovakia and relations at all levels except for the highest political levels began improving.[225] The reason for this was because the relations between the Czech and Slovak people continued to be good, especially in the realm of cultural exchanges, the militaries, and familial ties. The Slovak and Czech people understood that it was politics between the leaders that complicated their lives.[226] The people, as opposed to Mečiar, believed that mutual respect and a closer relationship between their two states would only benefit each party.[227]

Based on a long history of cooperation relations with Poland were stable, but their full potential was not realized during Mečiar's tenure. Expanded economic relations, security issues, border crossings, tourism, and anti-crime measures rank among the issues that were discussed between the two states for improved cooperation.[228]

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[222] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 84.
[223] Zdenka Kramplová, Minister of Foreign Affairs, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bratislava, Slovakia, 7 May 1998.
[224] Dušan Slobodnik, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 December 1997.
[225] Ľudovít Černák, Deputy Chairman, DU, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997.
[226] Miro Wlachovský, Director, Foreign Policy Research Center, interview by author, tape recording, Foreign Policy Research Center, Bratislava, Slovakia, 22 December 1997; Jocelyn Greene, interview by author, tape recording, United States Embassy, Prague, Czech Republic, 11 December 1997.
[227] Elvira Chadimova, Slovak business woman, interview by author, tape recording, Hotel Echo, Bratislava, Slovakia, December 1997.
[228] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 87-88.

Relations with Austria were traditionally strong because of their common border, mutual support, and large Austrian investment in Slovakia,[229] but some contentious issued remained. A minor issue of contention that put a strain on bilateral relations was the unresolved kidnapping of President Kovač's son as previous mentioned. A major issue of contention that caused friction between the two states was the controversy over the safety of the Slovak Mochovce and Jaslovske Bohuncie nuclear power plants. The Mochovce power plant, begun during the communist era, is located in Slovakia 100 kilometers from Vienna. Although it was declared safe to open by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Austrians had argued that the plant posed environmental dangers. Despite Austria's objections one of the reactors was activated in 1998 after IAEA declared it safe to operate and construction to complete the plant continued.[230] Even though Austria is one of Slovakia's most important neighbors high-level governmental contacts between Slovakia and Austria were virtually non-existent during Mečiar's tenure.[231]

Slovakia's largest neighbor is Ukraine. Although the two share a common border, diplomatic relations were extremely limited during this period. During a rare two-day meeting in 1996 the two prime ministers focused on promoting a continued increase in mutual trade. Despite optimism on both sides the greatest obstacle was the absence of a bilateral payment mechanism, which compels companies to use a clearing currency and

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[229] Austria trailed only Germany in the amount of foreign direct investment in Slovakia and is one of Slovakia's largest trading partners. Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 37.

[230] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 86-87; and Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 37.

[231] Magda Vášáryová, Board Chairman, Slovak Foreign Policy Association, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Bratislava, Slovakia, 19 December 1997.

third party financial services. A key unresolved issue in Slovak Ukraine relations was the coordination of a joint approach to the transit of Russian raw materials through Ukraine and Slovakia to Western Europe. Ukraine regarded the Jamel-Europe pipeline from the Russian Federation through Poland to Germany as a threat to its vital interests. Ukraine resented Slovakia for not consulting with its government before beginning negotiations with Russia about a pipeline spur from Poland through Slovakia to Western European destinations and felt that Slovakia was placing its bilateral relationship with the Russian Federation above that with Ukraine.[232] Limited high-level communication between Slovakia and Ukraine occurred. However, much room existed for improved bilateral relations under Mečiar's government.

Relations between the Slovaks and the Hungarians were tense since the 10th century when the prolonged period of Hungarian Rule began. Unresolved issues and historical resentments on both sides during that period put a strain on relations between Bratislava and Budapest. Instead of making an attempt to ameliorate the historic tensions, Mečiar openly continued to foster them. Hungarians constitute the largest minority in Slovakia and the government's policies toward ethnic minorities received some criticism. However, some Slovak politicians loyal to Mečiar contended that Slovakia's policy toward minorities was not flawed, and that the Hungarians were treated well. While some friction between Slovak leaders and Hungarian minority leaders on the

[232] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 88.

issue of minorities was likely historical in nature, the political elite in power did not attempt to improve relations and often exacerbated the tension.[233]

Issues surrounding the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros hydroelectric power plant were definitely a matter of contention and a subject of an international lawsuit during this period. The Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros dam was a massive Hungarian and Czechoslovak communist-era project begun in 1977 and backed by Austrian financiers to create hydroelectric power for the region. In 1989 Hungary unilaterally withdrew from the 1977 treaty that established the project, citing fears of environmental damage. Slovakia inherited the project after the split from the Czech Republic. In an attempt to recoup the enormous construction expenses necessary for completion of the dam, Slovakia diverted 80 percent of the flow of the Danube on the Slovak side of the border, generating electricity only for Slovakia. A serious dispute ensued. Hungary contended that the diversion caused environmental damage and that fertile wetlands dried up. Several environmental studies showed that 90 percent of the flora and fauna over an area of 32,000 acre area was threatened with extinction. Hungary refused to build a dam on its side of the border and demanded that the Slovak-built dam be torn down. In 1993 both states agreed to submit their dispute to the binding arbitration of the International Court of Justice. In 1997 the court ruled that both sides had broken the treaty. Hungary was wrong to suspend, and then abandon its obligations to the project, and Czechoslovakia had proceeded illegally when it diverted the river through the Slovak dam. The court ordered the two states to negotiate in "good faith" to insure the objectives of the 1977 treaty were met and to compensate each other for damages. The two states formed

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[233] Miro Wlachovský, Director, Foreign Policy Research Center, interview by author, tape recording,

delegations to negotiate a final agreement in accordance with the court's decision.[234] But the issue remained unresolved during Mečiar's tenure as prime minister. While relations with Hungary and the Hungarian minority were less than optimal they were not the leading reason why Slovakia was excluded from NATO.

Relations with Russia have been influenced by Slovakia's historical experiences with the Soviet Union since 1948 when the Totalitarian Stalinist Rule period began, by Slovakia's continued dependency on Russian energy supplies, and Bratislava's concerns about the future stability of Russia. While other Central European states firmly placed themselves on a path toward Western integration, Mečiar and members of his ruling coalition repeatedly suggested that Slovakia should "serve as a bridge between East and West." Over 120 bilateral agreements between Slovakia and Russia were signed through mid-1998. Not only was this a disproportionately high number, as compared to the number Slovakia had with other states, the agreements included treaties involving energy supplies, military assistance, and intelligence cooperation. Such agreements complicated Slovakia's relationship with the West.[235]

By signing many undisclosed agreements with Russia Slovakia appeared to have more frequent diplomatic contact and greater political, economic, and military bilateral relations with Russia than with any NATO, EU or G-7 state.[236] Mečiar attempted to

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Foreign Policy Research Center, Bratislava, Slovakia, 22 December 1997.

[234] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 86.; Jane Perlez, "World Court Leaves Fight Over Danube Unresolved," *New York Times International 26* September 1997, A8; James Drake, "A Dam Makes for Bad Neighbors...But There's Hope for Compromise," *Business Week International,* 19 May 1997; and Andrew Ludanyi, "Confrontation on the Danube: Slovaks versus Hungarians," *Analysis of Current Events,* vol. 9, no. 10 (October 1997): 5, 8.

[235] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 94.

[236] Ibid., 94-96.

show that he had a "special" relationship with Russia by holding "secret" meetings with Russian leaders without disclosing the content or results to the public. According to Ján Figeľ, Deputy Chairman of the KDH and member of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs,

> It appears that the country has better cooperation with the East than the West. The truth is basically different. The problem is the government. Important visitors from the West at the level of the prime minister didn't come to Slovakia during the past few years and Slovakia did not even receive an invitation from the West. But they [Mečiar's ruling party members] go to Moscow every second or third month—officially, semi-officially, and secretly.[237]

Subsequent investigations of Mečiar's meetings led by the Dzurinda-led democratic government did not reveal any secret agreements between Mečiar and Russia.[238] They were just a ploy to increase Mečiar's popularity with his political supporters.

As many other states, Slovakia tried to expand its role in the Russian market. Because Russia owed Slovakia a large economic debt,[239] imports of fuel, oil, steel, wool and other raw materials, which were traditionally imported from Russia, needed to be increased.[240] Despite Russia's formidable influence over Slovakia since the communists had seized power in 1948, thus beginning the Totalitarian Stalinist Rule period, the 1968 Soviet-led Warsaw Pact occupation of Czechoslovakia (which a majority of Slovaks

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[237] Ján Figeľ, Deputy Chairman, KDH, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 May 1998.

[238] Miro Wlachovský, Head, Department of Analyses and Policy Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interview by author, Arlington, Virginia, 1 September 1999.

[239] The Russians owed Slovakia approximately $1.2 billion in 1998 according to Zdenka Kramplová, Minister of Foreign Affairs under Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar.

[240] Michal Kovač, President of Slovakia, interview by author, tape recording, Presidential Palace, Bratislava, Slovakia, 16 December 1997; Jozef Guydoš, State Secretary, Ministry of Defense, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998. Dušan Slobodník, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 December 1997; Štefan Krištof, Colonel, Slovak Defense Attaché, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Embassy, Washington, D.C., 10 October 1997; and Zdenka Kramplová,

resent very strongly to this day), and the perpetuation of the perception that Slovakia was fostering closer than normal ties with Russia, even pro-democratic leaders in Slovakia believed that imports from Russia needed to be increased in order to recoup some of Slovakia's tremendous financial losses to Russia.[241] On the other hand, certain critics saw the unique relationship as one where Russian leaders were using and abusing Slovakia for their own gain.[242] Whatever the reason, under Mečiar's lead Slovakia's bilateral relations with Russia were extremely close and frequent, more so than with any other neighbor or any other state. This caused the West to question Slovakia's commitment to joining Western institutions.

Slovakia's relations with the United States, as well as with other Western states, were tense because the West consistently raised concerns about the deterioration of democracy, fundamental human rights, the rule of law, and free market reform in Slovakia. The concerns, focused on the actions of Mečiar's ruling coalition, contributed to less than optimal bilateral or multilateral relations.[243] Foreign relations with other Western states were established; however, efforts by the Slovak government to improve or expand relations were limited despite the fact that the populace hoped for greater Western ties and opportunities for cooperation.

Following independence Slovakia retained membership in international organizations previously held by Czechoslovakia and began working toward full membership in other European organizations. Slovakia is a member of the United

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Minister of Foreign Affairs, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bratislava, Slovakia, 7 May 1998.

[241] Boris Zala, interview by author, tape recording, Bratislava, Slovakia, 16 January 1998.

[242]Miro Wlachovský, Director, Foreign Policy Research Center, interview by author, tape recording, Foreign Policy Research Center, Bratislava, Slovakia, 22 December 1997.

Nations (UN) and a number of UN agencies, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It is also a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), an associate of the EU, an observer at the Western European Union (WEU), and an active participant in the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Slovakia has a full-time liaison officer at the Southern Headquarters Allied Power in Europe (SHAPE) and holds memberships in the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. In June 1995, Slovakia, in addition to ten other hopefuls, applied for full membership in the EU. None of the original ten applicants had met the economic criteria by that point. After repeated warnings from EU officials that Bratislava was not making progress Slovakia was left out of the fast track applicants in July 1997 and singled out for specifically not meeting the political criteria.

Slovakia was a newly established state in the process of transitioning from a difficult post-communist period to a democratic system. It did not display behavior in its internal or external affairs during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period that would lead international actors to believe that the Slovak government was serious about implementing a true democracy and integrating into Western institutions. While other Central European states experienced difficulties in their transition to democracies, democratization in Slovakia was seen as less than optimal.

Defense. One of the greatest challenges a new Slovakia faced was establishing a national security structure – developing defense policies, creating a military based on

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[243] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of*

Western standards, and integrating into Euro Atlantic security structures specifically the WEU and NATO.

Slovak national security policy follows its national interest, which consists of ensuring Slovak sovereignty, territorial integrity, boundary preservation, economic prosperity, social stability and international recognition. The official direction of Slovak security orientation has been to obtain membership Euro-Atlantic security structures, primarily NATO, WEU and the EU. This direction was reaffirmed in the *Fundamental Goal and Principle of National Security* approved by the National Council on 21 June 1996.[244] Official documents reflect that Slovakia considers NATO is the most effective existing trans-Atlantic security organization that can guarantee adequate states security and support Slovakia's return to the values of democracy, human rights, and justice.[245]

Slovakia does not consider any other state its enemy, but has concerns about instability in neighboring countries and Europe as a whole.[246] Therefore, participation in PfP, OSCE, and various UN organizations and peacekeeping missions are viewed as important programs and necessary prerequisites for admission into Western security structures.[247]

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*Society* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 92-94.

[244] Miroslav Wlachovský, „Armáda SR a národná bezpečnost", in *Slovensko 1997 Súhrnná správa o stave spoločnosti a trendoch na rok 1998*, ed. Martin Bútora and Michal Ivantyšyn (Bratislava: Institút Pre Verejné Otázky, 1998), 305.

[245] "Ministerstvo Obrany Slovenskej Republiky," [cited 4 April 1999]; available from http://www.defense.gov.sk/ INTERNET; and Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 14.

[246] "Ibid.

[247] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 14.

The government of Slovakia maintains civilian control of the military through the Ministry of Defense (MOD).[248] The Slovak MOD is the central body responsible for the defense of air space, command of the ASR, and political and military control of strategic defense planning. The ASR was established by National Council Act number 3/1993 as a crucial part of the armed forces of the Slovak Republic. Its mission is to protect freedom, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Slovakia; prevent national disasters, catastrophes and other large scale accidents; and accomplish UN Peacekeeping Force missions and missions associated with other military institutions and international organizations. The General Staff of the Army is the supreme command body. The Army consists of Ground Forces, Air Forces and Air Defense, Military Police, Military Regional Administration, Military Formations and Facilities.

From its inception the ASR had worked to transform itself into a viable self-defense force capable of fulfilling its established mission and integrating into Euro-Atlantic military structures. A three-stage transformation plan through 2000 based on a more Western-style military capable of integrating into NATO was outlined.

In the six-year period following independence Slovakia enjoyed both success and disappointment in its economy, society, politics and defense arenas. Economically

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[248] Extensive literature on civil-military relations during the democratization process is available. See Marybeth Petersen Ulrich, *Democratizing Communist Militaries: The Cases of the Czech Republic and Russian Armed Forces* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Jeffrey Simon, *NATO Enlargement & Central Europe: A Study in Civil-Military Relations* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996); Felipe Agüero, "Legacies of Transition: Institutionalism, the Military, and Democracy in South America," *Mershon International Studies Review,* vol. 42, no. 2 (November 1998); Felipe Agüero, "A Political Army in Chile: Historical Assessment and Prospects for the New Democracy," in *Political Armies: The Military and Nation Building in the Age of Democracy* ed. Kees Kooning and Dirks Kruijt (London: Zed Books, 2002); Felipe Agüero, "Institutions, Transitions and Bargaining: Civilians and the Military in Shaping Post-Authoritarian Regimes," in *Civil-Military Relations in Latin America: New Analytical Perspectives*, ed. David Pion-Berlin (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Felipe Agüero, "Democratic Consolidation and the Military in Southern Europe and South

Slovakia performed well through 1996 but weaknesses became visible in 1997 due to delays in economic reform and shortcomings in economic restructuring. Slovakia's society enjoyed some of the most talented leaders in the nonprofit and non-governmental sector, a sound educational system, freedom of speech, media and cultural pursuits (albeit partial), and trusted religious institutions but reliance on government subsidies hindered progress. Politically Slovakia progressed on its post-communist path toward a functioning democracy but also experienced challenges to the rule of law and shortcomings in democracy and human rights. The government's foreign and national security policies were often made to appease the West, its relations with other states and institutions were tepid at best and its desire to integrate into Western security structures had often been questioned. In the following chapter I provide a more in-depth view of Slovakia's political and security situation as it relates to membership in NATO. But before I do that I take a closer look at the issue of national identity and explore the life of Slovakia's key political figure—Mečiar and his form of rule, Mečiarism.

## Slovak Identity versus Mečiarism

What is the identity of a Slovak? This was very challenging to answer. There are not many scholarly works that explore this specific question. One such book, *Slovakia and the Slovaks*, was written in 1977 for young Slovak-Americans primarily because there was a dearth of books on the topic. Before the Slovaks gained independence most books in the English-speaking world were about Czechoslovakia and focused on the

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America," in *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe,* ed. Richard Gunther, Nikiforos Diamandouros and Hans-Jürgen Puhle (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); and more.

Czechs.[249] To get a better understanding of who is a Slovak one must understand nationalism and identity—concepts that have become more pervasive in the post-communist period.

The end of the Cold War has produced a resurgence of the nationalist phenomenon and a score of nationally defined successor states.[250] These states were created on the basis of nationality and a shared identity. Therefore, nationalism is about identity. Nationalism is usually territorial, is based on shared historical experiences and is often rooted in "a shared ethnicity, lineage, language, culture, religion or citizenship."[251] If a nation's identity is intimately bound up in 'place' and 'territory'[252] then the Slovaks' past, which is intimately bound up with Slovakia's territory is also directly tied to its identity. In addition, a nation's identity is a result of how its people interpret its history.[253] Therefore I found it necessary to ask the people of Slovakia from all sides of the political spectrum about their interpretation of Slovak history and how they describe their own national identity. In the course of conducting my interviews I found that many factors contribute to the identity of a Slovak such as historical events, the introduction of Christianity, a variety of distinctive characteristics, and an orientation toward the West.

First and foremost, a Slovak is cognizant of the struggles and challenges of the Slovak people throughout history. Not all Slovaks, most notably the younger generation

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[249] Joseph A. Mikus, *Slovakia and the Slovaks* (Washington D.C.: Three Continental Press, 1977).
[250] Brian Jenkins and Spyros A. Sofos, *Nation and Identity in Contemporary Europe* (London: Rutledge, 1996); and Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
[251] Charles A. Kupchan, ed., *Nationalism and the New Nationalities in the New Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 1-14.
[252] George W. White, *Nationalism and Territory* (Lanham, NC: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc, 2000), 249.

of Slovaks, are keenly aware of the experience of their ancestors. However, a vast majority of middle and older generation Slovaks lived through and remember the repeated periods of domination and suppression since the Nazi Rule period and know about the struggles that date back to the Conquerors Rule period in the 9th century. Brigita Schmognerová, a 1998 SDL Presidential candidate, noted that it is difficult to say what it is to be Slovak without looking back because "Slovakia never had its own statehood" and this plays a very large role in identity.[254] Mečiar's State Secretary for the MOD, Jozef Guydoš, believed that Slovakia arose from a "very difficult path through which we fulfilled a century old desire to be an independent, sovereign, self-ruled nation."[255] Going back to Prizel's premise that a polity's national identity—specifically that of a state which has expressed a strong sense of cultural and political resentment—is very much a result of how it interprets its history[256] it is not difficult to conclude that, while categorizing Slovakia among those states may be bit of a stretch, the Slovaks have focused very heavily on their past experiences and their history has played a very significant role in their sense of nation-ness[257] and in the formation of their identity.

Second, Christianity was brought to what is now known as Slovakia in the early 9th century and helps define what it is to be a Slovak.[258] Religiously, Slovakia is a Christian state dominated by the Roman Catholic faith and this religion plays a fairly

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[253] Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[254] Brigita Schmognerová, Deputy Chair, SDL, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998.
[255] Jozef Guydoš, State Secretary, Ministry of Defense, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998.
[256] Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); 14.
[257] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983).
[258] Christianity also is a defining characteristic of the Poles.

significant part in Slovak society. According to then President Kovač, the concept of Christianity plays a very strong role in the creation of Slovak identity. He contends that this quality helps the Slovak stand fast against influences of many negative tendencies.[259]

Other characteristics have been used to describe the Slovak. President Kovač believes the second trait of a Slovak is the feeling of "non-superiority" or inferiority. He stated that historically Slovaks "were always under someone else's control." Kovač explained that this quality fostered "a bigger potential for solidarity, togetherness, cooperation, respect toward foreigners, for hospitality, good heartedness" which "manifests itself as a positive characteristic in the wider European context."[260] Dzurinda said that among the characteristics of a Slovak belong the following: being good hearted, hospitable, open, and hardworking." He added that these are the values of Europe that Slovakia can take a lead on and enrich others with.[261] Viliam Hornáček, HZDS parliamentarian, agreed that Slovaks are hard working, he added that they are dedicated, thrifty, and strong because "we were slapped around from all sides" throughout history.[262] This type of sentiment was prevalent among supporters of HZDS. Guydoš added that Slovaks have a national pride of tradition, warm disposition to people, and are educated...but also are temperamental, touchy, argumentative, know how to get offended, but also know how to forget and forgive." He concluded that he believes a dominant characteristic of Slovaks is "their huge hospitality and openness...qualities often used

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[259] Michal Kovač, Slovak President, interview by author, tape recording, Presidential Palace, Bratislava, Slovakia, 16 December 1997.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Mikulaš Dzurinda, Chairman, SDK, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998.
[262] Viliam Hornaček, Member of HZDS, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Bratislava, Slovakia, 14 May 1998.

against us."[263] In his book Mikus contends that, in addition to their language, a part of the Slovak people's "cultural identity is loyalty to their traditional values: religion, family, respect for human life, sense of honor and courage."[264]

Slovaks identify more with the West than with the East, thus they consider themselves to be Westerners. In fact, Slovaks are closer to being Czech than they are to being Russian. Even from a Russian perspective, Slovakia was considered part of Western Europe. History shows that Slovaks have never been a natural part of the former Soviet Empire.[265] Slovaks have lived in the center of Europe for over 1,000 years. They were under the control of other groups during the Conquerors Rule period, controlled by the Hungarians during the thousand-year Hungarian Rule period, suppressed for six years under Nazi Rule, and dominated 50 years by the Soviet from the time of the Totalitarian Stalinist Rule period. All of these experiences helped form their identity, preserve their language and are a part of being Slovak.

It is important also to realize one very important point about the Slovak language—that it is a language unique to the Slovak people. Slovak may be somewhat similar to the language of the Czech people; however, it is not of the same dialect. In addition to various scholarly works on the topic, *Encyclopedia Britannic*, among other documents, accurately pointed out the differences even in 1968 when the state of Czechoslovakia still existed

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[263] Jozef Guydoš, State Secretary, Ministry of Defense, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998.
[264] Joseph A. Mikus, *Slovakia and the Slovaks* (Washington D.C.: Three Continental Press, 1977), xiii.
[265] Sergej Chelemendik, *Portréty Slovensých Politikov - Superslovák Vladimir Mečiar* (Bartislava: Slovansky Dom Sergej Chelemendik Agency, 1996), 71; and Sergej Chelemendik, *Europa alebo Mečiar, Moc Utopií a Utopie Moci* (Bartislava: Slovansky Dom Sergej Chelemendik Agency, 1996), 11.
[267] Joseph A. Mikus, *Slovakia and the Slovaks* (Washington D.C.: Three Continental Press, 1977).

> Since Slovak is the closest to Old Slav, the affirmation of some biased Czech linguists that Slovak is only a dialect of Czech is illogical...As to the relation between Czech and Slovak, the following lines are to be found in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, XX, p. 199, 1968: 'The two languages of the Czechoslovak Republic, namely Czech and Slovak...are not identical either in their literary form or in their dialects.' Therefore in its own language, the Slovak nation has one important proof of its own individuality. This fact received support again in the years between 1959 and 1968, when the Slovak Academy of Sciences published a *Dictionary of the Slovak Language* in six volumes.[267]

Joseph Mikus contends that "It is of course understood today that Czech and Slovak are not the same language, or even dialects of the same language."[268] In a book on beginning Slovak, the authors write that "Slovak is a separate language with a distinct grammar, vocabulary, and cultural heritage."[269] Far too many people make the mistake of assuming that the Czech and Slovak languages are the indistinguishable—they are not. The Slovaks and the Czechs had a separate history, clearly defined national identities, and distinctive cultures and languages.[270] The Slovak language is a key aspect of the Slovaks' identity.

The identity of Slovaks can be distinguished from others by the fact that the Slovak people did not have their own state until the early 1990s, struggled to retain their language and identity, and ultimately fulfilled a century old desire to have an independent, sovereign, self-ruled nation. In addition, Christianity, certain distinctive characteristics and an orientation toward the West all influenced the identity of Slovaks and the identity of Slovakia. All of these resulted from past events, experiences or

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[268] , Carol Skalnik Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia: The Making and Remaking of a State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).
[269] Dr. Oscar E. Swan & Sylvia Galova-Lorinc, *Beginning Slovak* (Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1990.)
[270] John Morrison, "Nationalism in Czechoslovakia," in *Contemporary Nationalism in East Central Europe*, Paul Latawski, ed., (New York: St. Martin Press, 1995); 83, Carol Skalnik Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia: The Making and Remaking of a State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 6.

influences thus history played the greatest role in the formation of the Slovak national identity. But national identity is never static. National identity can be refashioned by political and cultural elites in the light of new and changing circumstances.[271] One man had a significant impact on Slovakia's national identity in the ever-changing post-communist environment—that man was Vladimír Mečiar.

Who is Vladimír Mečiar? For the first six years of its existence, Slovakia and its politics were dominated by a single man – Mečiar, the only politician in post-communist Central Europe to have been elected to power three times and removed from office twice, the first time in 1991 and the second in 1994.[272] This energetic, charismatic and imposing leader, who had the ability to pursue his devoted followers effectively, had also polarized the country and its people to the point that typical ideological divisions no longer mattered. Mečiar's governing coalition, composed of extremist parties from the left and right, as well as his own populist-nationalist HZDS party, used poisonous politics as a basis for normal operations. Political referendums were aborted, opponents from all walks of life were labeled anti-Slovak, and journalists were attacked on a recurring basis.[273]

A communist activist in his youth, Mečiar joined the Communist Party in 1962 and graduated from the Komsomol college in Moscow in 1965. He rose through the ranks of the Communist Party but, like hundreds of thousands of other Czechs and

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[271] Graham Smith, et al., *Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3.

[272] Mečiar led a Slovak government before Slovakia became independent when he was elected prime minister in 1990. Mečiar's government fell in April 1991 when he was removed by the Slovak National Council's presidium for continued "political mistakes" and Jan Čarnogurský took over the prime minister's post.

[273] Peter Finn, "Controversial Premier Divides Slovak Voters," *The Washington Post,* 15 September 1998, sec A, p 18.

Slovaks, fell victim to the "normalization" process that followed the 1968 Soviet-led invasion. He, as well as many others, was later expelled from the Communist Party and worked in a steelworks plant while studying law at Comenius University in Bratislava. After working 16 years as a lawyer for a bottling company, Mečiar began his career in politics following the fall of communism. In November 1989 he joined the newly created the VPN party, which, together with its Czech counterpart the OF party, forced the Communist Party out of power. Mečiar's energetic entry had an immediate impact. In January 1990 he was appointed Minister of Interior and the Environment in the Slovak Republic government. He was label a "genius of the people" by his fellow politicians because of his vast and deep knowledge of the intra-workings of the ministry despite having no prior knowledge or experience in working there.[274] He was often praised for his energetic speaking ability, concrete decision-making skills, expansive knowledge and ability to vigorously pursue issues until they were resolved to his liking. However, despite his positive characteristics, his political enemies later regretted the decision to appoint Mečiar to the Ministry of Interior when he was accused of using secret files that he had access to by virtue of his position to blackmail people.[275]

Mečiar quickly became one of the most popular politicians in Slovakia and VPN was forced to nominate him as their candidate for prime minister. He was able to beat all other candidates once he presented his unique "concept" for Slovakia.[276] In the first round of post-communist parliamentary elections in June 1990 Mečiar was elected as a

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[274] Marian Leško, *Mečiar a mečiarizmus, Politik bez škrupúl, politika bez zábran* (Bratislava: VMV, 1996), 26.
[275] Steve Kettle, "Slovakia's One-Man Band," *Transitions* (23 August 1996): 12, 13.
[276] Marian Leško, *Mečiar a mečiarizmus, Politik bez škrupúl, politika bez zábran* (Bratislava: VMV, 1996), 26.

VPN deputy to the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly and also became Slovak prime minister. Political differences ensued when key figures of VPN began to demand greater autonomy from Prague and a clearer Slovak identity within the Czechoslovak federation. Mečiar's government fell in April 1991 when he was removed by the Slovak National Council's presidium for continued "political mistakes" and Ján Čarnogurský took over the prime minister's post. Seven days after Mečiar's sacking, a new, separate party was created – HZDS of which Mečiar was elected chairman in June 1991. Although HZDS called for greater autonomy, it did not call for the creation of an independent state but rather a new, confederal arrangement with the Czechs.

As the leader of a new political party, Mečiar used his position to increase his popularity. He won decisively in the June 1992 elections and became prime minister for the second time while Prime Minister Klaus took the helm of the Czech Republic. Mečiar and Klaus, often alone behind closed doors, began to negotiate the fate of Czechoslovakia.[277] Many authors argued that the Czechs were fed up with Slovak demands for greater autonomy, and that the Slovaks were fed up with the Czechs' domination. However, public opinion polls revealed that the majority of both Slovaks and Czechs were opposed to a split. Despite public opposition and without so much as a referendum, Czechoslovakia divided on 31 December 1992 and two independent states emerged on 1 January 1993. Initially stunned by the events, Mečiar quickly proclaimed himself to be the "father of Slovakia."[278]

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[277] Steve Kettle, "Slovakia's One-Man Band," *Transitions* (23 August 1996): 14, 15.
[278] Peter Finn, "Controversial Premier Divides Slovak Voters," *The Washington Post*, 15 September 1998, sec A, p 18.

Following the split HZDS began splintering and political infighting was rampant in the Slovak government. Mečiar lost a no-confidence vote in the parliament in March 1994 and was removed from office for the second time. Moravčik became prime minister in a temporary government that would hold office until October of that year. HZDS, with Mečiar still at the helm, won over 35 percent of the vote (61 parliamentary seats) and formed a coalition in December with SNS and ZRS. Mečiar was reluctant to include these two radical parties in his coalition, however, this was the only way he was going to be able to form a government and regain control of the state. The composition of the coalition resulted in his government advocating different political policies such as advocating neutrality and NATO membership at the same time.[279] The new coalition had 83 parliamentary seats and Mečiar once again consolidated his position and power as prime minister for the third time.[280]

In his early years as prime minister Mečiar had the unique ability to work hard for many hours in the day and study pertinent proposed parliamentary and legislative documents late at night. Not only was he able to surprise his adversaries with an in-depth knowledge of the issues, he was also able to recommend logical solutions that other readily supported. He spoke publicly and persuasively with little or no preparation and made many grand promises to the populace. His speeches were very emotional, his policies sounded logical but were often contradictory, a fact that many people chose to ignore at least initially.[281] It seemed that Mečiar was able to accomplish much in his first

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[279] Miroslav Wlachovský, Head, Department of Analyses and Policy Planning, interview by author, Arlington, Virginia, 1 September 1999.
[280] Steve Kettle, "Slovakia's One-Man Band," *Transitions* (23 August 1996): 15.
[281] Miroslav Wlachovský, Head, Department of Analyses and Policy Planning, interview by author, Arlington, Virginia, 1 September 1999.

few months of office and was labeled as a "phenomenon." But, as Mečiar's behavior came to light, critics began to condemn him and his party increasingly.

Mečiar used authoritarian and dictatorial tactics, blackmailing and browbeating even his allies, seeking head-on challenges with anyone who crossed his path. He refused to compromise or work together with anyone whose opinion differed even slightly from his own. He thrived on confrontation, while succeeding to keep a firm hold on the government. Although he was a proven and surefooted vote-getter, he was also an intuitive manipulator of the levers of power whose consistent political style was characterized as one of "divide and rule." Mečiar was smart enough to benefit from docile or ineffective opponents who were unable to match his charisma and popularity.[282] Throughout his political career Mečiar received the greatest support "among rural, older and less educated voters (primarily female), those hardest hit by unemployment, inflation, rising crime and decreasing social benefits."[283] He carefully planned and carried out mass public gatherings in rural areas and did not allow the media to enter. He bused people to the gatherings, gave them food and money, and made unattainable promises such as significantly increasing social security payments for the elderly and disabled. Much of his political support came from these "closed" vote-getting sessions.

Mečiar's critics were no longer just from the opposition and from independent pro-democratic forces. Intellectuals and many in the media realized his tactics, but were unable to convince the Slovak people that Mečiar was manipulating them for his own political gain. Even professional organizations such as the Slovak psychiatrists wrote a

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[282] Steve Kettle, "Slovakia's One-Man Band," *Transitions* (23 August 1996): 12.

letter to Mečiar asking him to resign and leave politics "in his own interest and in the interest of Slovaks who want to live freely and without fear." Mečiar dismissed their request and accused the psychiatrists of abusing science.[284] As his political stronghold began to weaken even the slightest little bit, he became belligerent, bellicose, rude and lashed-out at anyone who dared to criticize him or act against his wishes.[285] His frequent outbursts and uncensored speeches were the cause of several diplomatic incidents. Following his defeat in the 1998 election[286] Mečiar publicly announced that he was leaving the government and, perhaps, politics as well. He ended his television appearance by singing "With the Lord God, I take my leave, I never hurt any of you..."

It is no secret that Western leaders and institutions repeatedly criticized Slovakia for its increasing deficiencies in democratic development and gradual destruction of basic democratic principles and human rights. Mečiar was able to use his political skills to politicize successfully many government and private institutions such as the SIS and free press organizations forcing 4,000 people suspected of disloyalty out of their positions. He used the privatization of industry to enrich political associates as stakes in enterprises were sold off at bargain rates, manipulated the Constitution for his party's benefit, and controlled the corrupt privatization process of state-owned entities and enriched political allies. He cancelled a referendum on NATO membership and direct presidential elections, illegally removed a parliamentarian from his seat, and repeatedly violated

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[283] Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 50.

[284]Michael Shafir, "Slovak Psychiatrists Ask Meciar to Quit Politics," *Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty*, vol. 2, no. 108, part II (8 June 1998).

[285] Marian Leško, *Mečiar a mečiarizmus, Politik bez škrupúl, politika bez zábran* (Bratislava: VMV, 1996), 36.

minority rights. Furthermore, Mečiar was rumored to be involved in kidnappings and assassinations. Credible reports of physical intimidation of opponents of the governments, especially journalists, increased – although his government denied any involvement in such activities.[287] He continued to enjoy the support of many Slovaks despite his political behavior—intolerance of criticism and opposition, penchant for harsh retribution against anyone that tried to defy his leadership.[288] He gradually became known as somewhat of a mythical figure and a master of political comebacks. But he was also seen as a budding dictator who was an incalculable man inconsistent in what he told various audiences.[289] Mečiar the man went from being labeled as a genius and phenomenon to being vilified as an authoritarian demagogue. Mečiar's popularity among the people persisted nonetheless.

Mečiarism. So why was Mečiar so popular and why did so many Slovaks continue to believe in him despite his shortcomings? What do the terms Mečiarism, anti-Mečiarism, de-Meačiarization, and post-Mečiarism mean?

Mečiar, the man, at least initially, possessed qualities the Slovak people had been looking for in a leader—one who would take them to the "promised land." A former boxer, he was strong, hardworking, solid and depicted as an imposing leader. He was able to feel the movement of masses of people. He was looked up to as a father figure

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[286] Mečiar's HZDS won the largest number of votes but fell short of a majority and was unable to form a government.
[287] Peter Finn, "Controversial Premier Divides Slovak Voters," *The Washington Post*, 15 September 1998, sec A, p 18.
[288] Minton F. Goldman, *Slovakia Since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy* (Westport: Prager Publishers, 1999), 71.
[289] Miroslav Beblavy and Andrej Salner, "Ugley Duckling, Ugly Swan: Foreign Perceptions of Slovakia," in *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs (*Spring 2000), 77.

who could accomplish anything even under the domination of the Czechs.[290] One expert on Mečiar believes that his success was in part due to the fact that Slovaks tend to vote with their emotions rather than base their decisions on fact and reality.[291] Another believes that Mečiar's ideology fed in a direct and simplistic way the resentments and sense of injustice felt by many Slovaks as a result of their country's history. Mečiar personified the beleaguered and downtrodden Slovak perpetually exploited in the past by Hungarian and Czechs.[292] Yet another author feels that, due to Slovakia's particular history, the social-democratic potential had still not found its institutional form, therefore, the Slovak people identified themselves more easily with nationalist ideology and populist politicians.[293]

Because the Slovak people struggled to develop their own language and maintain their identity since the early 9th or 10th century and desired and fought for increased autonomy in a variety of ways while under the rule or authority of the Hungarians, Czechs, Germans or Soviets, the masses looked up to Mečiar as their long lost leader who would finally bring them the independence that they had longed for. According to Goldman

> Mečiar's political resilience stems from his popularity with most of the Slovak people, even those whom one would expect to be critical of his antidemocratic style of leadership, such as the youth and the well educated. Respect for Mečiar was strongest among rural voters, who were older and less well educated...with little understanding of or sympathy for Western-style pluralistic democracy...They distrusted and

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[290] Sergej Chelemendik, *Portréty Slovensých Politikov - Superslovák Vladimir Mečiar* (Bartislava: Slovansky Dom Sergej Chelemendik Agency, 1996) 12, 17.
[291] Sergej Chelemendik, *Europa alebo Mečiar, Moc Utopií a Utopie Moci* (Bartislava: Slovansky Dom Sergej Chelemendik Agency, 1996), 71.
[292] Steve Kettle, "Slovakia's One-Man Band," *Transitions* (23 August 1996): 12.
[293] Jan Vermeersch, "Social Democracy in the Czech Republic and Slovakia," in *Social Democracy in a Post-Communist Europe* Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters and Kris Deschouwer, ed. (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited: 1994): 131.

> feared change and had little faith in politics. They took to Mečiar also because he simplified the issues and spoke to them in reassuring terms.[294]

Other reasons for Mečiar's continued support were Mečiar's ability to play the nationalist card and the fragmented opposition's inability to produce a spokesman to match him. He repeatedly told his constituents that his policies were in the name of Slovak identity, sovereignty and independence. This reasoning resonated strongly with many.[295] The persistence of his political career despite many warning signs was likely due to a combination of the above factors as well as the Slovak people's desire to want to believe in a leader who primary concern was that of Slovak interests.

Mečiarism, the ideology, has been described as a nationalist-populist philosophy that fed the resentments and sense of injustice felt by many Slovaks[296] as a result of their struggles to maintain a language, gain autonomy and win independence. Others contended that Mečiarism cannot be a political ideology, but rather just a label for a man whose persona, actions and political practices impacted an entire nation and the direction of its state. Bútora, Mesežnikov, and Bútorova call it a "style of politics" with twelve typical features:

1. A long-lasting conflict between top state officials
2. Antagonistic confrontation between the ruling coalition and the opposition
3. The drafting, enacting, and enforcing of legislative measures to ensure the concentration of political power in the hands of the governing coalition
4. Strengthening authoritarian elements in the way the ruling coalition operated
5. Ongoing tension in relations between government officials and representatives of almost all national minorities and ethnic groups

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[294] Minton F. Goldman, *Slovakia Since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy* (Westport: Prager Publishers, 1999), 83.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Steve Kettle, "Slovakia's One-Man Band," *Transitions* (23 August 1996): 12.

6. Brinkmanship with regard to constitutional principles, accompanied by a lack of respect for and inadequate implementation of Constitutional Court decisions
7. Repeated violations of the principles of the rule of law in the interest of retaining power in the hands of the ruling coalition, breach of the tenet of equality before the law, and the spread of legal nihilism
8. Weakening communications, followed by growing numbers of misunderstandings and disputes
9. Government efforts to exert direct and indirect economic and political pressure on the independent media, failure to inform the public about the work of state bodies, etc.
10. The gradual building of the ruling coalition's ideological foundations through the pro-government "public" television; signs of formulating a "state ideology" based on nationalism; rejection of the West, opposition to the Euro-Atlantic community; and reaching out toward the East
11. Efforts to establish a comprehensive media and propaganda machine
12. Undermining social peace through the interruption of social dialogue at the statewide level

In their analysis of the 1998 elections Bútora, Mesežnikov, and Bútorova argue that the impact of Mečiarism was powerful and the struggle against Mečiarism was difficult; however, the very existence of this struggle for a democratic form of government demonstrated that Slovakia was a democracy that was alive and well.[297]

According to Mečiar himself, Mečiarism did not exist. However, he did on occasion speak of anti-Mečiarism. He defined anti-Mečiarism as a "hatred of opposition." In other words, if one was anti-Mečiar then he or she was politically opposed to Mečiar and, therefore, hated Mečiar. Mečiar believed that the political opposition blamed its own shortcomings and faults on him and therefore hated him.[298] This is what he defined as anti-Mečiarism.

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[297] Martin Bútora, Grigorij Mesežnikov and Zora Bútoriva, "Introduction: Overcoming Illiberalism – Slovakia's 1998 Election," in Martin Bútora, Grigorij Mesežnikov, Zora Bútoriva, and Sharon Fisher, eds., *The 1998 Parliamentary Elections and Democratic Rebirth in Slovakia* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1999), 13-14.

[298] Marian Leško, *Mečiar a mečiarizmus, Politik bez škrupúl, politika bez zábran* (Bratislava: VMV, 1996), 172, 173.

Slovak political commentator Marian Leško wrote about the feasibility of "De-Meačiarization." He maintained that the results of the 1998 election in effect started a new era, which can be most fittingly termed as "post-Mečiarism" and could possibly result in de-Mečiarization.[299]

Whether Mečiar and/or his international image permanently hurt Slovakia, or whether Slovakia can one day be completely de-Mečiarized will likely become the topic of discussion for years to come. Whatever the discussions will be, Mečiar the man made a significant impact on Slovakia and its people. Several momentous events can be attributed, in large part, to Mečiar: Czechoslovakia's dissolution in 1992; Slovakia's poor international image during its first six years of independence; Slovakia's exclusion from NATO's first round of enlargement in 1997; and Slovakia's exclusion from the first group of states invited to discuss EU membership. This is Mečiar's legacy. As a result Mečiarism will be a permanent part of Slovakia's history.

Prior to and during the period of Authoritarian Mečiarist rule, Mečiar was labeled a genius and a phenomenon and, at the same time, characterized as an unstable autocrat. In short, Mečiar can be described as a demagogue who was willing to use any means to achieve his political and personal goals. He dominated Slovakia and its politics and was the only politician in post-communist Central Europe to have risen to power three times and removed from office twice. His authoritarian style of leadership and undemocratic political practices not only polarized Slovak politics and its people, but also tarnished the state's international standing and made negatively impacted the state's transition from a

[299] Marian Leško, "'De-Meciarization' Is Feasible," *Transitions (*October 1998): 73-74.

post-communist state to a democratic one. Mečiar was an unusual individual who made Slovakia's democratic transition a unique one.

## Struggle for Democracy

1998 Parliamentary Elections. In the mid 1990s the leading political party in Slovakia continued to be Mečiar's HZDS. Initially a center-left party committed to moderate reforms, Mečiar's transformed HZDS into a loyal instrument of his political leadership. The opposition parties covered a wide political spectrum and remained fragmented through the mid-1990s except for their shared hostility toward Mečiar. During this period the opposition parties did not offer voters an alternative to Mečiar's leadership because of the varied ideological perspectives. Furthermore, Mečiar's popularity and charismatic personality kept them on the defensive. The most prominent opposition party led by Čarnogurský, leader of KDH, advocated market reform and respect for human rights and was an outspoken critic of Mečiar's political tactics and leadership style.[300] Despite the opposition's diversity, the coalition members were committed to democratic principles and the rule of law, and supported Slovakia's integration into the EU and NATO as a national security priority. Mečiar, on the other hand, favored a balanced approach to both the West and Russia, enabling Slovakia to act as a bridge between the West and the East. A real public debate on the merits of NATO membership, however, never existed. Rather, Slovakia's public witnessed paralleled

[300] Minton F. Goldman, *Slovakia Since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy* (Westport: Prager Publishers, 1999), 59.

monologues or mutual criticism as a consequence of internal political developments and the struggle between the ruling coalition and the opposition.[301]

Although Slovak political parties appeared to be just like Western parties, they differed in that their internal structure had not matured and that they did not have clear or consistent platforms. This made it somewhat difficult to place them on the left-right political spectrum. In recent years they have made progress in developing clear platforms to address Slovakia's problems but many are still consumed with political survival.[302] As a result the 1998 elections were bound to be emotional.

The 1998 election campaign was highly charged because it also involved non-governmental organizations, which emphasized freedom of choice and encouraged voters to take part in the elections.[303] During the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period many democratic developments and signs of increased civic mobilization began to emerge. Carrying an underlying democratic message, activities such as an unprecedented number of protest meetings, petitions, open letters and other forms of expression were aimed at the government. They came from physicians, health-care providers, journalists, the independent media, university professors and other academics, members of the Hungarian minority, NGOs, theater actors and other cultural figures, employees of privatized companies, trade unions, and religious leaders. The most important political event during this period may have been the conduct of the May 1997 referendum on NATO membership and direct presidential elections. Because many people feared that the 1998

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[301] Martin Bútora and František Šebej, ed., *Slovensko v Šedej Zóne? Rozširovanie NATO, Zlyhania a Perspecktívy Slovenska* (Bratislava: Inštitute Pre Verejné Otázky, 1998), 248.
[302] Minton F. Goldman, *Slovakia Since Independence: A Struggle for Democracy* (Westport: Prager Publishers, 1999), 58.

elections would also be manipulated as was the referendum NGOs played a significant role and established programs such as the Civic Campaign OK '98, an open non-partisan initiative. Dozens of NGOs prepared educations materials and held discussions, cultural activities and concerts in support of free and fair elections.[304] In addition, several months before the election nine Catholic bishops released an open letter to the media "implicitly criticizing the government for 'incivility, vulgarity, and subversion of moral values.'" Similarly Protestant clergy issued similar statements "urging voters to strengthen democracy and 'the hope for Slovakia's acceptance into European structures.'" Even the country's largest labor union openly criticized the government's poor record toward workers.[305]

In light of Mečiar's history of authoritarian rule and disconcerting actions prior to the September 1998 elections, OSCE participating states decided to mount an election observation mission consisting of 12 long-term and 211 short-term observers.[306] An unprecedented 84 percent of Slovak voters participated in the parliamentary elections. This reflects an exceptional and probably unrepeatable instance of civic mobilization in Slovakia.[307] Voter turnout was nine percent higher than it had been in the 1994 elections and exceeded that of its Višegrád neighbors.[308] OSCE noted some irregularities, but declared that the elections were carried out correctly. Not surprisingly, Mečiar's HZDS

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[303] Martin Bútora, Grigorij Mesežnikov, Zora Bútoriva, and Sharon Fisher, ed., *The 1998 Parliamentary Elections and Democratic Rebirth in Slovakia*, (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1999), 9.
[304] Ibid., 15-16.
[305] Mathew Rhodes, "Slovakia After Meciar: A Midterm Report," *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 48, no. 4 (July-August 2001), 6.
[306] Erika B. Schlager, "Parliamentary Election in Slovakia Observed by Commission Staff," *Commission on Security and Cooperation Digest*, n.d., 112.
[307] Marian Lesko, "De Mečiarization is Feasible," *Transitions* (December 1998): 73, 74.
[308] Martin Bútora, Grigorij Mesežnikov, Zora Bútoriva, and Sharon Fisher, ed., *The 1998 Parliamentary Elections and Democratic Rebirth in Slovakia*, (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1999), 9.

party won the highest percentage of votes (27 percent); but was unable to form a coalition government. The SDK, comprised of five parties, both leftist and right-centrists – KDH, DU, Social Democratic Party (SDSS), Greens (SZS), and the Democratic Party (DS) – won 26.3 percent of the vote. The SDK's platform was continued support of economic and political development and integration into Western institutions. Under the leadership of Dzurinda, SDK formed a government with three other parties, the reformist communist party SDL (14.6 percent), the center-left SOP (8.1 percent), and the ethnic Hungarian-coalition party (SMK) (9.1 percent).[309] Together, the new governing coalition garnered 93 of the 150 parliamentary seats (greater than three-fifths), enough to pass legislation and elect a new president. Following six years of an increasingly politically polarized society and virtual international isolation under Mečiar's rule, the results of the 1998 election marked a significant turning point for Slovakia labeled by some as the "democratic rebirth"[310] of Slovakia. Mečiar was finally defeated.

Mečiar was beaten for several reasons. First, the 1998 election campaign experienced unprecedented mobilization because of the involvement of NGOs, religious leaders, and unions, which emphasized freedom of choice and encouraged voters to take part in the elections. Second, the opposing coalition, as tenuous as it was, was able to coalesce on two critical issues—they were for integration into Euro-Atlantic security structures and they were all against Mečiar's form of government. Third, when Mečiar began his political career he and his VPN party espoused what they believed to be democratic ideals. But as he encountered major roadblocks and setbacks he established a

[309] Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, *The 1998 Parliamentary Election in Slovakia,* 5 October 1998.

breakaway party, HZDS, and conveniently and secretly shifted his party's identity to one of authoritarian ideals over time.[311] Because many people saw him as the father of independent Slovakia who would stand up for national interests they chose to ignore the warning signs and continued to provide him political support. But the warning signs became more prominent and there was a realization, at least by some of the voters, that a vote for Mečiar was indeed Slovakia's train ticket to no-where. According to Sharon Fisher "the perceived democratic deficit was also important in bringing down Mečiar's HZDS in 1998." She writes

> That feeling was influenced partly by Slovaks' heightened sense of isolation after Slovakia was left out of the first wave of NATO enlargement and EU entrance talks for purely political reasons, as well as by the thwarted referendum on NATO enlargement and direct presidential elections in May 1997 and the governments controversial cultural and educational policies...[312]

Fourth, the social-democratic potential had begun to find its institutional form and the people were less likely to identify themselves with nationalist ideology and populist politicians and more so with democratic ideals. During this process the basic identity of the Slovaks did not change; however, the people came to realize that the leader they once trusted was no longer the person that they believed him to be. Democratic forces finally won out and democratization was back on track.

In addition to being faced with a multitude of formidable tasks, the government challenge was to repair bilateral relations with neighboring and Western states and re-

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[310] Martin Bútora, Grigorij Mesežnikov, Zora Bútoriva, and Sharon Fisher, ed., *The 1998 Parliamentary Elections and Democratic Rebirth in Slovakia*, (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1999).
[311] Leff writes about shifts in party identity in her book, Carol Skalnik Leff, *The Czech and Slovak Republics: Nation Versus State* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997).
[312] Sharon Fisher, "The Rise and Fall of National Movements in Slovakia and Croatia," *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs,* vol. 1, no. 2 (Fall 2000).

energize relations with regional and international organizations. Newly elected Prime Minister Dzurinda acknowledged that there were many issues his government would have to deal with that had been neglected for years. Despite the challenge, Dzurinda was confident that the new government would be able to keep their promise to deal with all the problems that had prevented Slovakia from being invited to join NATO and the EU and pledged to fulfill Slovakia's ambition as a country with a future. Dzurinda wanted to ensure that other countries viewed Slovakia as a stable state willing to enact change to strengthen democracy and resolve its economic and social problems. Integration into the West became one of Slovakia's highest priorities.[313]

On 19 November 1998 Prime Minister Dzurinda presented his government's manifesto at the 4th session of the Slovak parliament. The proclamation covered four areas – democratic rule of law, economic policy, state defense and foreign policy.[314] Dzurinda pledged to rebuild the democratic rule of law in Slovakia by strengthening freedom, equality, justice, democracy, tolerance and solidarity with the weak and defenseless. In the economic sphere the government's intent was to consolidate the economy, renew macro-economic stability and create conditions for economic growth within the first two years.[315]

The government's main emphasis in the realm of foreign policy was the process of Euro-Atlantic integration and a strategic objective of membership in the EU and NATO. Additional priorities were to develop good relations with neighboring countries,

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[313] Mikulas Dzurinda, interview by Tamara Valkova, trans. Foreign Broadcasting Information Service, Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko, 30 September 1998.
[314] Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Slovakia: TASR Reports Dzurinda Speech of Government Manifesto" (Bratislava, TASR: 19 November 1998).
[315] Ibid.

seek a revival of the Višegrád Four, develop sound relations with the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and ensure balanced relations with the Russian Federation. In the sphere of defense, the government's strategic priority was the fastest possible attainment of NATO membership. The government would place increased emphasis on participation in the EAPC, the PfP program, through other forms of cooperation with NATO member countries, and continue support for the OSCE.[316]

Neighboring states and leaders from around the world welcomed Slovakia's newly elected government and provided continued words of encouragement. The United States government acknowledged the emergence of a new government with a State Department press release that read, in part,

> We are encouraged by the new government's pledge to pursue economic and democratic reform and Slovakia's integration into European and transatlantic institutions... The United States is prepared to offer assistance and support... We hope to intensify our dialogue with the Slovak Government to help Slovakia take its rightful place as a full partner in the new Europe.[317]

While the United States increased its support to Slovakia when the new government took control I do not believe that the United States' lack of support during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period had a significant impact on internal Slovak politics during its first six years of independence.

Despite their success in forming a coalition and establishing a democratic and Western-leaning governmental program, in 1998 the Dzurinda-led government was faced with numerous significant challenges. First and foremost, the government had to tackle

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[316] Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Statement by Slovak Prime Minster Mikulas Dzurinda to a Session of the Slovak National Assembly" (Bratislava, STV 2 Television Network: 19 November 1998).
[317] U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesman, *New Government in Slovakia*, a press statement by James B. Foley, Deputy Spokesman, 30 October 1998.

an almost insurmountable economic situation, not to mention empty government coffers, left behind by the former government. The government had to reverse damaging crony privatization, expansive fiscal corruption, and implement sound economic reforms before a serious financial crisis ensues. Second, the governing coalition, held together by its goal to defeat Mečiar, had to set aside personal and party differences in their ongoing struggle to stay in power. Third, Dzurinda's government had to work to fulfill its own commitment it promised to the people by balancing fragile domestic policies and its overriding goal of re-integrating into the West as fast as possible before the populace became disillusioned. They needed to legitimize their candidacy for the EU and NATO and improve Slovakia's international image while placating people at home. Fourth, they had to tackle increasing internal problems such as corruption, organized crime, illicit drugs, and the like. Fifth, they needed to continue the legislative process to change outdated laws and create new ones based on Western and democratic principles. Sixth, they faced the prospect of correcting relations with Russia while continuing to repair relations with neighboring and other Western states. While these and other issues faced the Dzurinda-led government in 1998, they also faced another, possibly even more daunting task – the possible resurgence of Mečiar.

## Conclusion

Slovakia experienced many domestic and international successes, failures and challenges during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period. Some of the successes were positive economic growth and some progress toward democratic ideals. Some of the failures included the inability to implement total freedom of speech, stagnant bilateral

international relationships, and problems with government officials following the rule of law and principles of democracy and human rights.

A significant challenge that Slovakia faced was projecting a positive international image while Mečiar was at the helm. Mečiar, the dominant political figure in Slovak politics, managed almost single-handedly to polarize Slovakia and tarnished the state's international standing. The poor international image that Mečiar created ultimately led to Slovakia's disqualification and subsequent exclusion from NATO membership in 1997. Although a democratic parliamentary government took over in September 1998 many domestic and international challenges remained and democratization was not yet complete.

Historical events, religious beliefs, identification with the West, and other unique characteristics constructed the identity of the Slovak people. But it was not the Slovak people, but rather Mečiar's actions, that characterized Slovakia's democratically deficient patterns of behavior and shaped its identity as a state unwilling to uphold democratic principles. His influence on Slovakia was evident by the increasing use of terminology such as Mečiarism, anti-Mečiarism, de-Mečiarization, and post-Mečiarism by Slovak and international actors alike.

The next chapter takes a brief look at NATO's history, its evolution after the Cold War, its renewed purpose, enlargement policy in the late 1990s, and future expansion programs. It then focuses on Slovakia's national security concepts, perceived threats, and relationships with other institutions. The chapter delves into the unique challenges Slovakia's defense establishment faced following independence and reviews the military's transformation into a Western-style armed force and glimpses at how the armed

forces are projected to look once the reform is complete. It provides an overview of civilian control and oversight of the military and explores how Mečiar attempted to exert excessive political influence over the armed forces. It also reviews Slovakia participation in assistance programs, military exercises, and real-world military operations and concludes with a section on the contributions the armed forces made toward promoting democracy in Slovakia. The chapter explores Slovakia perceived or actual tendencies to lean East or West, surveys the theories explaining why Slovakia was excluded from NATO, looks at NATO's exclusion of Slovakia in 1997 from a security perspective, reviews Slovakia's political, military and foreign policy events beyond 1998, and provides a brief comparative look at similar post-communist states. An analysis of the overall culture of national security in Slovakia from 1993 to 1998 is presented in the concluding comments.

# IV.
# THE CULTURE
# OF NATIONAL SECURITY IN SLOVAKIA
# (1993-1998)

Introduction. The Slovaks consistently maintain that they belong to the West and not to the East. During my interview with Ján Figel, Deputy Chairman KDH and member of the Slovak Foreign Affairs Committee, he stated, "Slovakia...belongs in the Western group, culturally, historically, politically... [and with respect to matters of] civilization."[318] Similarly I was told that "We [the Slovaks] cannot exist alone, we have to belong somewhere...we belong spiritually, historically, culturally, politically and economically [in the West]," by Pavol Hamžík, Deputy Chairman of the SOP and former Minister of Foreign Affairs.[319] Clearly Slovakia has secured its place in "Europe" by virtue of its geographic location in the "heart of Europe."

One way in which Slovakia strived to "secure" its place in "Western Europe" is by obtaining membership in European and Euro-Atlantic collective defense organizations. Since independence Slovakia's primary national security interest has been to preserve the state's territorial integrity by obtaining membership in NATO, followed by the EU and the WEU. The original role of NATO was to keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down.[320] While this may have been true for the first 40 years of the

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[318] Ján Figel', Deputy Chairman, KDH, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 May 1998.

[319] Pavol Hamžík, Deputy Chairman, SOP, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 14 May 1998.

[320] Roger E. Kanet and Nouray V. Ibryamova, "La sécurité en Europe centrale et orientale: un systeme en cours de changement," [Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A Changing System], *Revue d'Études comparatives Est-Ouest* vol. 33, no. 1 (2002): 179-203. A somewhat different version of the article has appeared in English as Nouray V. Ibryamova and Roger E. Kanet, "NATO, the European Union, and

organization's existence it was no longer true toward the end of the 20th century.

This chapter's ambitious agenda includes: an exploration of NATO, its evolution and ever-changing purpose; an examination of Slovakia's national security, defense and military postures; a review of Slovakia's post-communist path during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period; and a brief look at recent key events during the period of Democratic Rule. The first section of this chapter takes a brief look at NATO's history from its inception in 1949, its evolution following the unexpected events of the late 1980s and early 1990s, its revitalized purpose for existence, and enlargement in 1999, and concludes with a look at future expansion efforts.

The second section of this chapter focuses on Slovakia's national security concepts, perceived threats, and relationships with other institutions. It examines the unique challenges Slovakia's defense establishment faced following independence and reviews the military's post-communist transformation process. Furthermore, the section provides a brief look at how the armed forces are projected to look once the reform is complete and it reviews recommendations provided military experts on the transformation process. The section provides an overview of civilian control of the military and governmental oversight and explores how Mečiar's government's attempted to exert excessive political influence over the armed forces. It also reviews Slovakia participation in assistance programs, military exercises, and joint and combined real-world military operations. It provides a brief comparative analysis in the fourth section and concludes by highlighting the remarkable contribution the armed forces made toward promoting democracy in Slovakia.

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European Security," in *The United States and Europe: Policy Imperatives in a Globalizing World, ed.*

The third section of this chapter explores Slovakia's perceived or actual tendencies to lean East or West, explores theories explaining why Slovakia was excluded from NATO, looks at NATO's exclusion of Slovakia in 1997 from a security perspective, and concludes with a review of the political, military and foreign policy events relevant to Slovakia after 1998, of which the EU invitation for membership in 1999, Mečiar's defeat in September 2002, and the receipt of a NATO invitation in November 2002 are the most significant. To conclude, I provide an assessment of the overall culture of national security in Slovakia from 1993 to 1998.

## NATO: A Security Organization

Since independence Slovakia's primary national security interest has been to preserve the state's territorial integrity. To protect that interest Slovakia established membership in the NATO as its number one national security priority. Slovakia chose NATO because it has been one of the most successful collective defense organizations in this past century and is able to guarantee the security of a small independent state—a state that cannot provide such security for itself alone. By becoming a NATO member Slovakia believes it will be released from the Russian sphere of influence[321] for good and can take it's rightful place among Western states. Furthermore, Slovakia believes that NATO membership will bolster its journey toward total and complete democratic and free market reforms. Can NATO provide all of this for Slovakia? This section seeks to answer that question by exploring the Alliance's history, evolution and ever-changing purpose.

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Howard M. Hensel (London: Ashgate Publishers, 2002) 99-122.

The Alliance. The United States, Canada, and ten Western European countries established NATO in April 1949. Today the Alliance consists of 19 North Atlantic states. The NATO members are: Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States.

NATO was created in response to the perceived communist threat from the Soviet Union after the culmination of World War II. This was the first time ever that the United States mobilized and "deemed it necessary to enter into a peacetime military Alliance with foreign states and to deploy its major forces on the territory of its allies in the absence of armed conflict."[322] The NATO pact was unique in that each party committed to an automatic and collective armed response as a result of an attack on one. Article 5 states:

> The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all; and...each of them... will assist the...attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force...[323]

The members also agreed to establish an integrated command structure and a commitment of forces to NATO whose ultimate command rested with the national command of the member states.[324] In a sense, "Europe became America's first line of defense" with NATO as the formalized mechanism to contain communism in the Western

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[321] Ibid.
[322] Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Lawrence J. Korb, *American National Security, Policy and Process*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989): 64.
[323] NATO, *NATO Handbook* (Brussels: NATO Information Service, 1980), 14.
[324] McCormick, *American Foreign Policy and Process*, 2nd ed. (Library of Congress: Peacock Publishers, 1992), 53.

European region.[325] It was clearly a collective defense organization based on the principle of "defense." And has, by far, proved to be the most effective collective defense Alliance in the second half of the 20th century.[326]

In the beginning Western European and American concerns were virtually identical. However, as time passed, the goals began to diverge. Once the Soviet Union developed strategic weapons that threatened to destroy the United States if a nuclear war occurred, the American commitment to NATO became more costly.[327] This nuclear age brought about another interesting change, "a feeling throughout the West that a Soviet attack is most unlikely, simultaneously creating pressure—at times, almost irresistible pressure—to reduce defenses."[328] In this bipolar world, the two superpowers dominated their Alliances through military and economic means while the nuclear stalemate ensured that neither side would issue a first strike.[329] A calmer period of "détente" followed where the superpowers agreed to reduce force levels while continuing on the path of deterrence.

By the end of the 1980s NATO faced several unconventional issues. First, General Secretary Gorbachev's "glasnost" slowly began to diminish the traditional NATO perception of the Soviet communist threat. Second, burden sharing became a critical issue to the extent to which Western European states were willing to commit resources to their own defense. And then the monumental event that few predicted would ever happen happened—the Cold War ended. Although difficult to pinpoint to one single

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[325] Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Lawrence J. Korb, *American National Security, Policy and Process*, 3rd ed (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989), 64.
[326] John Hillen, "Getting NATO Back to Basics," *Strategic Review* (spring 1996).
[327] Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Lawrence J. Korb, *American National Security, Policy and Process*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989), 505.

event, the end of the Cold War could be linked to Gorbachev's unilateral withdrawal of Soviet troops from Central Europe in 1988 and 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the reunification of Germany in 1990, the collapse of the Warsaw Treat Organization (WTO) in 1991, and the subsequent demise of the Soviet Union. The culmination of these events dramatically changed the European security environment and forced NATO to change or lose its preeminent position in Europe. Many wondered whether NATO "would, or should, be swept away by the breathtaking winds of change."[330] Hillen wrote, "If NATO continues down its present path, the result will be an emasculated organization that bears no resemblance to its predecessor."[331] NATO had no intentions of disbanding its Alliance because "dangers to peace and threats to stability remained."[332] Soviet leaders were the most vocal proponents of the idea of dissolving NATO and the failing Warsaw Pact but in November 1990 the two organizations jointly declared that "security is indivisible and...inextricable linked to the security of all States participating in the CSCE." Nonetheless, NATO was recognized as a better security guarantor than the CSCE was ever likely to become.[333]

One of the first challenges that arose was the Soviet Union's concern about a united Germany becoming a part of NATO. Both sides agreed on a resolution in which they made concessions about troop locations and levels.[334] In June 1990, the North Atlantic Council recognized another challenge: the need for economic and political

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[328] Ibid, 507.
[329] Andrew M. Doorman and Adrian Treacher, *European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner, 1995), 2.
[330], Stanley Sloan, "An Alliance Transformed: NATO Prepares for the Challenges of the 21st Century," *50 Years of NATO: 1949-1999* (North America: Government Services Group, 1999).
[331] John Hillen, "Getting NATO Back to Basics," *Strategic Review*, (spring 1996): 41.
[332] *NATO Handbook* (NATO Office of Information and Press: Brussels, October 1995), 21.
[333] David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington, D.C.: The United States Institute for Peace, 1998), 47-49.

reform within the states of Central Europe and the former Soviet Union.[335] During those talks, the London Declaration proposed how NATO would provide security in the post-Cold War era. Some of those proposals included; an invitation to former Warsaw Pact members to establish diplomatic relations with NATO, support of the European Union movement, a new NATO military posture of Flexible Response, and recommendations for an institutionalization of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process[336] later renamed the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).[337] NATO stressed the fact that "security and stability do not lie solely in the military dimension" and wanted to "build new partnerships with all the nations of Europe."[338]

The European security environment became increasing complex as a result of the new transformations. The challenges facing NATO became multi-faceted and multi-directional in nature. NATO had a whole new host of factors to consider. The security dimensions included military, political, economic, societal, and environmental concerns, which interact in myriad complex and often, contradictory ways.[339] This new environment required, "the reconfiguration of the existing security arrangements, including specifically an expanded and active peacekeeping role for NATO outside its

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[334] Andrew M. Doorman and Adrian Treacher, *European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner, 1995), 47.
[335] Ibid.
[336] Ibid.
[337] Good sources on the negotiations are Philip Zelikow and Condoleeza Rice, *Germany United and Transformed (*Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); and George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Knopf, 1998); George Bush, Brent Scowcroft, and Condoleeza Rice, Audiotape of *A World Transformed* (New York: Random House, 1998).
[338] North Atlantic Council, *The London Declaration of a Transformed North Atlantic Alliance* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, 1990)
[339] Gary Buzan, "Is International Security Possible?" in *New Thinking About Strategic and International Security*, ed. Ken Booth (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991): 31.

historic borders."[340] Clearly the Alliance was evolving.

With respect to initiating meaningful dialogue with Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, in 1991 NATO created the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) a forum for discussions and sharing of expertise on security and related issues.[341] NACC included all NATO members, former Warsaw Pact members from Central Europe, the Baltic States, and later, members of the former Soviet Union. Although the NACC, replaced in 1997 by the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), became the principle NATO forum for East-West consultations and cooperation and promoted the Alliance's commitment to promoting stability and preventative diplomacy, to many Central European and Baltic nations it was insufficient. These nations feared that they were caught in a 'no man's land' between NATO and Russia.[342] Several requested entry into NATO for protection from the recent rising nationalism in Russia. In response to these demands, NATO offered these countries a "Partnership for Peace" in 1994 as an attempt to meet their desires without a membership in NATO or explicit security guarantee.[343] NATO designed Partnership for Peace (PfP) in order to consolidate transitions toward democratic societies and market economies in Central Europe and the former Soviet Union and to promote security throughout the entire region.[344] However, this partnership

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[340] Gülnar Aybet, *A European Security Architecture after the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security (*Washington, D.C.: The United States Institute for Peace, 1998); and Roger E. Kanet and Nouray V. Ibryamova, "La sécurité en Europe centrale et orientale: un systeme en cours de changement," [Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A Changing System], *Revue d'Études comparatives Est-Ouest* vol. 33, no. 1 (2002): 179-203.

[341] Andrew M. Doorman and Adrian Treacher, *European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner, 1995), 49.

[342] Fergus Carr and Paul Flenley, "NATO and the Russian Federation in the New Europe: The Founding Act on Mutual Relations," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics,* vol. 15, no. 2 (1999): 91.

[343] Andrew M. Doorman and Adrian Treacher, *European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner, 1995), 49.

[344] William J. Perry, Annual Report to the President and the Congress. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995.

did not entitle these states to protection under NATO's collective defense provision.[345] Many international relations and security studies scholars began to explore and theorize about European security issues.[346] Gray contended that NATO should continue work to redefine its role in the current world situation so that it does not lose the edge of being

> the most successful peacetime Alliance in history...NATO needs to distinguish carefully among vision, policy, and strategy, and to address questions of necessity, feasibility, and desirability.[347]

NATO took heed, and issues such as role revitalization and membership enlargement were among those in the forefront. NATO began to explore various expansion programs, military support to other international organizations, and out-of-the-area peace enforcement operations.[348] NATO even offered its services as a combat subcontractor to UN peacekeeping mission in the former Yugoslavia and taken on a role of peace implementation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.[349]

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[345] Kim Edward Spiezio, *Beyond Containment, Reconstructing European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1995), 59.

[346] Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Lawrence J. Korb, *American National Security, Policy and Process*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989); Gary Buzan, "Is International Security Possible?" in *New Thinking About Strategic and International Security*, ed. Ken Booth (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991); Andrew M. Doorman and Adrian Treacher, *European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner, 1995); Kim Edward Spiezio, *Beyond Containment, Reconstructing European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1995); Colin S. Gray, "NATO: In Trouble at the Crossroads Again," *Strategic Review* (summer 1995); Stephen J. Cimbala, "NATO Enlargement and Russia," *Strategic Review* (spring 1996); Jeffrey Simon, "Post-Enlargement NATO: Dangers of 'Failed Suitors' and Need for A Strategy," in *From Madrid to Brussels: Perspectives on NATO Enlargement*, ed. Stephen J. Blank (US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 15 June 1997); Niels Helveg Petersen, "Towards a European Security Model for the 21st Century," *NATO Review*, vol. 45, November/December 1997; and Jan Arved Trapans, "National Security Concepts in Central and Eastern Europe," *NATO Review* (November/December 1997).

[347] Colin S. Gray, "NATO: In Trouble at the Crossroads Again," *Strategic Review* (summer 1995): 7.

[348] John Hillen, "Getting NATO Back to Basics," *Strategic Review* (spring 1996): 49.

NATO's security challenges had shifted from the center of the European continent to "its periphery and beyond."[350] The new European security architecture is now comprised of the OSCE, the EU, the WEU and NATO. Each entity having to adapt to new conditions and meet the challenge of being "...overlapping but interlocking and albeit with a different focus, complementary.[351]

Enlargement. The enlargement of NATO became official policy, justified by the notion of promoting stability in Central Europe and the necessity of reconfiguring its post Cold War security architecture.[352] The new arrangements of the 1990s were to "provide stability and security without creating new dividing lines."[353] NATO, the United States, and other Alliance members began to assist prospective new members in promoting civilian control over the military, civil and military cooperation, and interoperability with NATO.[354]

Russia was initially opposed to NATO's expansion into what was formerly its sphere of influence. There was talk of a new division in Europe and NATO and Russia becoming enemies one again. In an effort to alleviate Russian concerns the Founding Act on Mutual Relations between NATO and Russia was signed in 1997. It was a vehicle to promote increased dialogue between the two and to counterbalance the negative effects of

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[349] Ibid., 41.
[350] Roger E. Kanet and Nouray V. Ibryamova, "La sécurité en Europe centrale et orientale: un systeme en cours de changement," [Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A Changing System], *Revue d'Études comparatives Est-Ouest* vol. 33, no. 1 (2002): 179-203.
[351] Fergus Carr and Paul Flenley, "NATO and the Russian Federation in the New Europe: The Founding Act on Mutual Relations," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics,* vol. 15, no. 2 (1999): 90; and Manfred Worner, "The Atlantic Alliance in the New Era," *NATO Review* vol. 39, no. 1 (1991): 8.
[352] Fergus Carr and Paul Flenley, "NATO and the Russian Federation in the New Europe: The Founding Act on Mutual Relations," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* vol. 15, no. 2 (1999): 88.
[353] Roger E. Kanet and Nouray V. Ibryamova, "La sécurité en Europe centrale et orientale: un systéme en cours de changement," [Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A Changing System], *Revue d'Études comparatives Est-Ouest,* vol. 33, no. 1 (2002): 179-203.

NATO's eastward expansion. Some government and defense officials believed that Russia's strong position against NATO expansion persuaded NATO to take into account Russian concerns and limit the number of new states it accepted as members.[355] NATO pressed on with the concept of enlargement and a dozen states, including Slovakia, declared their aspiration to join NATO.[356]

In 1995 NATO had no "established" criteria for accepting new members; accession was ultimately a political decision made on a consensus basis in the Alliance. The NATO's 1995 Study on Enlargement laid out general guidelines to be used to consider the suitability of states seeking membership. These guidelines included a relatively strong, free market economy, political systems based on the rule of law and adherence to it, a stable democracy, a demonstrated commitment to resolving ethnic, territorial, and other disputes with neighbors, civilian control of the military, the ability to share the responsibility of collective defense, work toward interoperability with NATO forces, and participate in NATO's new missions.[357]

Threats to the national security of NATO states became more complex. A wide-range of issues that are able to transcend international borders have potential peace and security implications. These include the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, ethnic or religious conflicts, mass migrations, aggressive nationalism, organized crime,

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[354] General Accounting Office, *NATO Enlargement: U.S. and International Efforts to Assist Potential New Members,* report to the Chairman, Committee International Relations, House of Representatives, June 1997.
[355] Fergus Carr and Paul Flenley, "NATO and the Russian Federation in the New Europe: The Founding Act on Mutual Relations," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics,* vol. 15, no. 2 (1999): 89-102.
[356] NATO, *NATO Handbook* (NATO Office of Information and Press: Brussels, October 1995), 11-21.
[357] NATO, *Study on NATO Enlargement* (NATO Office of Information and Press: Brussels, September 1995); Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald, ed, *Enlarging NATO* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001); and Stephen J. Blank, ed., *Perspectives on NATO Enlargement* (US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 15 June 1997).

disease, environmental and ecological threats, overpopulation and underdevelopment.[358] In light of the sweeping changes that occurred in the early 1990's, the upcoming first round of expansion in 1999, the possibility of new and more challenges threats to national security, and talks of continued expansion, experts once again gave serious thought as to what the future role of NATO should be.[359]

In 1997 NATO extended an invitation to three of the twelve aspirants—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Numerous in-depth studies were conducted on the invitees to determine whether they were or were not viable candidates.[360] According to United States Congressional testimony by Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen on February 24, 1998, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic all possessed deficiencies prior to their accession into NATO. All three invitees needed to develop key personnel, downsize their forces, focus on personnel to get qualified people into their militaries and develop a Non-Commissioned Officer Corps, provide better training and focus on

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[358] Lloyd Axworthy, "NATO's New Security Vocation," *NATO Review,* vol. 47 (winter 1999): 8; and Niels Helveg Petersen, "Towards a European Security Model for the 21st Century," *NATO Review,* vol 45. (November/December 1997).

[359] Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Lawrence J. Korb, *American National Security, Policy and Process*, 3rd ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989); McCormick, *American Foreign Policy and Process*, 2nd ed. (Library of Congress: Peacock Publishers, 1992); John Hillen, "Getting NATO Back to Basics," *Strategic Review* (spring 1996); Andrew M. Doorman and Adrian Treacher, *European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner, 1995); Gary Buzan, "Is International Security Possible?" in *New Thinking About Strategic and International Security*, ed. Ken Booth (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991); Kim Edward Spiezio, *Beyond Containment, Reconstructing European Security* (Boulder, CO, Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1995); Colin S. Gray, "NATO: In Trouble at the Crossroads Again," *Strategic Review* (summer 1995); NATO, *Study on NATO Enlargement* (Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press, September 1995); Lloyd Axworthy, "NATO's New Security Vocation," *NATO Review,* vol. 47, (winter 1999): 8; and Niels Helveg Petersen, "Towards a European Security Model for the 21st Century," *NATO Review,* vol. 45 (November/December 1997).

[360] Congress, The Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, CRS Report for Congress, *NATO Prospective Members: Military Modernization,* report prepared by Christopher Bell, 24 April 1998; Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Administrations Views on the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty on Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic*, xxth Cong., 2nd sess., 24 February 1998, 15; Stephen J. Blank, ed., *Perspectives on NATO Enlargement* (US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 15 June 1997); and Andrew A. Michta, ed., *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO (*Seattle-London: University of Washington Press, 1999).

interoperability with NATO through their command, control and communications systems, and then acquire new weapon systems.[361] On the positive side, a 1998 Congressional Research Report for Congress noted that all three countries raised defense spending in the past two years, contributed troops to SFOR in Bosnia, and were concentrating on communications and infrastructure modernization in the short-term and on major weapons procurement in the long-term.[362]

Some Westerners felt that "there [was]...a historic and moral justification for bringing the Višegrád states into NATO, namely the Western abandonment of these states to Nazi and Soviet imperialism earlier in the century."[363] As a former member of the Višegrád Group, Slovakia was often compared to the other three – Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Many experts contended that Slovakia was close to fulfilling the guidelines for NATO membership in 1993, as were the other three states.[364] And in 1993 it probably was. Needless to say, all of the Višegrád states possessed shortcomings when it came to accession. Then in 1999 Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic – three of the four original members of the Višegrád Group -- became members of the Alliance. Slovakia did not.

In 1998 NATO Secretary General Javier Solana stated that "NATO's door will remain open to other aspirants who are willing to take on the responsibilities and

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[361] Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Administrations Views on the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty on Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic*, xxth Cong., 2nd sess., 24 February 1998, 15.
[362] Congress, The Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, CRS Report for Congress, *NATO Prospective Members: Military Modernization,* report prepared by Christopher Bell, 24 April 1998.
[363] Carl C. Hodge, ed., *Redefining European Security* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 334.
[364] František Šebej, "Slovakia and NATO: A Case of Self-Disqualification," presented at conference on Illuminating the Gray Zone: Insecurity and Uncertainty in Eastern Europe After NATO Enlargement, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 11-12 December 1997, 28; and

obligations of membership." He further affirmed that intensive dialogue would continue with those states who have expressed an interest in joining the Alliance and that NATO will review the accession process at the next Summit in 1999.[365] Scholars began to discuss the pros and cons of future expansion efforts and explored the circumstances surrounding the states that were not invited to join NATO in preparation for another round of expansion.[366]

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Zdenka Kramplová, Minister of Foreign Affairs, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bratislava, Slovakia, 7 May 1998.

[365] Javier Solana, "On Course for a NATO of 19 Nations in 1999," *NATO Review,* vol. 46(1988): 3-5.

[366] Roger E. Kanet and Nouray V. Ibryamova, "La sécurité en Europe centrale et orientale: un systéme en cours de changement," [Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A Changing System], *Revue d'Études comparatives Est-Ouest,* vol. 33, no. 1 (2002): 179-203; Jeffrey Simon, "Post-Enlargement NATO: Dangers of 'Failed Suitors' and Need for A Strategy," in *From Madrid to Brussels: Perspectives on NATO Enlargement*, ed. Stephen J. Blank (US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 15 June 1997); Gale A. Mattox and Arthur R. Rachwald, ed, *Enlarging NATO* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001); Michael Brenner, ed., *NATO and Collective Security* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1998); Niels Helveg Petersen, "Towards a European Security Model for the 21st Century," *NATO Review,* vol. 45 (November/December 1997); Michael Ruhle, "Imagining NATO 2011," *NATO Review,* vol. 49 (autumn 2001); Lloyd Axworth, "NATO's New Security Vocation," *NATO Review,* vol. 47 (winter 1999); Andrei Zagorski, "Great Expectations," *NATO Review,* vol. 49 (spring 2001); Jan Arveds Trapans, "National Security Concepts in Central and Eastern Europe," *NATO Review* (November/December 1997); Stuart Croft, Jolyon Howorth, Terry Terriff and Mark Webber, "NATO's Triple Challenge," *International Affairs,* vol. 76, no. 3 (2000); Fergus Carr and Paul Flenley, "NATO and the Russian Federation in the New Europe: The Founding Act on Mutual Relations," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics,* vol. 15, no. 2 (1999): 88-110; Gülnar Aybet, *A European Security Architecture after the Cold War: Questions of Legitimacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); Charles-Philippe David and Jacques Levesque, ed., *The Future of NATO: Enlargement, Russia, and European Security* (Montreal-Kingston-London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999); Carl C. Hodge, ed., *Redefining European Security* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999); Heinz Gartner, "European Security, the Transatlantic Link, and Crisis Management," in *Europe's New Security Challenges* ed. Heinz Gartner, Adrian Hyde-Price, and Erich Reiter (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2000), 125-147; Anton A. Bebler, ed., *The Challenge of NATO Enlargement* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999); Andrew A. Michta, ed., *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO* (Seattle-London: University of Washington Press, 1999); James M. Goldgeier, *Not Whether But When: The US Decision to Enlarge NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999); William E. Ferry and Roger E. Kanet, *Post Communist States in the World Community* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (Washington, D.C.: The United States Institute for Peace, 1998); Sean Kay, *NATO and the Future of European Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998); Charles Krupnick, ed., *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002); Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis in association with The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, *European Security Institutions: Ready for the Twenty-First Century?* (Everett, MA: Fidelity Press, 2000); and Stanley Sloan, "An Alliance Transformed: NATO Prepares for the Challenges of the 21st Century," in *50 Years of NATO: 1949-1999* (North America: Faircourt International Inc: 1999).

At the April 1999 NATO summit the Alliance declared that it was open to further enlargement but did not set a timetable nor guaranteed membership to any state. Instead, NATO created a Membership Action Plan (MAP) for states desiring membership, outlining a structured set of goals for prospective members, such as ending the danger of ethnic conflict, developing a democratic society with civilian control of the military, and pledging commitment to defense budgets to build military forces able to contribute to missions from collective defense to peacekeeping.[367] In November 2002 NATO invited seven new states, including Slovakia, to begin accession talks for possible NATO membership in the future.

This newest round of NATO enlargement brings with it additional concerns, including NATO's relationship with Moscow.[368] Russia is once again nervous about the continued expansion of NATO. Hodge asserts that "ways must be found that provide for further NATO expansion into Central Europe without destroying political and military cooperation with Russia."[369] Kanet and Ibryamova contend that this next round of enlargement would enhance security in Europe, increase stability in the region, and strengthen democratic values in the newly admitted states. However, Russian concerns,

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[367]NATO, *Washington Summit Communique,* 24 April 1994.

[368] Fergus Carr and Paul Flenley, "NATO and the Russian Federation in the New Europe: The Founding Act on Mutual Relations," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics,* vol. 15, no. 2 (1999); Andrei Zagorski, "Great Expectations," *NATO Review,* vol. 49, (spring 2001); Roger E. Kanet and Nouray V. Ibryamova, "La sécurité en Europe centrale et orientale: un systeme en cours de changement," [Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A Changing System], *Revue d'Études comparatives Est-Ouest,* vol. 33, no. 1 (2002): 179-203, "Mezhdu Konsensusom i konfrontatsiei: Rossiia i Soedinnenye Shtaty," [Between Consensus and Confrontation: Russia and the United States], in *Vneshnyaya politika Rossii ot El'cina k Putinu. Kiev: Izdatel'stvo ˜Optimaâ™, Stefan Krojzberger* [Stefan Kreuzberger] ed., Zabine Grabovski [Sabine Grabowski], and Iutta Unzer [Jutta Unser] (2002): 169-182; Stanley Sloan, "An Alliance Transformed: NATO Prepares for the Challenges of the 21st Century," *50 Years of NATO: 1949-1999* (North America: Government Services Group, 1999); Charles-Philippe David and Jacques Levesque, ed., *The Future of NATO: Enlargement, Russia, and European Security* (Montreal-Kingston-London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999); and Mark Webber, *Russia and Europe: Conflict or Cooperation?* (St. Martin's Press, 2000).

as well as those of the other excluded states, must be addressed if NATO's enlargement is not to cause new problems. They add that to understand the emerging environment in which European security finds itself, other factors in addition to NATO enlargement must be taken into consideration such as the EU, the EU's initiative to develop its own security and defense capabilities.[370] According to Croft, Howorth, Terriff, and Webber, NATO now faces a triple challenge in the 21st century all of which are deeply interrelated. First, with respect to expansion, NATO must contend with whom to invite, how and when and also how to deal with those excluded. Secondly, it must contend with perception that the "Europeanization" of the Alliance may be an attempt by Washington to gradually withdraw from the organization. Thirdly, NATO must deal with whether it should intensify its military posture or not, and if not, realize that it will be a less effective military instrument in the future.[371]

NATO continues to be a viable entity. In addition to being a formidable collective defense organization NATO has assisted former communist states transition toward democratic societies, market economies, and Western-style militaries and defense establishments. NATO has also promoted peaceful resolution of various ethnic and regional disputes and has greatly contributed to peacekeeping missions inside and outside its borders. Furthermore, NATO has established serious dialogue with its former superpower enemy and institutionalized a vehicle that has promoted increased security on

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[369] Carl C. Hodge, ed., *Redefining European Security* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 10.
[370] Roger E. Kanet and Nouray V. Ibryamova, "La sécurité en Europe centrale et orientale: un systéme en cours de changement," [Security in Central and Eastern Europe: A Changing System], *Revue d'Études comparatives Est-Ouest,* vol. 33, no. 1 (2002): 179-203; Fergus Carr and Paul Flenley, "NATO and the Russian Federation in the New Europe: The Founding Act on Mutual Relations," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics,* vol. 15, no. 2 (1999): 105.
[371] Stuart Croft, Jolyon Howorth, Terry Terriff and Mark Webber, "NATO's Triple Challenge," *International Affairs,* vol. 76, no. 3 (2000).

the European continent.

NATO is clearly a key component of the new European security architecture working in concert with the EU, WEU and OSCE. A formidable, robust and revitalized NATO can contribute to the overall European security architecture and can positioning itself to meet the new challenges and threats to the national security of its members. It can help members of NACC and PfP meet those challenges in the future as well.

## National Security of Slovakia

This section on national security examines the evolution of Slovakia's security and defense policies during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period. It explores Slovakia's national security concept, perceived threats to its national security, and its relationships with various institutions. It further examines the challenges Slovakia's defense establishment faced following the Velvet Divorce from the Czech Republic and the military's goal to transform and reform its armed forces from a Soviet style military into a viable self-defense force capable of integrating with NATO and other Western military structures. Furthermore, the section provides a brief look at how the armed forces will be structured once the reform is complete and recaps recommendations by United States military experts on how the Slovak military should proceed with its transformation.

In addition, this section provides an overview of civilian control of the military and governmental oversight and explores how Mečiar's government's attempted to exert excessive political influence over the armed forces by taking such actions as modifying laws on command relationships, purging the military of its most capable officers, illegally

appointing a new Chief of Staff of the ASR, and continually under funding the defense establishment. While the first three actions were largely unsuccessful, the fiscal limitations proved to be the most overwhelming constraint placed on the ASR. This section looks at the various assistance programs Slovakia took advantage of during this period and the ASR's participation in military exercises as well as real world joint and combined military operations. It concludes by highlighting the remarkable contribution the armed forces made toward promoting democracy in Slovakia by providing the Slovak people an institution they could trust and believe in during the turbulent Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule Period.

National Security. From the earliest period of existence in the Tribal Rule Period all the way through to the Authoritarian Mečiar ist Rule period, Slovakia was not afforded the opportunity to master its own security destiny. It was not until Slovakia split from the Czech Republic that the Slovaks took on that responsibility for themselves. Following independence Slovakia's evolving security and defense policies were laid out in three basic documents: the *Defense Doctrine of the Slovak Republic* adopted by the Parliament in 1994; the *Basic Goals and Principles of National Security of the Slovak Republic* published in 1994, later revised and adopted by the Parliament in 1996;[372] and the *National Defense Strategy* adopted by the State Defense Council in 1996.[373]

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[372] Národná Rada Slovenskej Republiky, *Základné ciele a zasay náraodnej bezpečnosti Slovenskej republiky*, Bratislava (21 juna 1996).

[373] All three of these basic documents and legal regulations were placed under review and revision following the March 1999 NATO enlargement and Washington Summit decisions. In 2001 the Slovak Parliament adopted the following new documents: the *Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic*, the *Defense Strategy of the Slovak Republic*, and the *Military Strategy of the Slovak Republic*. Josef Stank, "Security and Defense Policy of the Slovak Republic," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace,* vol. 47, no. 4/2002 (4/2002): 139.

Slovakia's national security concept, *The Basic Goals and Principles of National Security of the Slovak Republic,* most resembled a national security strategy. It defined the national interest as the security of Slovak independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, as well as economic prosperity, social stability, and international recognition. It emphasized integration into transatlantic and West European political, economic and security structures and notes the current absence of international security guarantees. The goals included compatibility with European security systems, participation stabilizing activities such as peacekeeping, friendly relations with neighbors, recognizing the rights of minorities, providing individual security, and developing democracy and the rule of law that will lead to a functioning market economy. The basic principles included adherence to international obligations, the indivisibility of security with respect to other states, conflict prevention, reasonable sufficiency of armed forces, democratic and civilian control of the armed forces, crime prevention, education toward patriotism, and environmental awareness.[374]

Slovakia's national interests lie in the state's self-preservation. Slovakia does not consider any state its enemy, but has concerns about economic, social and political instability in neighboring states and in Europe as a whole. Possible threats to the national security of Slovakia include: failure of political and economic transformation in Central European states; instability and armed conflict at their borders; a halt in the flow of energy and raw materials of which the majority comes from Russia; and the usual post Cold War threats of mass illegal migration, nationalism, militant religious fundamentalism, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD),

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[374] Headquarters United States European Command, *Military Capabilities of Slovakia*, report to

environmental disasters, information warfare/hacking, and organized crimes and drugs. Slovakia considers the breakup of the Soviet Union into several independent decision-making entities a potential concern because of the inherent unpredictability of those states' actions. However, MOD officials do not envision a threat of invasion in the next 10 to 20 years.[375] Security against these threats and protection of its own existence serve as the basis for the state's defense policy.[376] With many changes ongoing in the European region, Slovakia's national interest and defense policies have evolved and matured. To that end, the state has had to strengthen existing international relationships and forge new partnerships in the realm of security.

Slovakia maintains relationships with various institutions and organizations. Since independence in 1993 and throughout the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period Slovakia's official orientation and primary security objective has been to obtain membership in the NATO.[377] The majority of political parties believed NATO to be the only organization capable of offering Slovakia real security in the near term so gaining membership in the Alliance was a priority followed by obtaining membership in the WEU and EU.[378] Consequently the number one priority of the MOD and the ASR also has been NATO membership.

Defense Establishment. Following the split from the Czech Republic in 1993, Slovakia was forced to set up its own defense establishment and create entirely new

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OSD/OUSDP/ASD/EUR, December 1999; http:www.mod.gov.sk

[375] Headquarters United States European Command, *Military Capabilities of Slovakia*, report to OSD/OUSDP/ASD/EUR, December 1999.

[376] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 14.

[377] And to gain membership in the Western European Union (WEU). Military Press and Information Agency of the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, Partnership for Stability and Security, 1 November 1996; http:www.mod.gov.sk.

[378] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 14.

command structures for its defense ministry and armed forces. Slovakia did not have a facility to house its MOD or General Staff. All of these facilities and first-line troops were located in the western part of Czechoslovakia, now the Czech Republic. Only training units were based in the current Slovak Republic. When the Czechoslovak military divided into two separate entities, approximately two-thirds of the military assets went to the Czech Republic and one-third to the Slovak Republic, based on the relative population of the two states. The division had to be accomplished very quickly, and some contended that it was not conducted equitably. During interviews some Slovak military personnel claimed that the Czechs kept the more advanced equipment for themselves and gave the older, obsolete weapon systems, military equipment and computer systems to the Slovaks.[379] According to General Milan Cerovsky, Chief of the General Staff, ASR, after the split Slovakia lacked sufficient airfields, an air-defense system, accommodations for the troops and suffered from a personnel shortage and a slow equipment modernization and upgrade process, which contributed to its difficult post division challenges.[381] Slovakia did not inherit a coherent force tailored to the needs of a new state. This condition was unique to Slovakia.[382] The other members of the Višegrád Four were not forced to create new military structures, forces and facilities.

In addition to creating a military structure from the ground up, the Slovak defense establishment was forced to transform drastically and downsize in personnel and military equipment (tanks, armored vehicles, artillery systems, attack helicopters and combat

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[379] A few of the Czech military officers I interviewed corroborated off line that the Czech military retained the majority of the modern equipment.
[381] Ibid.
[382] And to Slovenia.

aircraft),[383] as did the militaries of the other Central European states.[384] The ASR goal was to transform itself into a viable self-defense force capable of integrating into NATO military structures and participating in UN and OSCE peacekeeping missions through a three-step transformation plan: reorganization of the MOD, reconfiguration or replacement of command, control and communications systems to meet the NATO standard, and modernization of the ASR with Western equipment.[385] Since independence the ASR has been downsizing steadily, moving toward a smaller, more flexible and less top-heavy force.[386] Military structures have been aligned more closely with Western standards, the ratio between junior enlisted personnel and officers has been increasing, a personnel management process was being developed, training and education programs were being fortified, and knowledge of the English language for promotion purposes became a requirement.[387] In 1998 Deputy Counsel of the Embassy of the United States of America in Bratislava, William Schofield, stated that, "militarily Slovakia is well ahead of the Czech Republic and Hungary...can't say it about the Poles."[388] But continued reforms are necessary.

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[383] The ASR inventory of heavy weapons systems has been reduced to within the limits of the Conventional Forces Europe (CFE) treaty. Headquarters United States European Command, Military Capabilities of Slovakia, Report to OSD/OUSDP/ASD/EUR, December 1999.

[384] Chris Donnelly, Reform Realities, *NATO Review* (autumn 2001): 30.

[385] Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, "Slovak Defense Policies, Allocation of Defense Resources, Assessing Force Structure, and Force Draw-down and Personnel Management," briefings held at the Pentagon, Washington D.C., (25-29 January 1999); Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 14.

[386] Congress, The Library of Congress, United States Congressional Research Service, *Slovakia and NATO Membership,* report prepared by Julie Kim, 4 February 1999.

[387] Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, "Slovak Defense Policies, Allocation of Defense Resources, Assessing Force Structure, and Force Draw-down and Personnel Management," briefings held at the Pentagon, Washington D.C., (25-29 January 1999).

[388] William P. Schofield, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the United States of America, interview by author, tape recording, American Embassy, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 December 1998.

A 1999 study, *The Military Capabilities of the Slovak Republic*, indicated that after the reform has been completed, the armed forces will be divided into four categories: army, air/air defense forces, territorial forces, and reserve forces. They will be tiered into immediate reaction, rapid reaction, and main reaction defense forces, with the first two forces being professionalized.[389] There will be two headquarters, land and air force. The General Staff will be integrated and located along with the MOD. Personnel strengths, which began at 53,000[390] in 1993, will be further reduced from 35,000 to 30,000 over three years, professionalized soldiers will gradually increase from 45 percent to 60 percent, and conscription will be shortened from 12 months to 9 months. Among the additional force cuts will be one airbase, one surface-to-air missile (SAM) brigade, three armored battalions, four mechanized battalions, three artillery batteries, and associated equipment. The ASR planned to implement gradually a planning, programming and budgeting system in 2000.[391]

The United States European Command team conducting the study provided 13 recommendations to help Slovakia continue the reform of its military. The team suggested that Slovakia: design a reformed ASR to meet Slovakia's perceived threats; delineate responsibilities among the MOD and other ministries, or privatize the tasks to reduce overhead; limit command to three years and increase officer mobility; keep conscription at one year for now and consider abolishing it in the future; increase salaries

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[389] The professionalization of the military forces will be complete by 2006. Josef Stank, "Security and Defense Policy of the Slovak Republic," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace,* vol. 47, no. 4/2002 (4/2002): 139.

[390] Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, "Slovak Defense Policies, Allocation of Defense Resources, Assessing Force Structure, and Force Draw-down and Personnel Management," briefings held at the Pentagon, Washington D.C., (25-29 January 1999).

[391] Headquarters United States European Command, *Military Capabilities of Slovakia,* report to OSD/OUSDP/ASD/EUR, December 1999.

for the lowest ranks; fund the institute for Defense Strategy to allow war college level education for senior officers; include joint operations in training and professional development; use excess equipment for training or salvaging; continue acquisition of night combat equipment and secure NATO compatible communications; better specify mission of the Air and Air Defense Forces; assign attack helicopters to the land forces; cease preparations of MiG-29's for peacekeeping and redirect resources to upgrading transport helicopters as a contribution to peacekeeping; and immediately fund sufficient flying hours to prevent loss of continuity in advanced aviation skills.[392]

Slovakia's defense establishment faced many of the same transformation and reform challenges as did the militaries of its neighbors and other post-communist states. Marybeth Peterson Ulrich conducted an excellent study on the democratization of the post-communist militaries, specifically the Czech and Russian militaries.[393] But Slovakia was unique in that it faced two additional challenges as a result of Slovakia's split from the Czech Republic. Slovakia was forced to establish entirely new defense structures and facilities, which were previously established in the Czech part of Czechoslovakia, and had to contend with building a new military from the ground up with less than adequate military equipment and weapons systems. From the beginning Slovakia's goal was to transform itself into a viable self-defense force capable of integrating into NATO military structures. Almost immediately the military began to downsize and move toward a smaller, more flexible and less top-heavy force. Despite Mečiar, the armed forces made significant strides toward achieving their goal.

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[392] Ibid.

Civilian Control of the Military. As in Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, mechanisms for civilian control of the military and parliamentary oversight were codified in various laws on national security and the armed forces, and in subsequent amendments to these laws. Under the Slovak Constitution, the president is the supreme commander and can declare a state of emergency. Toward the end of the Mečiar's term in office, controversies surfaced over the government's apparent actions to exert undue political influence over the military.[394] Mečiar's government attempted to change laws that established command relationships, tried to purge the military of its most able officers through a controversial change in the social security law, desired to exert undue power over the military by unlawfully appointing a new Chief of Staff of the ASR, and repeatedly failed to adequately fund the military.

Following Mečiar's guidance the National Council passed a 1995 amendment to the Law on the ASR. This law transferred the President's power to appoint and recall the Chief of the General Staff to the government on the recommendation of the Defense Minister. President Kovač refused to sign the law because it attempted to reduce his power over the armed forces, contradicted the Constitution by denying his ability to appoint and promote general officers, and was in direct violation of the division of power between the President and the Prime Minister. Two years later the National Council voted on another law proposed by Mečiar's HZDS party mandating that the state secretary of the Defense Ministry head the General Staff. This would have, in effect,

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[393] Marybeth Petersen Ulrich, *Democratizing Communist Militaries: The Cases of the Czech Republic and Russian Armed Forces* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); and David Betz and John Löwenhardt, *Army and State in Postcommunist Europe (* London: Franck Cass, 2001).
[394] Congress, The Library of Congress, United States Congressional Research Service, *Slovakia and NATO Membership,* report prepared by Julie Kim, 4 February 1999.

politicized the military by putting a politician selected by the ruling party in a position to have direct command over the General Staff and the armed forces. Opposition to the proposed law was widespread from opposing democratic parties and the media and the proposed law was ultimately defeated.[395]

In an apparent attempt to decrease the morale of the armed forces, the National Council passed a law in early 1998 requiring military members to serve until the age of 55 before being eligible for active duty severance pay, thereby replacing the current law which afforded military members severance pay after serving for six years. Over 200 officers applied for release before the law was to take effect. The law was highly criticized as a government attempt to rid the armed forces of capable military officers, many of whom were trained in NATO countries. After President Kovač rejected the provision and returned the law to the National Council the original six-year period was restored and many of the officers returned to active duty service.[396]

Just a month before 1998 parliamentary elections were to be held, then Chief of Staff General Jozef Tuchyňa resigned and became a candidate on an opposing party's ticket. Parliamentary Chairman Gasparovic, HZDS accepted Tuchyňa's resignation and appointed Colonel Marian Miklus as his replacement. The presidential privilege of appointing the Chief of Staff was transferred to Gasparovic after the parliament failed to elect a new president as Kovač's successor. Gasparovic disregarded the Defense Ministry's proposed candidate and appointed Mečiar's candidate. Legal experts claimed

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[395] Grigorij Mesežnikov, "Domestic Political Developments and the Political Scene in the Slovak Republic," in *Global Report on Slovakia: Comprehensive Analyses From 1995 and Trends from 1996* (Bratislava: Sandor Marai Foundation, 1997): 11-31.

this was a breach of the law. In effect, this was another attempt by Mečiar to have the armed forces under his personal control.[397]

Fortunately for the ASR Mečiar's attempts to exert undue political influence over the military were largely unsuccessful. The leadership of the ASR, the political opposition, and the President successfully countered Mečiar's attempts to change laws on command relationships, purge the military of its most capable officers, and appoint a new Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.

Defense Budget. The overwhelming constraint faced by the ASR during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period was financial. The military's ability to implement necessary reforms in a timely manner and the ASR's overall effectiveness was greatly hampered by its considerable lack of resources. Slovakia defense budget dropped nearly 50 percent in real terms since 1989 and has stayed steady at approximately 2.3 percent of the GDP through 1997. The budget has consistently been less that the amount requested by the military and has limited training, readiness and modernization plans.[398] Training, except for basic conscripts, was nearly at a standstill. In 1998, Slovakia spent $406 million on its defense budget, about eight percent of its federal budget, which was again a decrease in real terms due to increasing inflation.[399] According to the United States State

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[396] Grigorij Mesežnikov, "Vnútropolitický vývoj a szstém politických strán," in *Slovensko 1998-1999: Súhrnná správa o stave spoločnosti,* ed., Grigorij Mesežnikov and Michal Ivantzšzn (Bratislava: Inštittút pre Verejné Otáykz, 1999): 17-114.

[397] Joyce Naegele, "Slovakia: Defense Minister Wins A Small Victory," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 3 September 1998; Marian Simko, "Slovakia Has New Chief of Staff," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 20 August 1998; Marian Simko, "New Slovak Chief of Staff Promoted to General," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 21 August 1998; Marian Simko, "Slovak Coalition Argues Over Chief of Staff," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 25 August 1998; and Marian Simko, "Acting Chief of Staff Appointed in Slovakia," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 2 September 1998.

[398] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 16. This was also the case in most of the post-communist states.

[399] Julie Moffett, "East: U.S. Report Says Some Militaries Struggling," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 25 February 1999.

Department, Slovakia's budget "barely met minimum requirements to maintain subsistence."[400]

Because of the fiscal constraints placed on the ASR, Slovakia took advantage of participating in exchange programs with other militaries and received foreign monetary assistance. For example, as part of a joint United States and Slovak effort, the Indiana National Guard established a State Partnership Program (SPP) with its Guard and Reserve resources with the Slovak military. Under the direction of the United States European Command (USEUCOM) Joint Contact Team Program (JCTP), the ASR and the Indiana National Guard conduct familiarization visits and exchange activities. In addition to this exchange program, Slovakia has received funds from Western states, including the United States, to purchase items related to participation in PfP activities. Furthermore, through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program, Slovakia also received funds for training designed to introduce civilian and military official to U.S. concepts of defense planning and civil-military relations as well as helping to establish a non-political professional officer corps along Western standards.[401]

Military Contributions. Despite the economic challenges, the ASR was able to participate in a variety of exercises and real world joint military operations. From 1993 through 1998 Slovakia provided assistance to a number of UN and other peacekeeping operations, such as the UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES) in Croatia, the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in the Golan Heights, the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Lebanon, the EU's Monitoring Mission in the former Yugoslavia, and to the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia-

[400] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998),16.

Herzegovina.[402] During this period Slovakia contributed more than 2,600 military members for operations in the Balkans,[403] participated in 40 PfP exercises, and assisted Hungary and Austria to prepare engineering battalions for SFOR.[404] In addition, the ASR sponsored numerous joint and multi-national training exercises such as training for humanitarian or disaster relief crises, peacekeeping deployments, and general staff exercises in conjunction with forces from Hungary, Austria, and Slovenia.[405]

The most significant role the Slovak military performed for an independent Slovakia on a turbulent road to democratization was to remain apolitical and provide the populace with an institution they could trust and believe in. According to Deputy Counsel Schofield the "military is a highly professional organization and, according to the polls, it is the most respected organization in the country."[406] A June 1998 poll indicated that the military was trusted by 74 percent of the population, with no other government institution even coming close.[407] One of the reasons why the armed forces was, and continues to be well regarded is that one of their security pillars is to remain politically neutral at all times.[408] General Tuchyňa upheld this pillar despite the adversities that Mečiar cast his way.

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[401] Erika Triscari, ed., *Country Profile of Slovakia*, 4th ed. (August 1998), 4.
[402] Ibid.
[403] Ludovit Gal, "Contributions of Defense Department to Peacekeeping, Summary," *Apologia (*November 1999, 14 February 1999).
[404] Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, "Slovak Defense Policies, Allocation of Defense Resources, Assessing Force Structure, and Force Draw-down and Personnel Management," briefings held at the Pentagon, Washington D.C., (25-29 January 1999).
[405] Ibid.
[406] William Schofield, Deputy Council, Embassy of the United States of America, interview by author, tape recording, Embassy of the USA, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 December 1998.
[407] "Opinion Poll Canvasses Views on Army Leadership, "Bratislava TASR, (8 February 1998) from FBIS Vienna AU.
[408] Headquarters United States European Command, *Military Capabilities of Slovakia*, report to OSD/OUSDP/ASD/EUR, December 1999.

In her study on the democratization of post-communist militaries Ulrich contends that

> Authoritarian and democratic political systems produce different forms of civilian control and military professionalism...A new form of military professionalism is needed to ensure that the militaries in the post-communist states become democratically accountable and reflect democratic principles while also functioning as effective instruments of national security. Militaries in transitioning states must set their sights on achieving these goals although they are burdened with the weight of institutional norms formed while in service to authoritarian states.[409]

Although I have not applied Ulrich's theoretical framework to the case of Slovakia explicitly, I contend that the Slovak military had set its sights on these goals very early on and had already implemented a new form of military professionalism. Furthermore, the ASR had made great strides in becoming democratically accountable and reflecting democratic principles while also functioning as effective instruments of national security. According to a 1998 study on the *Democratic Control of Slovak Defense Forces: Structural Progress and Governmental Interference*, "the armed forces are an impressive element of the democratic control system in Slovakia." The study concluded that the military is competent, highly professional and "remarkably disinterested in politics despite repeated government efforts to exert influence over the armed forces."[410] A testament to the professionalism of its senior leaders, the ASR was held in very high esteem by the populace[411] and has been voted the most respected institution in Slovakia

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[409] Marybeth Petersen Ulrich, *Democratizing Communist Militaries: The Cases of the Czech Republic and Russian Armed Forces* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999).
[410] Christopher Sartorius, "Democratic Control of Slovak Defense Forces: Structural Progress and Governmental Interference" (master's thesis, Joint Military Intelligence College, August 1998).
[411] Daniel N. Nelson, "Civil Armies, Civil Societies and NATO's Enlargement," Armed Forces and Society vol. 25, no. 1 (fall 1998): 20; Congress, The Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, CRS Report for Congress, *NATO Prospective Members: Military Modernization,* report prepared by Christopher Bell, 24 April 1998, 12.

since independence.[412] The Czech Army, in contrast, was held in low esteem. The Czechs' anti-military and pacifistic outlooks contributed to a frequent call by Czech citizens for abolition of the Czech military.[413]

Slovakia's national security concepts, policies, perceived threats and desires for integration into NATO, the EU and the WEU remained the same even during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period. During that same period the ASR's goal was to transform and reform itself from a military based on Soviet doctrine into a viable self-defense force capable of integrating with NATO and other Western military structures. The ASR was able to make some progress toward that goal despite having to create military establishment virtually from the ground up, dealing with repeated legal challenges Mečiar forced upon it, and facing fiscal limitations placed on it by the Parliament. Rising above all of these issues, the Slovak armed forces made remarkable contributions toward institutionalizing democracy by giving Slovakia a governmental entity on which they could rely.

## Slovakia's Post-Communist Path

It is difficult to assess Slovak national security issues without exploring Slovakia's post-communist path toward democratization after finally being released from the Soviet Empire's grip. As previously laid out in the chapter on Slovakia's history, Soviet hard-line communists seized power in 1948 at the onset of the Totalitarian Stalinist Rule period and maintained control of the Slovak government and people until

[412] Christopher Sartorius, "Democratic Control of Slovak Defense Forces: Structural progress and Governmental Interference" (master's thesis, Joint Military Intelligence College, August 1998).

the end of the Soviet Normalization Rule period ending in 1989. There was but a brief exception between 1962 and 1968, the Reformation of Socialist Rule period, when economic, social and political reforms were evident during the movement called Socialism with a Human Face.

This section focuses on the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period and is divided into four parts. It explores Slovakia's perceived or actual tendencies to lean East or West, various theories about why Slovakia was excluded from NATO, and the impact of NATO's exclusion of Slovakia in 1997 from a security perspective. It concludes with a brief review of the events beyond 1998, such as the new government's pledges, Slovakia's recent military, economic and political accomplishments, remaining challenges the nation must face, and the triple good news on the horizon for the near-term —an invitation from the EU in 1999, a political triumph over Mečiar in 2002, and a long awaited invitation from NATO just two months after Mečiar's defeat.

Leaning East or West? Since independence Slovakia's national security interest has been to preserve the state's territorial integrity. Virtually all of the official governmental documents related to national security purported that Slovakia should integrate itself into Western structures, specifically mentioning NATO, the WEU and the EU. Although the government's program set NATO membership as a national security priority in 1993, government run public media did not engage in a systematic campaign to explain to the public the substance of NATO or the benefits of joining the Alliance. The same HZDS government political figures that publicly supported and declared they would do what it took to get Slovakia accepted into NATO also published articles containing

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[413] Andrew A. Michta, ed., *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO*

militant arguments against Western countries and international democratic structures.[414] Ivo Samson called this "double talk" a "deep difference between political declarations, declamations and the real political output."[415] This dichotomy contributed to the international community's confusion about Slovakia's inclinations.

In a May 1997 special edition of *Nová Panoramá: Politiky, Ekonomiky a Spoločnosti* titled *Checeme do NATO? [Do we want go into NATO?]* Mečiar submitted an article titled "Bezpečnosť pre Vzsetkych" [Security for All] in which he wrote, "...the Slovak Republic is looking for its place in the NATO structure as a guarantee for security..." During her comments on 25 August 1997 to North Atlantic Assembly Parliamentarians, Foreign Minister Zdenka Kramplová reaffirmed that, "the interest of the Slovak Republic in attaining full membership of NATO has been and remains unchanged." During my interview with Minister Kramplová in May 1998 she reiterated this notion and said

> Entrance into NATO and the EU is truly a priority and all of our steps are toward that so that we will become members in the near term. We are not looking for another solution at this moment...the first three countries, our closest neighbors, are joining NATO and we have ambitions to become members of NATO. It bothers us that we were not invited because our military is better prepared than the militaries of the three countries.[416]

This standard "party line" was invariably repeated by all ten of the high-ranking HZDS and coalition government officials with whom I spoke. For example, Imrich Andrejčák, Defense and Security Committee Chairman and former Minister of Defense, commented

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(Seattle-London: University of Washington Press, 1999), 112-148.

[414] Martin Bútora and František Šebej, ed., *Slovensko v Šedej Zóne? Rozširovanie NATO, Zlyhania a Perspecktívy Slovenska* (Bratislava: Inštitute Pre Verejné Otázky, 1998); 248-249.

[415] Ivo Samson, "Security Policy of the Slovak Republic: Meeting NATO Criteria Before Madrid and After NATO," in *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* (Spring 2000), 43.

[416] Zdenka Kramplová, Minister of Foreign Affairs, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bratislava, Slovakia, 7 May 1998.

"...we will win the election [September 1998 parliamentary election] and we will go into NATO."[417] Dušan Slobodník, Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman said, "Our politics is in one direction. We want to go into NATO...".[418] Jozef Gujdoš, State Secretary for the MOD, when he spoke of NATO, noted, "We have to accept a kind of security that will guarantee growth, future stability and security, one that we are not capable of doing alone."[419] Ján Repaský, Chief of the Defense Ministry Office, added "We realize that we have to enter into NATO for security."[420]

Publicly Mečiar's HZDS party at the highest levels stated that the government supported Slovakia's national security goal of integration into NATO. But one major sources of confusion arose because two of the ruling coalition's junior and weaker partners, the extremist SNS and the far-left wing ZRS, did not support NATO membership. This was yet another factor that contributed to the perplexity about Slovakia's perceived or actual proclivity. When I asked Andrečak about this confusion he said

> When it comes to NATO we have a very large disadvantage. The governing coalition has top political parties, which are weaker the HZDS and don't want to go into NATO...the internal political infighting is such that our opposition wants to [enter NATO], but not when Mečiar is at the top.[421]

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[417] Imrich Andrejčák, Deputy Chairman, National Council, and Chairman, Defense and Security Committee, Parliamentarian, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997.
[418] Dušan Slobodník, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 December 1997.
[419] Ján Repaský, Chief, Defense Ministry Office, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 January 1998.
[420] Jozef Gujdoš, State Secretary, Ministry of Defense, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998.
[421] Imrich Andrečak, Deputy Chairman, National Council, and Chairman, Defense and Security Committee, Parliamentarian, HZDS interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997.

Brigita Schmognerová, Slovak Democratic Left Deputy Chair and 1998 presidential hopeful, explained the confusion in the following way,

> HZDS is like the wildest political party, in his [Mečiar's] political party documents he wants Slovakia to become a member of EU and NATO. SNS is categorically against, it supports neutrality...ZRS, and all those other small parties, I would say, are strongly against NATO and EU. So you can see how far the schizophrenia goes. I'll give you an example. SNS, which holds the Ministry of Defense, and the Minister of Defense [Sitek] himself, as a minister of this government, supports entry into NATO... On the other hand, he was the first one to sign SNS's petition against NATO entry and for neutrality. Logically, Kalman, the Deputy Chair of ZRS, has the responsibility to get Slovakia into NATO and into EU. But on the other hand, because he is a ZRS member, he has a negative outlook [on NATO membership]....Of course this reflects in our politics...[422]

A very close relationship between Bratislava and Moscow added to the perplexity. Mečiar and members of his ruling coalition repeatedly suggested that Slovakia should "serve as a bridge between East and West." A disproportionately high number of bilateral agreements were signed with Russia during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period as compared to the number Slovakia had with other states.[423] Furthermore Mečiar repeatedly showed that he had a "special" relationship with Russia by holding "secret" meetings with Russian leaders without disclosing the content or results to the public. Mečiar fostered this special relationship for his own personal gain, as did Russia for its own national gain. Therefore to outside observers, it appeared that Slovakia had more frequent diplomatic contact and greater political, economic, and military bilateral relations with Russia than with any Western entity.

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[422] Brigita Smognerova, Deputy Chair, SDL, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998.

[423] Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony, ed., *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society* (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 94.

In the words of Tim Haughton, "to do justice to the theme of the relationship between HZDS and NATO would require book length treatment." However, in his article, "A Dispensable Priority? Questioning HZDS's NATO Policy," Haughton contends that HZDS sought NATO membership for security, economic, strategic reasons and for prestige. However, "NATO membership was a priority HZDS was prepared to sacrifice on the alter of domestic politics."[424] This priority was also one that Mečiar was prepared to sacrifice for his own political gain. Slovakia was not leaning to the East; however, Mečiar ensured that the perception held by international observers was such that Slovakia was not leaning West. Mečiar received his wish, and Slovakia was summarily dropped from the list as a potential candidate for NATO membership.

Excluded from NATO. There are several explanations why Slovakia was excluded from NATO. Prime Minister Mečiar and the ruling coalition believed that internal and/or external actors conspired against Slovakia to ensure that it did not receive an invitation. President Kovač believed, as did much of the opposition, that it was Slovakia's questionable internal politics under the leadership of Mečiar that convinced NATO to drop Slovakia as a potential candidate. Leaders of Slovak NGOs and academics concluded that Mečiar and his political elite were not willing to give in to political demands, both from his democratic opposition and from the West. The United States contended that Slovakia was excluded from NATO because democracy and respect for the rule of law had not yet taken root under Mečiar's leadership.

Mečiar and HZDS party members advocated at least four theories explaining why Slovakia was not invited into NATO. Mečiar said that Slovakia's exclusion from NATO

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[424] Tim Haughton, "A Dispensable Priority?" in *Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs* (Fall 2000), 72.

was not a result of domestic political problems and advocated three alternative theories. According to his first theory Slovakia was excluded from NATO as the result of "global agreements" between superpowers.[425] Mečiar publicly accused the United States, Russia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic of forging an agreement to keep Slovakia out of NATO. However, all parties involved, including the United States Department of State and NATO, contend that there has been no such secret agreement on the exclusion of Slovakia from NATO enlargement.[426] In his second widely advocated theory, Mečiar explained that scheming "foreign" conspirators misled NATO authorities into believing false reports about Mečiar 's government. Mečiar's third theory was that Slovak President Kovač and the domestic political oppositions constantly, and without cause, complained about his government, thereby convincing NATO that Slovakia should not be invited. The fourth theory promoted by Slobodník contended that the reason Slovakia was not invited into NATO was because Madeline Albright, the United States Secretary of State, and Václáv Havel, the President of the Czech Republic, were conspiring against Slovakia. When I interviewed Slobodník in 1997, he claimed that

> As long as Maggie Albright will be there [in her position as the United States Secretary of State], Slovakia will not get into NATO. Because she is from the Czech Republic, she is influenced by Havel. Havel is Slovakia's enemy number one. Today when I read what Havel did, I am in despair. That person did everything so that Slovakia would get into the worst situation. Those two are in cahoots. Albright will always veto it [Slovakia's NATO membership].[427]

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[425] Anna Siskova, "Slovakia Concludes First Round of Defense on Dam Dispute," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (28 March 1997).
[426] Ibid.
[427] Dušan Slobodník, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliamentarian, HZDS, interview by author, tape recording, Slovak Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 December 1997.

All of the government's theories appeared to be based on conspiracies. While some in Slovakia may have believed they were true, the majority of well-educated Slovaks did not. The more mainstream theories and explanations were centered around one man—Mečiar and one theme—the government's democratic deficiencies.

During my interview with President Kovač, I asked why Slovakia was not invited into NATO. He openly stated that

> Slovakia is characterized by that fact that it was not invited in the first group of NATO expansion...it is the fault of our current political situation... but it is something we can fix quickly... for us it's a matter of one election [September 1998 parliamentary election]. Yes, the next government's politics must change (and) the parliament must eliminate whatever is causing the West to say that we have a democratic deficit here... so that we can become members of NATO and EU as fast as possible.[428]

Twenty-one key government officials from the opposition and NGOs, whom I interviewed in late 1997 and early 1998, including Dzurinda, then SDK Chairman and current Prime Minister, echoed similar perspectives. Rudolf Schuster, then SOP Chairman and current President said that they created the SOP because

> ...we could not look at how Slovakia was slowly, but surely, [politically] isolating itself from Europe and Euro Atlantic structures, specifically NATO.[429]

Ján Figel', Deputy Chair, KDH and member of Foreign Affairs Committee,

> Why was Slovakia not invited like its neighbors? I believe the main problem is in Bratislava, not in Washington, not anywhere else, not in Moscow, it is here at home.

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[428] Michal Kovač, Slovak President, interview by author, tape recording, Presidential Palace, Bratislava, Slovakia, 16 December 1997.

[429] Rudolf Schuster, Chairman, SOP, Mayor of Košice, interview by author, tape recording, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998.

He added that the government in power had not conducted itself properly and therefore did not fulfill criteria necessary for NATO membership.[430] Eduard Kukan, DU Chairman, stated

> If the government of today wins, there is no reason that it would change its politics...that mean bye-bye NATO again...Slovakia will be back on a path toward isolation.[431]

According to Miroslav Wlachovský, Director of the Foreign Policy Research Center, "Slovakia was not invited into NATO because of its politics, that's all."[432] I also asked the ASR Chief General Tuchyňa why Slovakia was excluded from NATO. He declined to respond; no doubt because he strongly believed that the military must remain apolitical above all else. He commented that he was a "man in uniform" and not inclined to talk about "political" matters. However, he declared that NATO was the best and only solution for the overall national security of Slovakia.[433] General Tuchyňa contended that the ASR had done everything to enable the successful admission of Slovakia into NATO and that the ASR was not at fault. He, as well as opponents and proponents of NATO membership, believed that the preparedness of the ASR was not a determining factor in the disqualification of Slovakia.[434]

According to Martin Bútora, Bratislava Institute for Public Affairs President and former Slovak Ambassador to the United States through June 2003, and František Šebej,

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[430] Ján Figeľ, Deputy Chairman, KDH, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 May 1998.
[431] Eduard Kukan, Chairman, DU, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997.
[432] Miroslav Wlachovský, Director, Foreign Policy Research Center, interview by author, tape recording, Foreign Policy Research Center, Bratislava, Slovakia, 22 December 1997.
[433] Jozef Tuchyňa, Colonel General, Chairman of the General Staff, ASR, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, January 1998.
[434] Martin Bútora and František Šebej, ed., *Slovensko v Šedej Zóne? Rozširovanie NATO, Zlyhania a Perspecktívy Slovenska* (Bratislava: Inštitute Pre Verejné Otázky, 1998), 248.

Director of Foreign Policy Bratislava Institute for Public Affairs and Vice Chairman of the DS, there were at least two conspiracy theories among the many explanations why Slovakia was not invited into NATO. The first theory they say, advocated by Mečiar himself and presented earlier in this section, asserted that the United States and Russia made a secret deal to exclude Slovakia, but both states dismissed his assertation as nonsense. The second theory suggests that it was a plot by the former KGB to prevent, at least in part, NATO enlargement. According to Bútora and Šebej, the real explanation why Slovakia was not invited was that Mečiar and his political elite were not willing to give in to political demands, both from the West and from the domestic, democratic opposition, and consequently felt that

> [We] do not really want to be members of NATO (or the EU). The cost to us, in loss of power, is simply too high. But we are never going to admit that we have changed our mind; we are going to pretend that nothing has ever changed in our sincere efforts to integrate Slovakia in both NATO and the EU.[435]

In their analysis, Bútora and Šebej provide evidence that shows how Mečiar's actions gave ample reasons for NATO to disengage Slovakia in its quest for membership. Their examples include the passage of undemocratic laws, failure to compromise with the democratic opposition, obstruction of the NATO membership referendum, kidnapping of President Kovač's son, unconstitutionally expelling a member of parliament, and repeatedly violating minority rights. Bútora described the process as the culmination of "a critical mass of unconstitutional acts and developments" that ultimately overcame the

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[435] František Šebej, "Slovakia and NATO: A Case of Self-Disqualification," presented at conference on "Illuminating the Gray Zone: Insecurity and Uncertainty in Eastern Europe After NATO Enlargement" Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 11-12 December 1997, 28.

trust and patience of Slovakia's foreign friends.[436] Šebej labeled Slovakia's situation as a case of "self-disqualification... through the behavior of its own political elite." He wrote that Mečiar failed to pay the price for entrance into NATO. He neglected to "relinquish some of his power and permit the principles of liberal democracy—the rule of law, separation of powers, minority rights—to govern Slovak society."[437]

According to Karen Henderson, Department of Politics, University of Leicester, England, Slovakia

> had been excluded solely on democratic grounds rather than because of economic, practical or geopolitical factors from both NATO and the EU...It had largely excluded itself, since the Slovak Government had, from the end of 1994 onwards, consistently ignored all warning from representatives of both the EU and NATO about problematic issues in its democratic development.[438]

From the United States' perspective Slovakia clearly did not meet the criteria for democracy and rule of law. Deputy Council Schofield put it quite clearly

> Slovakia has taken itself out of the mainstream of the Višegrád countries and is running behind them right now for...political reasons. There were two issues that raised problems with...NATO membership--has democracy taken root and is there respect for the rule of law.[439]

Schofield added that the government destroyed the national referendum on NATO membership and had not addressed the matter of kicking out Gaulieder from Parliament when he resigned from the HZDS party, even when the Constitutional Court said

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[436] Ibid., 30.
[437] Ibid.
[438] Karen Henderson, "The Slovak Republic: Catching Up in the Dual Expansion," paper presented at the British International Studies Association Conference, Brighton, Britain, 14-16 December 1998.
[439] William P. Schofield, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the United States of America, interview by author, tape recording, American Embassy, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 December 1998.

Gaulieder's rights were violated and he should be reinstated. These were the two most serious issues that Western governments raised concerns over.[440]

During a press conference following a North Atlantic Council Meeting in December 1997, Madeline Albright, the United States Secretary of State, said that NATO did not invite Slovakia because

> There was evidence that (Slovakia) had not met the various guidelines (of) democratic systems of government and a market economy, where civilian institutions are dominant over the military ones, and where there is a sign that the democratic system is working.[441]

In other words, as a direct result of Mečiar's actions Slovakia did not meet the basic principles of democracy and free market reform. But how did all of this come to fruition?

My assertion is that Slovakia's historical experiences, such as repeated invasions, external domination, authoritarian rule and ongoing struggles to maintain a language and a separate identity, influenced the voters of Slovakia, shaped the behavior of Slovakia's political actors, its interests and policies, and constructed the state's identity. This identity influenced voters to support political actors who pursued increased autonomy and independence in the post-communist period. The goal of these political actors—primarily Mečiar and his key supporters—was to maintain the state's complete sovereignty thereby preserve their authoritarian control of the state. They believed that if Slovakia became a member of NATO it would, in effect, reduce their power. As a result of Mečiar's behavior and actions during the 1993 to 1998 period, the international community perceived Slovakia as possessing an institutionalized pattern of domestic

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[440] Ibid.

behavior that was deficient in democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law. This unacceptable behavior was inconsistent with international norms of behavior and projected a very negative image to Western observers, states and international institutions. The overall culture of the domestic environment and of national security in Slovakia was such that NATO declined to invite Slovakia during NATO's first round of post-Cold War enlargement.

Impact of Exclusion. In December 1997 a group of scholars discussed the impact of Slovakia's exclusion from NATO at a Woodrow Wilson Center sponsored conference. The conference titled "Illuminating the Gray Zone: Insecurity and Uncertainty in Eastern Europe after NATO Enlargement" focused on the impact of NATO enlargement on the United States, at home, in Europe and from a global perspective. Discussions about "the 'gray zone' syndrome" centered on the increased anxiety excluded states now face.[442] Undoubtedly, the impact had potentially far-reaching internal and eternal security ramifications.

From a security perspective, NATO's exclusion of Slovakia in 1997 impacted Slovakia's internal environment politically, militarily, economically and culturally. Politically, the exclusion impacted both the ruling coalition and the opposition. The positive impact on Mečiar and his ruling coalition was also a negative impact on the opposition. Mečiar was able to garner more support from those Slovak citizens who opposed NATO membership, advocated neutrality, desired closer ties with Russia, or just

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[441] Madeleine K. Albright, statement at press conference following North Atlantic Council meeting, NATO Headquarters, Brussels, 16 December 1997.

[442] John Clark, "Illuminating the 'Gray Zone': A Conference, A Project and Beyond," paper presented at a conference on Illuminating the Gray Zone: Insecurity and Uncertainty in Eastern Europe After NATO

believed that someone was finally looking out for their Slovak interests. In this way he was able to continue his style of authoritarian control without intervention from external sources. Thus, the opposition was perceived as weak and unable to band together toward a common goal as compared to the forces of the ruling coalition. The positive impact on the democratic opposition was that it forced its leaders to take a stronger stance in promoting democracy and the rule of law and finally come together to do what they believed was right for Slovakia. This positive impact proved to be the critical factor that removed Mečiar from the political scene in 1998—at least for a while.

Militarily, the exclusion had a negative impact on the armed forces. As one of the first applicants to the PfP program Slovakia received high praise for its capabilities and potential interoperability with NATO forces despite its significant economic constraints. High-level United States officials even contended that Slovakia's military was better prepared than those of both Hungary and the Czech Republic.[443] Military leaders, including the former Chief of the General Staff, General Tuchyňa, understood that Slovakia's exclusion was a result of political deficiencies and not military ones.[444] Nevertheless, the Slovak military worked very hard to prepare itself for accession into NATO and was successful despite the major challenges it faced in creating an entirely new defense establishment in addition to transforming and reforming. Military leaders were undoubtedly disheartened when the ASR was not afforded an opportunity to make contributions to NATO's military missions as a member of the Alliance.

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Enlargement, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, (11-12 December 1997).

[443] William P. Schofield, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the United States of America, interview by author, tape recording, American Embassy, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 December 1998.

Slovakia's exclusion from NATO did not impact Slovakia's economy immediately. Slovakia showed strong macroeconomic results such as high economic growth and low inflation in the mid 1990s. In terms of economic growth, "Slovakia was one of the stars of the post-communist world."[445] But because of Mečiar 's economic policies the new Dzurinda government was forced to implement austere fiscal measures to correct Mečiar's fiscal shortcomings. These deficiencies resulted, in part, from Mečiar's delays in economic reform, shortcomings in the area of economic restructuring, and in the superficial and often contradictory institutional economic development under Mečiar's government, particularly during 1995 and 1996.[446] Failure to enact realistic and substantial economic reform ensured that a continued economic slowdown in the short term was inevitable. As a result Slovakia's economy did not perform as well as was anticipated and foreign investments did not increase as was necessary for future growth. Slovakia's exclusion from NATO did not improve the state's financial situation. An invitation to NATO would have probably increased foreign investment and provide a much-needed boost to the economy.

Culturally, the Slovaks have always believed that they belonged in Europe — specifically the Western part of Europe, spiritually, historically, culturally, politically and economically.[447] After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Czechoslovak President Havel coined

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[444] Jozef Tuchyňa, Colonel General, Chairman of the General Staff, ASR, interview by author, tape recording, Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, January 1998.
[445] Michael Wyzan, "New Slovak Government Inherits Difficult Economic Situation," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,* no. 235, part 2, (8 December 1998).
[446] Ivan Mikloš and Eduard Žitňianský, "The Economy," in *Slovakia 1996-1997: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Martin Bútora and Thomas W. Skladony (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 114.
[447] Ján Figeľ, Deputy Chairman, KDH, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 May 1998; and Pavol Hamžík, Deputy Chairman, SOP, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 14 May 1998.

the term when he stated that it was time for Czechoslovakia to "return to Europe." Entrance into NATO was seen as one of the first official and monumental steps toward that goal. Failing to receive an invitation resulted in increased anxiety for Slovaks as the fear they are "falling into the 'gray zone' of insecurity, political and economic instability and uncertainty about their cultural identity and future."[448] After fifty years of forced existence under hard-line communist rule, Slovakia desired to become a member of defense organization voluntarily. When that did not happen, the opposition and the majority of Slovaks, primarily the educated who lived in urban areas, were disappointed and once again felt isolated and abandoned.[449]

From a security perspective, NATO's exclusion of Slovakia in 1997 impacted Slovakia's external environment with respect to relations with its neighbors and members of the international community, by the perceptions held by international actors, and by the realization that Slovakia would have to take action in order to secure a security arrangement in the future. During the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period Slovakia was unable, or more precisely, unwilling, to foster positive international relations with others. Relations with neighboring states (Czech Republic, Poland, Austria, and Ukraine) were cool but relations with Hungary were labeled contentious. Relations with the international institutions and the West were strained due to Slovakia's unsettled internal political situation. Mečiar's actions had repeatedly provoked increasingly sharp criticism from virtually all of the neighboring states, other European states, the United States and

[448] František Šebej, "Slovakia and NATO: A Case of Self-Disqualification," paper presented at conference on Illuminating the Gray Zone: Insecurity and Uncertainty in Eastern Europe After NATO Enlargement, Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 11-12 December 1997.

various international institutions at large.

Because Mečiar's government did not promote positive relations with the West, the overwhelming perception was that the exclusion from NATO left Slovakia susceptible to influence from the East. Mečiar himself repeatedly suggested that Slovakia should bridge the East to the West. Furthermore, Mečiar's bilateral relations with Moscow were extremely close and frequent, more so than with any other neighbor or any other state. This caused the West to question Slovakia's commitment to joining Western institutions and contributed to the perception that Slovakia was leaning East.

Slovakia's exclusion from NATO left the Slovaks in a position of limbo in a "gray no man's land." From am internal security perspective, Slovakia's environment was impacted politically, militarily, economically and culturally. Slovakia's external environment was impacted by the limits it posed on relations with external actors and by the unflattering perceptions held by international actors. Democratic leaders and most of the younger people[450] in Slovakia realized that they would have either take action to resolve the political situation in Slovakia or Mečiar would lead Slovakia elsewhere to obtain a security arrangement in the future. Virtually all of the democratic leaders and political elite believed that NATO was their best and only option for security. The opposition became determined to change the political tide in Slovakia. By mid-1998 the opposition finally coalesced against Mečiar.[451]

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[449] Eduard Kukan, Chairman, DU, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997; and Pavol Hamžík, Deputy Chair, SOP, Parliamentarian, interview by author, tape recording, Bratislava, Slovakia, 14 May 1998.

[450] Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 51.

[451] Ibid.

1998 and Beyond. Slovakia's 1998 parliamentary election was indeed a critical turning point for the future of Slovakia's national security. Although Mečiar's HZDS party won the highest percentage of votes, Mečiar was unable to form a coalition government. Headed by Dzurinda, a coalition comprised of five parties, in concert with three other parties, formed a government and led Slovakia on a different path with integration into Western institutions as a real and unambiguous priority. Neighboring states and leaders from around the world welcomed Slovakia's newly elected government and provided continued words of encouragement.

In November 1998 Prime Minister Dzurinda pledged to rebuild the democratic rule of law in Slovakia by establishing freedom, equality, justice, democracy, and tolerance. In the economic sphere, the government's intent was to consolidate the economy, renew macro-economic stability and quickly create conditions for economic growth.[452] In terms of foreign policy, he pledged to promote Slovakia's Euro-Atlantic integration effort and identified membership in NATO and the EU as the government's highest priorities. Additional priorities were to develop good relations with neighboring countries, seek a revival of the Višegrád Four, develop sound relations with the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and ensure balanced relations with the Russian Federation. In the sphere of defense and national security, the government would place increased emphasis on participation in the EAPC, the PfP program, through other forms of cooperation with NATO member countries, and continue support for the OSCE but placed its number one strategic priority as the fastest possible attainment of

[452] Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Slovakia: TASR Reports Dzurinda Speech of Government Manifesto" (Bratislava, TASR: 19 November 1998).

NATO membership.[453] Once firmly in office, the Dzurinda government began the difficult task of correcting Slovakia's deficiencies.

Not surprisingly Mečiar's political ambitions did not cease with the September 1998 elections. In 1999 Mečiar ran for the office of president, a goal he had previously set for himself. International leaders, neighboring states, opposition leaders and much of Slovakia breathed a huge sigh of relief when Rudolph Schuster won the election in a run-off against Mečiar, defeating him 57 percent to 43 percent.[454]

During its first four years in office the Dzurinda coalition made great strides in improving various deficient aspects of Slovakia's defense establishment, economy, and foreign policies.[455] The government was successful in garnering praise and acceptance from the West. Militarily Slovakia

> worked hard to reform, reorganize, and Westernize its military doctrine, equipment, and institutions to make them compatible with NATO forces...and...in 2001... adopted new national security, defense and military strategies to define further its national security interests and the role to be played by its military.[456]

The new national security documents that were adopted by the Parliament include the *Concept for the Reform of the Slovak Republic's Defense System*, the *Crises Management Audit Report of the Slovak Republic*, and the *State Defense Planning Methodology*. The

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[453] Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Statement by Slovak Prime Minster Mikulas Dzurinda to a Session of the Slovak National Assembly" (Bratislava, STV 2 Television Network: 19 November 1998).
[454] Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 52.
[455] A succinct overview of progress made by Dzurinda's government and the challenges that remain can be found in Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnik (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 47-82.
[456] Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnik (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 64-67.

ASR also developed key documents which outline the strategic reform of the military – the *Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic—SR Force 2010* and *Long Term Structure and Development Plan of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic* in concert with NATO experts from member states. [457]

Slovakia continues to make contributions to missions outside its borders. As of November 2002, 770[458] Slovak soldiers were operating as part of foreign peacekeeping missions, 100 Slovak soldiers have been deployed within the joint Czech-Slovak KFOR battalion since March 2002, eight Slovak officers have been working in SFOR staff in Bosnia and Herzegovina since August 1998, and a Slovak military field hospital has been operating in East Timor since the summer of 2001. Furthermore, Slovakia opened its airspace to NATO places during the Kosovo crisis in 1999, joined the United States campaign against terrorism,[459] and deployed an engineering unit into Afghanistan.[460] A new Slovak-Polish-Czech multinational brigade is now in the developmental stages. The brigade, headquartered in Slovakia, is being established according to NATO standards and will be ready for deployment in 2005.[461] The Slovak armed forces were able to make great strides in their transformation and reform efforts under Mečiar—despite Mečiar's attempts to exert excessive political influence over them. Even though fiscal constraints

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[457] Josef Stank, "Security and Defense Policy of the Slovak Republic," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace* vol. 47, no. 4/2002 (4/2002): 139.

[458] A list of the current missions and number of troops deployed can be found in Josef Stank, "Security and Defense Policy of the Slovak Republic," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace* vol. 47, no. 4/2002 (4/2002): 139.

[459] In response to Slovakia's support to the Kosovo crisis and 11 September 2001 Dzurinda noted, "These were not merely verbal contributions; they were always supported by clear and concrete activities, without any demand for great publicity." Mikluš Dzurinda, "Slovakia Possess the Potential," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace,* vol. 47, no. 4/2002 (4/2002): 138.

[460] Czech National News Agency, "Slovakia Finally at NATO Gates," *CTK News Wire*, Prague, 12 November 2002.

[461] Josef Stank, "Security and Defense Policy of the Slovak Republic," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace,* vol. 47, no. 4/2002 (4/2002): 140.

were severe the military was better positioned to continue its transformation and reform processes under the Dzurinda government, many of which are still to be done.

The government reconstructed fiscal programs and implemented austere fiscal measures that resulted in greater fiscal and monetary stability and improved prosperity. They moved expeditiously to reform Mečiar's controversial privatization process. As a result of these actions, increased exports, and foreign investment, Slovakia's economy grew.[462] Internally, Dzurinda's government quickly recognized and integrated minority groups. Externally, the leadership made earnest and sincere efforts to increase bilateral visits and cooperative efforts with the Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, and Austria and to normalize relations with Russia.

In Dzurinda's November 1998 address to the NATO's North Atlantic Council Dzurinda renewed and pledged Slovakia's sincere commitment to meeting NATO's criteria and obtaining membership in the Alliance and presented Slovakia's Membership Action Plan (MAP) to NATO in October 1999.[463] In 2002 Slovakia was assessed as being the" most 'logical' next member of NATO[464] and is widely viewed as the favorite among the seven most recent NATO candidates. The other six are Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. Although public support for NATO in Slovakia ranged from 35 percent to 57 percent since May 1994, it exceeded 50 percent in

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[462] Charles Krupnick and Carol Atkinson, "Slovakia and Security at the Center of Europe," in *Almost NATO: Partners and Players in Central and Eastern European Security,* ed. Charles Krupnick (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), p 52.
[463] Ibid., 67.
[464] Ibid.

December 2001.[465] Today more than 60 percent of the Slovak people support the government's ambition to become a member of NATO.[466]

Despite all the recent great strides Slovakia has made, numerous challenges remain. Slovakia needs to continue to resolve lingering bilateral disputes, fortify fiscal recovery programs and stabilize the economy, reduce unemployment, reform health and social systems, increase the defense budget, continue military, security and defense reforms, tackle corruption in the private sector, improve legislative frameworks, improve the enforcement of laws, and limit the ongoing political power struggles among the governing coalition partners.[467] And last, but not least, democratic forces need to be aware that Mečiar's possible resurgence on the Slovak political scene would put Slovakia once again on the fast train to no-where.

The good news is that in December 1999 the EU invited Slovakia to begin negotiations for membership into the union and in March 2003 signed a treaty of accession with Slovakia and nine of the new entrants, in September 2002 a Dzurinda-led coalition comprised of six parties won the parliamentary elections[468] and is expected to govern until 2006, and in November 2002 Slovakia finally receive an invitation to begin talks on NATO membership. Previous exclusion from NATO and the EU, known as Slovakia's double failure, has transformed into Slovakia's "double success."

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[465] Czech National News Agency, "Slovakia Finally at NATO Gates," CTK News Wire, Prague, 12 November 2002.
[466] Mikluš Dzurinda, "Slovakia Possess the Potential," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace,* vol. 47, no. 4/2002 (4/2002): 138.
[467] Robert Anderson, "EU Hails Center-Right Victory in Slovakia," *The Financial Times Limited* (London) (24 September 2002).
[468] Mečiar won the highest percentage of votes, but support for his HZDS party sunk from 27 percent in 1998 to 19.5 percent in this election, its lowest ever.

United States Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on an official visit to Slovakia in November 2002 congratulated Slovakia on its NATO invitation and praised the country's progress in preparations for entry.[469] President Schuster called the NATO invitation a historic event based on the efforts of Dzurinda's two governments, parliament, the media and Slovak citizens. Dzurinda said it represented a

> milestone on Slovakia's path toward permanent democracy. It is a satisfaction for the generations of people who suffered behind the Iron Curtain...Many died in prison for their belief in freedom and democracy and this day is dedicated also to their memory.[470]

On 12 December 2002 The London Financial Times printed the following:

> Slovakia is being hailed as one of the brightest prospects in post-communist Europe. The economy is vibrant, the country is poised to enter the European Union and NATO in 2004, and Mikulaš Dzurinda's center-right government is viewed as the most reform-minded in the region...What a contrast to five years ago, when, rather than a star, Slovakia was regarded as a "black hole" on the map of Central Europe.[471]

Slovakia's leaders are determined to lead Slovakia into NATO and the EU. Slovakia can once again proceed on its long awaited journey to "return to Europe" and begin a new, perhaps most promising phase of its history—among the countries of a united Europe.

## Comparative Analysis

I hope that my project has achieved its original intent—to explore the various domestic aspects that influenced Slovakia's post-communist security environment as it relates to NATO and investigate why Slovakia was excluded from the Alliance in 1997.

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[469] Czech National News Agency, "Rumsfeld Praises Slovakia's Progress on Path to NATO," CTK News Wire, Prague, 22 November 2002.
[470] Czech National News Agency, "Dzurinda Says NATO Invitation Encouragement for Slovakia," CTK News Wire, Prague, 21 November 2002.

I also hope that the reader has gained a better understanding of Slovakia's transition to democracy during its critical first six years of independence. Although my intent was not to conduct an in-depth comparative analysis of Slovakia's experience with those of other post-communist states, I provide a snapshot of Slovakia's democratic transition with those of similar states transitioning from communist to democratic systems and focus on the differences and/or similarities with respect to conditions present on the eve of NATO's 1997 invitation decision.

Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic are now members of NATO. Slovakia had been mentioned as a strong candidate in previous years but was dropped from the invitation list just prior to the 1997 Madrid Summit. Romania and Slovenia nearly received invitations—a majority if NATO members supported their entry but the United States advocated a small enlargement followed by an open door policy in the near future.[472] Therefore, officially NATO contended that Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic were the only states that met the criteria for Alliance membership; a relatively strong economy, adherence to the rule of law, a stable democracy, a demonstrated commitment to resolving disputes with neighbors, civilian control of their military, and the ability to share the responsibility of collective defense. Each of these three states experienced varying degrees of success in their democratic transition. According to Michta the prospect of NATO membership helped to further induce their consolidation of democracy. He contended that

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[471] Robert Anderson and Mark Andress, "Windows of Opportunity are Opening Wider: Government Must Make a Success of Overdue Structural Reforms," *The Financial Times* (London) (12 December 2002).
[472] Daniel N. Nelson and Thomas S. Szayna, "NATO's Metamorphosis and Its New Members," *Problems of Post-Communism* 45, no. 4 (July/August 1998): 41.

In the case of Poland, the political criteria for NATO membership framed the boundaries of civil-military relations and established patterns that were emulated by subsequent governments. In the Hungarian and Czech cases, the prospect of NATO membership encouraged non-antagonistic relations with neighbors and contributed to the sense of external security the countries needed in order to proceed with democratic reforms.[473]

In the case of Slovakia, I contend that the prospect of NATO membership did not further induce the state's democratic consolidation because the Mečiar-led ruling coalition in power for the overwhelming majority of time since the Velvet Revolution did not desire NATO membership. Therefore Mečiar's coalition had nothing to gain by meeting NATO's criteria for membership. Had the opposing coalition been in power throughout the 1990s Slovakia's democratization process would have been further along due in part to the prospect of NATO membership.

Following the Madrid decision to invite Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic as Phase I candidates, the Western press most often mentioned the Baltic countries (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia), Slovenia and, after 1996, Slovakia as potential Phase II candidates. Bulgaria and Romania were occasionally mentioned as well.[474]

Even though nine of the twelve original aspirants were not invited into NATO during the first round of expansion, their support for joining NATO did not appear to be dampened shortly after NATO decided to exclude them. Support for joining NATO right

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[473] Andrew A. Michta, ed., *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO* (Seattle-London: University of Washington Press, 1999), 186.

[474] Stanislav J. Kirshbaum, "Phase II Candidates: A Political or Strategic Solution?" in *The Future of NATO: Enlargement, Russia, and European Security,* Charles-Philippe David and Jacques Levesque, ed., (Montreal-Kingston-London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

after being excluded in Romania (82 percent), Slovenia (62 percent), Bulgaria (56 percent), and Slovakia (54 percent) was consistent with levels surveyed in early 1997. In addition, the majority of the public (more than 50 percent) in each country believed they were excluded because their state did not meet the requirements for NATO membership and each expected NATO to invite more states within a five-year period.[475]

There is a crucial interrelationship between democratic political reforms and market reforms. Both processes are mutually reinforcing. A 1997 survey of 25 Central European and newly independent states showed that the vast majority of these countries had established electoral processes that reflect democratic principles. The 25 states were categorized as consolidated democracies, transition governments, or consolidated autocracies. The following were classified and rank ordered as possessing consolidated democracies (from most to least consolidated) —the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. Slovakia was classified as having a transitional government and ranked below Russia and Moldova along with Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Croatia, and several of the former Soviet republics among others. The 25 states were also categorized as having consolidated market economies, transitional economies, or consolidated statist economies. Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland, Estonia, Slovenia, Lithuania and Latvia were classified as possessing consolidated market economies. Slovakia was classified as having a transitional economy on the verge of consolidation.[476]

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[475] United States Information Agency, Office of Research and Media Reaction NATO Enlargement: The Public Opinion Dimension October 1997 (Washington DC: USIA, October 1997).
[476] Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander Motyl, and Boris Shor, *Nations in Transit 1997: Civil Society, Democracy and Markets in East Central Europe and the Newly Independent States* (United States: Freedom House, Inc, 1997).

The survey concluded that the region's consolidated democracies were the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. Each had achieved a significant degree of both political and economic freedom with competitive elections, respect for basic human rights, the emergence of a strong rule of law, effective checks and balances on power, independent media, and respect for property rights. The states identified as transitional countries—Russia, Moldova, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Macedonia, Croatia, Albania, Armenia, Krygyzstan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan—were hybrids. While they were moving toward democracy and market reform or more authoritarian rule, their common feature was instability.[477] Clearly political instability was the predominant feature in the case of Slovakia.

In the remainder of this section I will focus on the four consolidated democratic states that were not invited into NATO during the first phase of enlargement—Slovenia, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania in comparison to Slovakia. All five of these states struggled to retain their language and national identity and fought for independence well before the start of the 20th century. All five possessed their own unique identities and languages but were subsumed by a larger entity: Slovenia was part of the Yugoslav Republic; Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia were part of the Soviet Union; and Slovakia was part of Czechoslovakia. Following the end of the Cold War all achieved independence in the early 1990s.

Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania had all experienced hundreds of years of foreign rule. Each was able to establish its own, independent democratic republic after World War I: Lithuania in 1918, Estonia in 1920 and Latvia in 1922. Lithuania's first

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[477] Ibid. Four countries were classified as Autocracies and Statist Economies—Belarus, Tajikistan,

independence was in 1918 when it was proclaimed an independent kingdom under German protection. Its capital, Vilnius, was seized by Poland and the two remained at war until 1927. Lithuania was ruled by a dictatorship until 1940. Estonia was recognized by Western powers as a democratic state in 1920 and became a member of the League of Nations. Estonians later experienced a difficult period of authoritarian rule from 1934 to 1940. The Latvians established a democratic republic; however, they did not enjoy political stability from 1922 to 1940. Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian independence ended in 1940 when the Soviet Union occupied all three Baltic States. All were overtaken and absorbed by the Soviet Union and normalized for a fifty-year period with the exception occupation by Germany during most of World War II. Independence sentiments were revived after the fall of the Berlin Wall and each reclaimed their independence in 1991.

Slovenia's history is somewhat similar to that of Slovakia's. Various empires ruled Slovenia from the 6th century to the 14th century, after which it became a part of the Hapsburg Empire. Slovenia remained a part of Austria until 1918, when it was included in the kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, later renamed Yugoslavia in 1929. In 1941 Slovenia was divided among Germany, Italy and Hungary for the duration of World War II. Then in 1945 Slovenia was made a constituent republic of Yugoslavia. In early 1990 Slovenia elected a non-Communist government and declared independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. Slovenia was recognized as an independent state in 1992.

There are many historical similarities among these five states. They each experienced hundreds of years of rule by foreign entities prior to the 20th century. Latvia,

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Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan.

Estonia, and Lithuania all experienced true independence in the early 1900s for a period of 18 to 22 years. But Slovenia and Slovakia did not—their first taste of true independence did not come until the 1990s.

Except for Slovenia a large percentage of each state's population is an ethnic minority. Latvia and Estonia possess the large number of ethnic minorities: Latvia (34 percent Russian); and Estonia (30 percent Russian). Lithuania and Slovakia have smaller ethnic minorities: Lithuania (9 percent Russian and 8 percent Polish); and Slovakia (11 percent Hungarian, 5 percent Roma, and 1 percent Czech). Slovenia's ethnic minorities total only 5 percent and are comprised of Croats, Serbs, and Muslims.[478] In 1997 citizenship laws in Lithuania were considered liberal and were not problematic. Because of their large numbers, it is not surprising that Latvia and Estonia experienced problems with citizenship for ethnic minorities. While procedures for gaining citizenship in Slovenia were slow, the government continued to make improvements.[479] Slovakia distinguished itself because disputes over Hungarian minority rights continued throughout the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period and were not resolved until a democratic government was installed in 1998.

Because of their location on the Baltic Sea, a position of geostrategic importance to Russia, all three of the Baltic States were aware that their future security was dependent on being accepted by NATO (and the EU). They had no other choice. Slovenia and Slovakia, on the other hand, were fairly secure in their locations because they were surrounded by NATO countries. Slovenia lies between Italy and Hungary and

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[478] Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander Motyl, and Boris Shor, *Nations in Transit 1997: Civil Society, Democracy and markets in East Central Europe and the Newly Independent States* (United States: Freedom House, Inc, 1997).

Slovakia is surrounded by the Phase I candidates except for a small border with Ukraine, a fairly comfortable position in terms of security.

In the realm of security all five states had to define their own security polices and establish national defense forces virtually from scratch. In 1998 Latvia spent the least on defense (.67 percent of its GDP). Estonia and Lithuania spent twice that amount or more, (1.18 percent) and (1.5 percent), respectively. Slovakia's (1.8 percent) and Slovenia's (1.89 percent) defense spending were closer to that of NATO's average (2.1 percent). All five of the states had mechanisms in place that governed civilian control of their militaries and intelligence services; however, Slovakia was singled out due to its controversies: Mečiar's efforts to exert political influence over the armed forces, a highly politicized intelligence service that reports directly to Mečiar, and exclusion of opposition parties from the parliamentary commission that oversee the intelligence service.[480]

During the mid 1990s each of the states possessed independent media in varying forms except for Slovakia, whose private media was independent but its public television was government dominated. All had possessed many NGOs; however, Slovakia's and Slovenia's NGOs were very active, as opposed to the passive NGOs of the Baltic States.[481] The comparisons could be infinite. While there are various similarities, each state possesses its own traditions, language, national identity and culture and, as a result,

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[479] Ivan Vejvoda, "Finding Their Own Way," *Transitions* (June 1998): 80-81.

[480] Congress, The Library of Congress, United States Congressional Research Service, *Slovakia and NATO Membership,* report prepared by Julie Kim, 4 February 1999; Congress, The Library of Congress, United States Congressional Research Service, *Slovenia's Qualifications for NATO Membership,* report prepared by Steve Woehrel, 7 October 1998; Congress, The Library of Congress, United States Congressional Research Service, *Latvia's Qualifications for NATO Membership,* report prepared by Steven Woehrel, 20 January 1999; Congress, The Library of Congress, United States Congressional Research Service, *Estonia's Qualifications for NATO Membership,* report prepared by Steven Woehrel, 19 January 1999; and Congress, The Library of Congress, United States Congressional Research Service, *Lithuania's Qualifications for NATO Membership,* report prepared by Steven Woehrel, 20 January 1999.

experienced a slightly different transition to democracy. What Slovakia experienced after attaining independence, however, was slightly different from what the other four experienced. Slovakia encountered Mečiarism, which was shaped by Slovakia's historical experiences, in part, and took nearly six years to halt.

In the end, I agree with Prizel's premise that a polity's national identity is very much a result of how it interprets its history.[483] Clearly the Slovaks have focused very heavily on their past experiences and their history has played a very significant role in the formation of their identity. I also agree with Saxonbuerg's contention that nuanced conditions in specific countries and their proclivities of their leaders help fine-tune the democratization script is true in Slovakia's case.[484] Along those same lines I concur with Bunce's contention that different countries had different experiences, exist in different environments and their leaders have different menus from which to make choices; therefore their democratic transitions are not all the same. She discovered that the founding and performance of new democracies is largely about the choices political leaders make, their preferences, their power, their actions and the consequences.[485] Slovakia's democratization process was different from the other states because Mečiar held certain preferences and used his power to made conscious choices for the state thereby impacting the transition from communism to democracy and free market economy. Mečiar happen to be in the right place and the right time to advance his

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[481] Ivan Vejvoda, "Finding Their Own Way," *Transitions* (June 1998): 80-81.
[483] Ilya Prizel, *National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia, and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); 14.
[484] Steven Saxonberg, "Regime Behavior in 1989: A Comparison of Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland," *Problems of Post-Communism,* vol. 47, no. 4 (July – August 2000): 45-58.
[485] Ibid.

political ambitions. However his actions and decisions were not in the best interest of Slovakia's national security or its evolving democratization process.

## Conclusion

Slovakia's national security and defense policies were created following independence during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period. From the beginning Slovak national security documents and Slovak government officials maintained that Slovakia's goal was to be integrated into Western European security architectures. To that end Slovakia envisioned NATO as the only viable collective defense organization able to guarantee its security and territorial integrity. Slovakia eagerly became a member of the NACC and was one of the first states to sign up for membership in NATO's PfP program. Often compared to its closest neighbors—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic—Slovakia contended that it was as close to fulfilling the guidelines for NATO membership as were its former Višegrád Group partners. But, according to NATO, Slovakia was not. What was the underlying reason why Slovakia was dropped from the list of eligible NATO candidates?

To answer this question I applied my conceptual framework to the culture of national security in Slovakia. I investigated Slovakia's patterns of behavior within the state' national security framework—its national security policies, the defense establishment, its civilian control of the military and the defense budget. I found that the government's institutionalized patterns of behavior and practices—specifically those of Mečiar and his ruling coalition—with respect to national security affairs were inconsistent with the international norms of behavior thereby giving NATO ample reason

to exclude Slovakia. This finding is consistent with my findings in the previous chapter on the first six years of Slovakia's independence.

Furthermore, I deduced that Mečiar's interests and goals were not inclined toward Western integration, rather they were for Slovakia to remain nonaligned thereby in a position to bridge the East to the West. Mečiar's explained that Slovakia was excluded from NATO because of international conspiracies. Albeit unfounded, these theories were meant to propagate the notion that Slovakia and the Slovaks were down trodden and would ultimately prevent Slovakia from becoming a member of the collective defense Alliance. Firmly out of the running for NATO membership Mečiar believed that Slovakia would remain wholly independent and under his and only his rule.

Slovakia's post-communist road toward NATO membership has been a steep one. Militarily the ASR accomplished much in the face of political and financial adversities. Politically the democratic forces put aside their differences and coalesced to put the state back on its path of Western integration. Once firmly in place democratic leaders managed to change Slovakia's international image from that of a "black hole" in Europe to a "shining star."

# V.
# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

East-West relations had tempered. Gorbachev unilaterally withdrew Soviet troops from Central Europe. The Berlin Wall fell. East and West Germany reunified. The Warsaw Treaty Organization disbanded. The Soviet Union imploded. Communism collapsed. The Cold War ended. These are some of the significant events that occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They were the catalysts for change that transformed Europe's security architecture at the end of the 20th century. NATO, arguably the most successful collective defense organization ever, had to change.

NATO's original charter was to keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down. But in light of the sweeping changes, NATO transformed and built new partnerships with all the states of Europe. The Alliance created the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), later renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), developed the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program, and signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the NATO-Ukraine Charter. Its security challenges had shifted from the center of the European continent to its periphery and beyond. NATO reconfigured its role. NATO felt that it needed to promote stability in Central Europe without creating new dividing lines and to create an expanded and active peacekeeping role outside its borders. Twelve post-communist states knocked on NATO's door and declared their aspiration to join the Alliance. In1997 NATO contended that only three states met the membership criteria, and Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic—three of the four members of the Višegrád Group—were accepted into the Alliance as members

in 1999. Slovakia, often called the fourth member of the Višegrád Group (as part of former Czechoslovakia), was excluded.

## Summary of the Study

What were Slovakia's significant historical experiences and events and how did they influence Slovakia's government during the state's first six years of independence? What was the culture of Slovakia's internal domestic environment during this period? How did the identity of the Slovak people compare to the identity of their dominant political actor— Vladimír Mečiar? What was the culture of national security in Slovakia during its first six years of existence? Why was Slovakia excluded from NATO? What impact did the exclusion have on Slovakia?

In the course of my study I recognized that neorealism and neoliberalism fail to explain the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the end of the Cold War, and the events in the post-Cold War Era. They also fail to explain NATO's exclusion of Slovakia in 1997. Neorealism and neoliberalism expect NATO to expand. They also expect states to do everything in their power to join the collective defense organization. But Slovakia did not do everything in its power to join NATO during its first six years of existence and, as a result, Slovakia was not invited. After reaching this conclusion, I explored questions about the national security of Slovakia using Katzenstein's theoretical framework, which examines norms, identity, and the culture of national security and further focused on the concepts of national identity and democratic transition.

In this study I surveyed Slovakia's history and analyzed how the historical experiences constructed the collective identity of the state and set the stage for future state

behavior. Second, I examined Slovakia's domestic economic, societal, political, and defense posture during the first six years of independent Slovakia's democratic transition period. I also explored the national identity of the Slovaks, studied the background of Mečiar the man and his ideology Mečiarism, and recounted the democratic forces' struggle during this transition to democracy. Third, I scrutinized the overall culture of national security in Slovakia. I surveyed NATO and its history up to the most recent round of enlargement talks. I examined the culture of national security in Slovakia by assessing the place of its defense establishment, its civilian control of the military, the defense budget and the contributions of the military. I then evaluated Slovakia's democratization and post-communist path to determine whether it was leaning to the East or to the West, why it was excluded from NATO, and what impacts resulted from the exclusion. I concluded a comparative look at Slovakia and similar post-communist states and a brief look at Slovakia's political, economic, societal and military issues beyond 1998.

## Research Conclusions

Before I began to investigate why Slovakia was excluded from NATO in 1997, I reviewed some of the prevailing explanations for the exclusion and determined that Slovakia's domestic environment or its internal politics—the behavior of its government—was the likely cause. I selectively focused on the political leaders of the ruling coalition and the domestic environment in which those politicians functioned.

Historical Perspective of the Slovak People, Nation, and State. I analyzed Slovakia's history and found that there were 12 significant eras or periods during

Slovakia's history in which a variety of important and influential events occurred. The first period, Tribal Rule, was important because the area now called Slovakia was first inhabited sometime in 500 BC. Tribes ruled the region through the 9th century AD. During the next period, Conquerors Rule, the region was conquered and ruled by three individual leaders. In the 9th and 10th centuries it is possible that a very early form of a cultural Slovak language emerged and the people inhabiting the region began to have consciousness of their Slovak identity. For the next 1,000-year period the Slovaks were subject to repeated invasions and territorial disputes albeit all under various forms of Hungarian control consequently named the period of Hungarian Rule. In the 18th century a national movement began to foster a sense of Slovak identity. Despite the fact that the Hungarians tried very hard to Magyarize the people, a Slovak literary language was formed, the first newspaper was published and a Slovak society was established. The Magyarization was relentless and the Slovaks had to struggle to maintain their language, identity and culture. In protest, they created the first Slovak political entity, gathered volunteer forces and lashed out against the Hungarians in what was the first Slovak Uprising. Although the Slovaks were defeated, this event remains a strong symbol of their fight for an identity.

It was in the next period, that of Stable Democratic Rule, that the identity of the Slovaks was recognized internationally in 1918 for the first time, albeit as the smaller and less significant part of the newly established democratic state of Czechoslovakia. This was known as one of the most stable and democratic periods in Slovak history. Although the state thrived, the Slovaks were still not content, because, as a minority in the new state, they felt that they were *de facto* governed by yet another group, this time it was the

Czechs. The struggle for equality and increased autonomy continued. Some say that the next period, 1939 to 1945, labeled the period of Nazi Rule, could be considered Slovakia's first statehood. A state of Slovakia was created in 1939, but it was puppet state of Nazi Germany, and the people enjoyed no sovereignty or legitimate self-rule. The struggle for autonomy grew and culminated in the unsuccessful Slovak National Uprising of 1944 against the Germans. This was another very strong symbol of the Slovaks' struggle for their identity.

Following the end of World War II, the democratic state of Czechoslovakia was resurrected and the nation experienced great freedoms and successes. I labeled 1945 to 1948 as the period of Prosperous Democratic Rule. While the Czechoslovak state flourished once again, the Slovaks' were unable to enjoy nationhood of their own and continued their effort to achieve greater independence. Unfortunately, the prosperity was short lived. In 1948 communists seized power and instituted a totalitarian state. For the next decade and a half, during the Stalinist Totalitarian Rule period, under severe Soviet suppression of personal and political freedoms, the Slovaks continued to strive for some autonomy and recognition of their identity. It was not until the early to mid 1960s that the Soviet repression began to loosen. During the Reformation of Socialist Rule period the movement "Socialism with a Human Face" brought about positive economic, political and social reforms to include increased personal freedoms. The increased openness made the Slovaks' struggle even more prominent. But all hopes faded in late 1968 when the Soviets, fearing the openness would spread to other satellite states, led an invasion of Czechoslovakia and installed another phase of its hard-line rule. At the onset of this Soviet Normalization Rule period, a new Czechoslovak federal republic was formed. It

was comprised of two national republics, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. With this action, the Slovaks achieved some increased autonomy from the Czechs but continued to be ruled and suppressed by a greater force for the next two decades, the Soviet Union.

The monumental changes of the late 1980s dramatically altered the European geopolitical landscape. The Berlin Wall fell, the Soviet Union disintegrated and the Cold War ended. Czechoslovakia became a free, democratic state for the third time. Political, economic and social turmoil existed during this period of Post-Communist Transition Rule. The Slovaks had the opportunity to make greater claims for equal division of power, increased autonomy and possible independence. This period came to an end in 1992, when the leaders of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic agreed to dissolve the federation in what became known as the Velvet Divorce. On 1 January 1993 Slovakia was created and the Slovak people finally had their own, independent, legitimate sovereign state. The five years that followed this seemingly positive event was anything but positive. The Slovak people finally broke free from the Hungarian, Czech, German, and Soviet rule; however, they began a politically tumultuous period labeled Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule. During this six-year period, various political, intellectual, and public organizations continued the struggle to reveal Slovakia's real identity and institute a true democratic government. Their efforts were successful and the final outcome of the 1998 elections became another critical turning point for the people of Slovakia, their nation and their state. A democratic coalition government was in place and Slovakia was finally recognized and accepted by the West.

The Slovaks' past was marked by repeated invasions, recurring suppression, continual external domination, authoritarian rule, and political and military uprisings. In addition, their history was marred by the struggle of its people to retain their language and culture, maintain their national identity, increase their autonomy and achieve independence since the 9th or 10th century. The Slovaks desired and fought for increased autonomy in a variety of ways while under the rule or authority of the Hungarians, Czechs, Germans and Soviets and continued this fight in the post-communist period. While the historical events contributed to the national identity of the Slovaks, the events also predisposed voters to support political leaders who pressed for Slovakia's increased autonomy from the Czech Republic. The politicians' pressure resulted in the Velvet Divorce and the Slovaks finally gained their independence, albeit inadvertently. Once Slovakia became independent, the political leaders— primarily Mečiar and his closest allies—believed that, if Slovakia became a member of a collective defense organization such as NATO, the state would lose some of its recently acquired autonomy and independence. This, in turn, would diminish their political power and reduce their control of the government and the state.

Moreover, I discovered that a reference to the influence of historical events on the behavior of political agents was embedded in the preamble of the Slovakia Constitution. The authors of the Constitution referred to the many challenges Slovaks faced through their history while endeavoring to maintain their own existence, language and identity and ultimately achieve statehood.

Slovakia's First Six Years of Independence (1993-1998). I examined Slovakia's behavior in the context of economic, cultural, internal and external political and defense

affairs to determine the culture of the domestic environment between 1993 and 1998. Slovakia experienced both success and disappointment in the first six-year period after gaining independence. Initially Slovakia was touted as one of the stars of the post-communist world in terms of economic growth; however, weaknesses became evident in the later part of this period. Its society had talented leaders and educators, but the ability to speak freely and pursue cultural interests without governmental influence was partial. Government support for reform policies was lacking. The people trusted the religious institutions but the institutions were forced to rely heavily on government subsidies for their existence. The state encountered many political internal and external challenges as did other post-communist states.

Slovakia had many problems in the realm of politics. The presidency was weak—a condition that Mečiar took advantage of repeatedly. The Constitution was not well written with respect to the division of powers between the government, parliament and the president. The politicians in power who swore to protect and uphold the Constitution had not always followed it. During this period Mečiar politicized many government and private institutions, such as the SIS and free press organizations and manipulated the Constitution for his party's benefit. He controlled the corrupt privatization process of state-owned entities and enriched political allies. He underhandedly cancelled a referendum on NATO membership and direct presidential elections, illegally removed a parliamentarian from his seat, and repeatedly violated minority rights. Furthermore, he was rumored to be involved in kidnappings and assassinations. Leaders of Western institutions repeatedly criticized Slovakia for its increasing deficiencies in democratic development, human rights, and the rule of law.

Slovakia's central foreign rhetorical policy theme was integration with Euro-Atlantic institutions and improvement of bilateral relations with its neighbors and other states and institutions. Relations with neighboring states (Czech Republic, Poland, Austria, and Ukraine) were cool, but fairly stable except for relations with Hungary, which were burdened by historical events. Relations with Russia were complicated by the large debt Russia owed to Slovakia and by the international perception that Bratislava was fostering a special relationship with Moscow. Relations with international institutions and the West were often strained. In terms of defense, Slovakia's challenge was unique in that the state had to establish a national security structure from the ground up in addition to developing defense policies, creating a military based on Western standards, and integrating into Euro-Atlantic security structures specifically NATO.

As a result of these findings, I concluded that Slovakia's behavior was characterized by various democratic deficiencies resulting from the actions of Mečiar and his key supporters. Slovakia's institutionalized pattern of behavior—failure to consistently follow the rule of law and the principles of democracy and human rights—thus shaped the state's identity and ultimately its goals. Slovakia was not invited into NATO and the Slovak people lost their chance to benefit from NATO's collective defense umbrella. Slovakia was characterized as a state unable or unwilling to completely transformation to a democratic system.

I explored the identity of the Slovak people in comparison with the identity of Slovakia's leading politician and overwhelmingly dominant leader—Mečiar. I found that the Slovaks had always maintained that they belong to the West and not to the East. The Slovaks believe that they belong to the West spiritually, culturally, historically,

economically, politically and with respect to matters of civilization. I discovered that historical events, Christianity and identification with the West were the main characteristics, in order of importance, of the Slovak people and these constituted their identity. A very unique challenge that Slovakia faced was highlighting and promoting its Slovak identity during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period or Mečiarism.

The concept of Mečiarism arose from one man—Mečiar. At the beginning of his career Mečiar displayed positive qualities that many Slovaks admired. He was an imposing, energetic, and charismatic leader, who had the ability and tenacity to pursue his devoted followers effectively. Mečiar, initially possessed qualities the Slovak people had been looking for in a leader—one who would protect their "Slovak" interests and take them to the "promised land." He was an imposing leader who was able to feel the movement of masses of people. His ideology fed the resentments and sense of injustice felt by many Slovaks as a result of their country's history and he was looked up to by some as a father figure who could accomplish anything even under the domination of the Czechs. He personified the beleaguered and downtrodden Slovak perpetually exploited in the past by Hungarian, Soviets, and the Czechs. The uneducated masses looked up to Mečiar as their long lost leader who would finally bring them the independence that they had longed for. He was seen as the "father of Slovakia" and a political martyr. But, as his career progressed, private, public and international critics began to describe him as an authoritarian demagogue who was willing to use any means to achieve his political and personal goals. He used dictatorial tactics, blackmail and physical coercion against his critics to get his way. He believed in and practiced the concept of divide and rule. He dominated Slovak politics and almost single-handedly politically polarized Slovakia and

its people and tarnished the state's international image.

Mečiar made the choices that characterized Slovakia's patterns of behavior (democratic deficiencies), shaped its identity (a state unwilling to transition fully to a democratic system), determined its goals (serve as a bridge between the East and the West), and polarized Slovakia (in effect labeling people either for and against "Slovakia"). Mečiar made such an enormous impact on Slovakia that terminology such as Mečiarism, anti-Mečiarism, de-Mečiarization, and post-Mečiarism became commonplace.

The Culture of National Security in Slovakia (1993-1998). Before I examined the culture of national security in Slovakia, I explored the history of NATO, its evolution and its redefined purpose of existence following the end of the Cold War.

One way in which Slovakia attempted to secure its place in Western Europe was by obtaining membership in European and Euro-Atlantic collective defense organizations. Since independence Slovakia's primary national security interest has been to preserve the state's territorial integrity by obtaining membership in NATO. NATO's original role was one of guaranteeing the security of its members. While this may have been true in the beginning it was no longer true toward the end of the 20$^{th}$ century. NATO's role had evolved to one that was much more than that.

The concept of a collective defense organization on the European continent was first conceived after the end of World War II. Established in 1949 NATO provided a security umbrella for its growing membership. The Alliance was forced to transform in light of the unexpected events of the late 1980s and early 1990s. It revitalized its purpose for existence and set a policy of enlargement. Three Central European states—Poland,

Hungary, and the Czech Republic—were accepted as the newest members in 1999. But the expansion effort was not complete. NATO left its door open for other aspirants desiring to become members. In 2002 NATO invited seven new candidate states, including Slovakia, to begin accession talks for possible NATO membership in the near future.

I investigated Slovakia's patterns of behavior within the state's national security framework—its national security policies, the defense establishment, its civilian control of the military and the defense budget. Slovakia's national security interest is self-preservation and integration into Euro-Atlantic security organizations—namely NATO. Following independence Slovakia's evolving security and defense policies were laid out in three basic documents: the *Defense Doctrine of the Slovak Republic* adopted by the Parliament in 1994; the *Basic Goals and Principles of National Security of the Slovak Republic* published in 1994, later revised and adopted by the Parliament in 1996; and the *National Defense Strategy* adopted by the State Defense Council in 1996.

Slovakia's national security concept, *The Basic Goals and Principles of National Security of the Slovak Republic,* most resembled a national security strategy. It defined the national interest as the security of Slovak independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, as well as economic prosperity, social stability, international recognition and emphasized integration into transatlantic and West European structures. Slovakia does not consider any state its enemy but has concerns about the instability of some European states. Slovakia believes the possible threats to its national security are failed post-communist states, armed conflict at its borders, the flow of energy primarily from Russia, as well as the usual post Cold War threats.

Slovakia's defense establishment faced many of the same transformation and reformation challenges as did the militaries of its neighbors and other post-communist states. But Slovakia was unique in that it faced two additional challenges as a result of Slovakia's split from the Czech Republic. Slovakia was forced to establish entirely new defense structures and facilities, which were previously established in the Czech part of Czechoslovakia. It also had to contend with building a new military from the ground up.

From the beginning Slovakia's goal was to transform itself into a viable self-defense force capable of integrating into NATO military structures and participating in UN and OSCE peacekeeping missions through a three-step transformation plan. Almost immediately the military began to downsize and move toward a smaller, more flexible and less top-heavy force. Military structures were aligned more closely with Western standards, the ratio between junior enlisted personnel and officers increased, a personnel management process was being developed, training and education programs were being fortified, and knowledge of the English language for promotion purposes became a requirement. The end goal is for the armed forces to be divided into four categories: army, air/air defense forces, territorial forces, and reserve forces. But numerous challenges remain—the most significant is financial.

Civilian control of the military remained strong despite Mečiar's questionable actions. During the six-year period Mečiar's government's attempted to exert excessive political influence over the armed forces by taking such actions as modifying laws on command relationships, purging the military of its most capable officers, illegally appointing a new Chief of Staff of the ASR, and continually under funding the defense establishment. While the first three actions were largely unsuccessful, the fiscal

limitations the government placed on the armed forces proved to be overwhelming. Despite this, the ASR was able to take advantage of various assistance programs and participated in numerous military exercises as well as real world joint and combined military operations. Through all of these trials and tribulations during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period the military made significant progress toward its transformation and reform goals and there were successes. The military was praised for its capabilities and potential for NATO integration and contributed to the democratic development of the state by providing the Slovak people an institution they could trust and believe in.

I concluded that my findings in the realm of Slovakia's national security were consistent with my previous findings. Mečiar's deficient pattern of behavior included exerting excessive political influence over the armed forces by taking such actions as modifying laws on command relationships, purging the military of its most capable officers, illegally appointing a new Chief of Staff of the ASR, and continually under funding the defense establishment. Thus the government's institutionalized pattern of behavior and practices with respect to national security affairs —specifically those of Mečiar—were also inconsistent with the international norms of behavior thereby giving NATO ample reason to exclude Slovakia.

I reviewed Slovakia's post-communist path to find out whether Slovakia was really leaning East or West, what were the prevalent theories explaining Slovakia exclusion from NATO, and how did this exclusion impact Slovakia. Since independence Slovakia's national security goal has been to preserve the state's territorial integrity. Virtually all of the official governmental documents related to national security purported that Slovakia should integrate itself into Western structures, specifically mentioning

NATO, the WEU and the EU. The politicians of the ruling coalition often repeated these national security policies in their rhetoric. But the international community was not convinced. Nonetheless Mečiar fostered a very close relationship with Moscow and often spoke of Slovakia serving as a gateway from the East and the West. Over 120 bilateral agreements were signed during the Authoritarian Mečiarist Rule period, a disproportionately high as compared to the number Slovakia had with other states. Mečiar signed numerous bilateral agreements with Russia and attempted to show that he had a special relationship with Moscow by holding secret meetings with Russian leaders without disclosing the content or results to the public. To outside observers it appeared that Slovakia had more frequent diplomatic contact and greater political, economic, and military bilateral relations with Russia than with any Western entity. I concluded that Slovakia was not necessarily leaning to the East. Mečiar's goal was for the international community to believe that Slovakia was not leaning to the West. Mečiar's interests and goals were not inclined toward Western integration, rather his interests and goals were for Slovakia to remain on the fence, in a sense, and bridge the East to the West.

In the course of my research I found that there were several explanations present to explain why Slovakia was excluded from NATO. Mečiar and the ruling coalition believe that internal and/or external actors conspired against Slovakia to ensure it did not receive an invitation. President Kovač believed, and did much of the opposition, that it was Slovakia's questionable internal politics under the leadership of Mečiar that convinced NATO to drop Slovakia as a potential candidate. Leaders of Slovak NGOs and academics concluded that Mečiar, and his political elite, was not willing to give in to political demands, both from his democratic opposition and from the West. The United

States contended that Slovakia was excluded from NATO because democracy and respect for the rule of law had not yet taken root under Mečiar's leadership. Mečiar's explanations of Slovakia's exclusion from NATO were based on unfounded conspiracy theories and were meant to keep Slovakia out of the Alliance. This was another example of Mečiar's institutionalized pattern of behavior and practices with respect to national security affairs that were inconsistent with the international norms of behavior thereby giving NATO ample reason to exclude Slovakia.

Slovakia's exclusion from NATO left the Slovaks in limbo, in a "gray no-man's land." From an internal security perspective, Slovakia's environment was impacted politically, militarily, economically and culturally. Politically the exclusion impacted both the ruling coalition and the opposition. Mečiar was able to gain more backing from his supporters and the opposition was perceived as weak in comparison to the ruling coalition. But the exclusion also forced democratic leaders to take a stronger stance in promoting democracy and rule of law by removing Mečiar from the political scene in 1998.

Militarily the exclusion had a negative impact on the armed forces. As one of the first applicants to the PfP program Slovakia received high praise for its capabilities and potential interoperability with NATO forces, despite its significant economic constraints. In addition to transforming and reforming, the Slovak military worked very hard to prepare itself for accession into NATO and was fairly successful, despite the major challenges it faced in creating an entirely new defense establishment. Military leaders were undoubtedly disheartened when the ASR was not afforded an opportunity to make contributions to NATO's military missions as a member of the Alliance.

Because of the shortcomings in Mečiar's economic policies the new Dzurinda government forced to implement austere and corrective fiscal measures. Mečiar's failure to enact realistic and substantial economic reform made an economic slowdown in the short term inevitable. An invitation to NATO could have increased foreign investment and exports in Slovakia thereby promoting economic growth. Failing to receive an invitation to NATO resulted in increased anxiety for some Slovaks as they feared they were falling into a gray zone of insecurity, political and economic instability. They also feared the uncertainty about their cultural identity and future.

The exclusion impacted Slovakia's external environment by the limits it posed on relations with external actors and advancing the unflattering perceptions held by international actors. Democratic actors in Slovakia realized that they would either have to take action to resolve the political situation in Slovakia or Mečiar would lead Slovakia elsewhere to obtain a security arrangement. Virtually all of the democratic leaders and political elite believed that NATO was their best and only option for security. The opposition became determined to change the political tide in Slovakia. I assert that the biggest impact Slovakia's exclusion from NATO was that democratic leaders were thrust into action. Democratic agents realized that, if Mečiar continued to rule the state, Slovakia would remain isolated, its national security would remain in limbo, and its return to Europe would be delayed yet again. The political tide in Slovakia changed and Mečiar was defeated in 1998 because the voters were finalized mobilized by NGOs and others, the opposition joined forces against Mečiar and for European integration, the citizen realized what effect Mečiarism had on the state, and democracy had finally begun to take root even under authoritarian rule.

I concluded that Slovakia's historical experience was comprised of repeated invasions, continual external domination, recurring suppression, attempted uprisings, authoritarian rule and the Slovak people's struggle to retain their language, maintain their identity, and preserve their culture. Slovakia's historical experiences are a critical part of the state's identity and influenced voters to support politicians—namely Mečiar and his key supporters—who desired and fought for independence. These historical experiences also predisposed the politicians to pursue increased autonomy, independence, and sovereignty and resulted in the Velvet Divorce. Mečiar was the key Slovak politician who instigated Slovakia's breakaway from Czech domination and this resulted in him being seen as the father figure of the newly independent Slovakia. This event propelled Mečiar into the political arena and people began to believe that he, and only he, could bring them to the promised land. Voters continued to support him and his ideals despite his numerous shortcomings. Mečiar and his closest allies believed that Slovakia's membership in a collective defense organization would result in a reduction of their political power and weaken their control of the state; therefore, they controlled the state as they saw fit thereby giving NATO ample reason to exclude Slovakia.

Slovakia's institutionalized pattern of behavior—deficient democratic and human rights practices and failure to consistently abide by the rule of law—shaped the state's identity and goals. Slovakia projected this institutionalized pattern of behavior to the international community. To prevent Slovakia from becoming a member of NATO Mečiar and his key supporters displayed an institutionalized pattern of behavior—one deficient in a commitment to democracy, rule of law, and human rights—that was inconsistent with international norms, thereby giving NATO reason to drop Slovakia

from its list of potential candidate in 1997. The culture of Slovakia's domestic environment and the culture of its national security were such that NATO declined to invite Slovakia into the Alliance during the first round of post-Cold War expansion. Therefore, Slovakia's historical experiences influenced and predisposed Slovakia's political agents—invariably Mečiar—to display democratically deficient domestic behavior thereby disqualifying Slovakia from NATO membership in 1997.

1998 and Beyond. In light of Mečiar's political history of authoritarian rule and Slovakia's negative international image, OSCE mounted an election observation mission for to the September 1998 elections. Some irregularities were noted but OSCE declared that the elections were fair. Mečiar's political party won the highest percentage of votes but Mečiar was unable to form a coalition government. A coalition party comprised of five parties, in concert with three other parties, formed a government and immediately set integration into Western institutions as a priority. Led by Dzurinda, this new government was faced with daunting challenges, many of which were caused by the previous Mečiar's governments, but met those challenges head on. The new government worked quickly to eliminate or reduce that which was criticized by the international community—deficiencies in democratic development, rule of law, and human rights.

During its first four years in office the Dzurinda coalition made significant strides in improving various deficient aspects of Slovakia's defense establishment, economy, and foreign policies. Militarily Slovakia worked hard to reform, reorganize, and Westernize its military doctrine, equipment, and institutions to make them compatible with NATO forces. The government adopted new national security, defense and military strategies in 2001 to define further its national security interests and the role to be played by its armed

forces. Despite ongoing and severe fiscal constraints the military was better positioned to continue its transformation and reform processes under the Dzurinda government, many of which still remain to be done.

The new government reconstructed fiscal programs and implemented austere fiscal measures that resulted in greater fiscal and monetary stability and improved prosperity. They moved expeditiously to reform Mečiar's controversial privatization process. As a result of these actions, exports and foreign investment increased and Slovakia's economy grew. Internally Dzurinda's government quickly recognized and integrated minority groups. Externally the leadership made earnest and sincere efforts to increase bilateral visits and cooperative efforts with the Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, and Austria and to normalize relations with Russia. In a 2002 report to NATO Dzurinda wrote

> Our armed forces now stand alongside our allies...all around the globe. We are there because Slovakia has learned from its own history that democracy and freedom can never be taken for granted. We are there because we want to shoulder our share of the responsibility for the security situation around us, as other countries do...Slovakia possesses the political potential and military capability to contribute toward Euro-Atlantic security. We are doing our best to demonstrate that Slovakia is a credible partner for the Alliance and that we are able to accept our share of the responsibilities and commitments that NATO membership entails...[486]

Their hard work and determination paid off: in March 2003 the EU signed a treaty of accession with Slovakia;[487] in September 2002 a Dzurinda-led coalition comprised of six parties won the parliamentary elections and is expected to govern until 2006; and in November 2002 Slovakia finally receive an invitation to begin talks on

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[486] Mikluš Dzurinda, "Slovakia Possess the Potential," *NATO's Nations and Partners for Peace,* vol. 47, no. 4/2002 (4/2002): 138.

[487] In December 1999 the EU invited Slovakia to begin negotiations for membership.

NATO membership. If Slovakia's government continues to uphold the rule of law and the principles of democracy and human rights and Slovakia becomes a member of the EU and NATO, it will be able to take its place as a full partner in the new Europe.

In conclusion, I agree with Prizel's premise that a polity's national identity is very much a result of how it interprets its history. Clearly the Slovaks have focused very heavily on their history and it played a very significant role in their identity formation. I also agree with Saxonbuerg that nuanced conditions in specific countries and their proclivities of their leaders help fine-tune the democratization script is true in Slovakia's case. Furthermore, I concur Bunce's contention that different countries had different experiences, exist in different environments, and their leaders have different menus from which to make choices; therefore their transition to democratization are not different. She also stated that founding and performance of new democracies is largely about the choices political leaders make, their preferences, their power, their actions and the consequences. Slovakia's democratization process was indeed different from the other states because Mečiar had preferences, used his power to make choices, and impacted Slovakia's transition. Mečiar happen to be in the right place and the right time to advance his political ambitions. However his actions and decisions were not in the best interest of Slovakia's national security or its evolving democratization process.

## Conceptual Framework

Contribution. My conceptual framework contributed to my analysis in numerous ways. First and foremost, it provided the tools that permitted me to answer my research questions—whereas the predominant theoretical perspectives of international relations

did not. It provided a systematic way of thinking about the national security of Slovakia and allowed me to think about my research in terms of national identity, norms and culture—all of which were significant in my research. This approach gave me the impetus to use historical analysis as a basis. It highlighted the fact that Slovakia's institutionalized pattern of behavior shaped Slovakia's identity and identity. And finally, it gave me an avenue to explore the culture of national security in Slovakia to uncover how the state's institutionalized pattern of behavior impacted its national security.

Future Application. One can take a structure to agent (top-down) or agent to structure (bottom-up) approach in the study of international relations. In this study I explored the culture of national security in Slovakia using a structure to agent approach—how Slovakia's domestic environment influenced NATO's decision to exclude the state in 1997 from the first round expansion effort. One could shift perspectives and apply this framework by using an agent to structure (top-down) approach to examine how NATO influenced Slovakia during the expansion and invitation process. I did not use this approach in my study because I believe this played a lesser role in Slovakia's exclusion. However, this could be an alternate application of this framework.

I applied my framework to only one case—Slovakia. A near-term application of this approach could be to explore the domestic environments of all of the other excluded first round candidates and conduct a comparative analysis of why the were not invited in 1997 to join NATO. A mid-term application could be to explore the domestic environments of the second round NATO candidate states, should any of them be excluded before 2004, and so on, and so on. A comparative analysis of the accepted

states could also be conducted to explore why they were invited or what made them decided to join NATO.

Certainly this framework is not limited to the NATO expansion effort. It could be applied to the exclusion or inclusion of states to other institutions on the European continent such as the EU and the WEU. Furthermore, it could be applied to virtually any international organization or institution worldwide and even to domestic organizations and institutions as well. The possibilities are limitless.

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# APPENDIX I

*Embassy of the United States of America*

Office of
The Ambassador

Bratislava, Slovak Republic
January 21, 1998

Captain Eva Strelka Jenkins, USAF
Doctoral Candidate
1205 Mariposa Ave., #215
Coral Gables, FL 33146

Dear Captain Jenkins:

Thank you very much for your letter of January 10, 1998. I am delighted to hear that you were well supported by Embassy personnel during your doctoral research here in Slovakia.

The topic you are exploring is clearly of major importance to Slovakia, to Europe and the United States, and to the institutions that Slovakia aspires to join. You seem to have done an excellent job of covering the political landscape in conducting your research. I am sure the results of your work will reflect the breadth and depth of your conversations here. In my view, the topics on which you are writing have not been well covered yet - there is an obvious need for more intellectual effort. I encourage you to publish your dissertation and I believe it should find an enthusiastic reception.

I hope that our schedules will coincide when you return to Slovakia. Feel free to contact my secretary to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Ralph R. Jenkins
Ambassador

# APPENDIX II: PICTORIAL DOCUMENTATION[488]

Andrejčák, Imrich. Chairman, Committee for Defense and Security. Interview by author. Tape recording. Slovak Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997. Author is to the left of the Chairman.

[488] Not all of the author's interviews (formal or informal) are displayed in this appendix.

Čarnogurský, Ján. Chairman, Christian Democratic Movement. Interview by author. Tape recording. Christian Democratic Party Headquarters, Bratislava, Slovakia, 15 December 1997.

Černák, Ľudovít. Deputy Chairman, Democratic Union. Interview by author. Tape recording. Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997.

Dzurinda, Mikulaš. Chairman, Slovak Democratic Coalition. Interview by author. Tape recording, Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 13 May 1998.

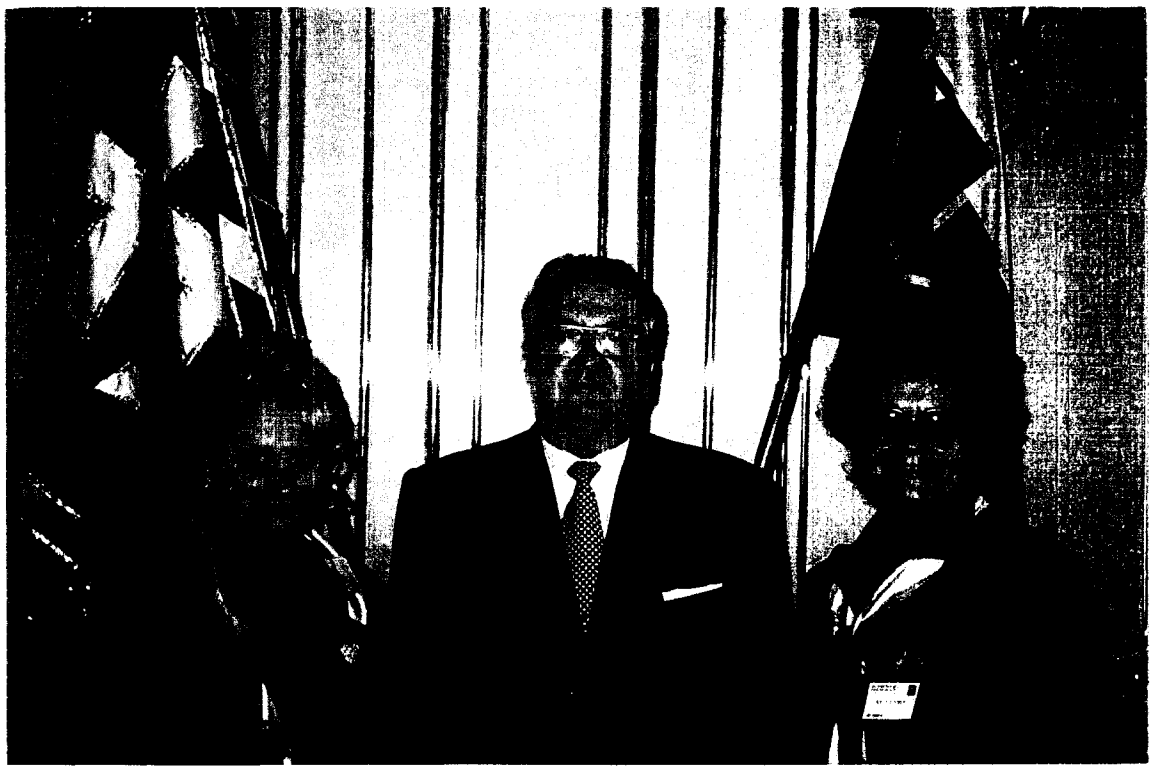
Gombík, Štefan (right of the author). Major General Engineer, Chief of Air Force and Air Defense Staff, General Staff of the Slovak Army. Interview by author. Tape recording. Trenčín, Slovakia, 14 December 1997.

Hamžík, Pavol. Deputy Chairman, Party of Civic Understanding. Interview by author. Tape recording. Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 14 May 1998.


Hryc, Andy. Owner and General Manager, Radio Twist. Interview by author. Tape recording. Radio Twist Headquarters, Bratislava, Slovakia, 19 December 1997.

Johnson, Ralph R. Ambassador of the United States of America to Slovakia. Interview by author. Embassy of the United States of America, Bratislava, Slovakia, May 1998.

Kiripolska, Pani (left of the author). Major, Plavetsky Mikulaš. Interview by author. Tape recording. Plavetsky Mikulaš, Slovakia, 3 January 1998.



Kovač, Michal. President, Slovak Republic. Interview by author. Tape recording. Presidential Palace, Bratislava, Slovakia, 16 December 1997. Kamila Kay Strelka Kankova is to the right of the President in the second picture.

Kramplová, Zdenka. Minister of Foreign Affairs. Interview by author. Tape recording. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bratislava, Slovakia, 7 May 1998.

Kukan, Eduard (right of the author). Chairman, Democratic Union. Interview by author. Tape recording. Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 17 December 1997.

Repaský, Ján. Chief, Defense Ministry Office. Interview by author. Tape recording. Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 January 1998.

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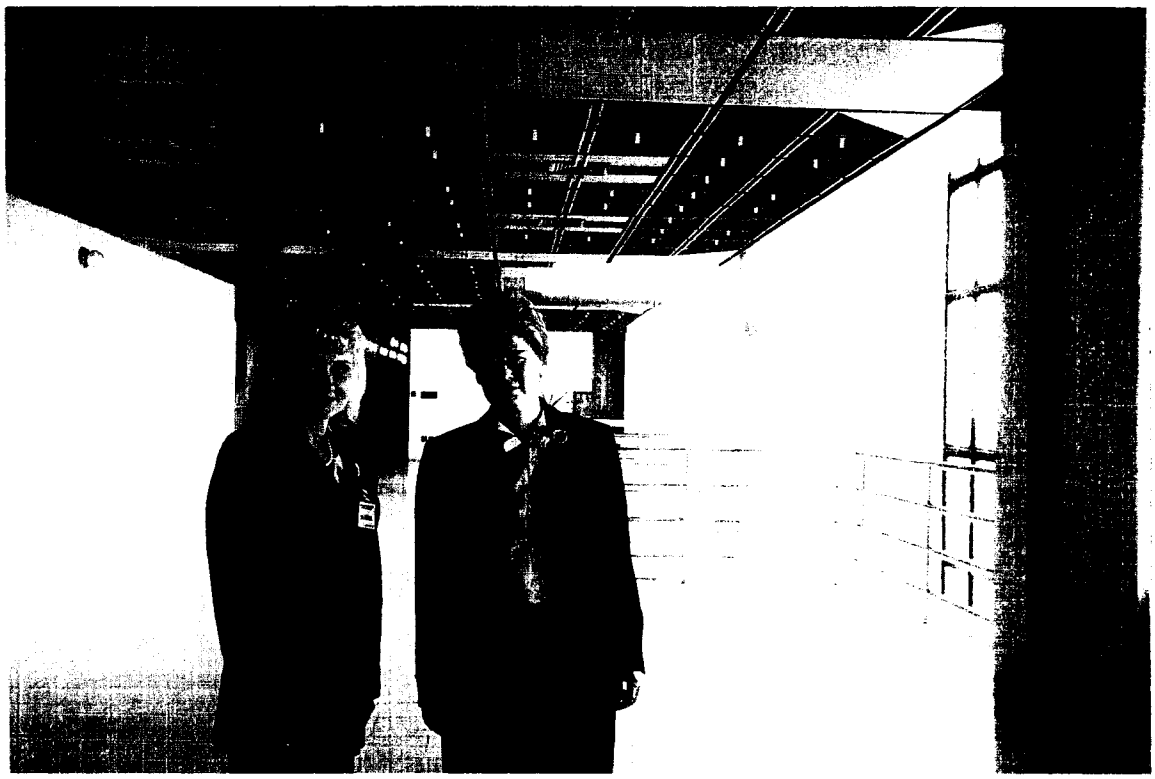

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Slobodník, Dušan. Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, National Council. Interview by author. Tape recording. Parliament, Bratislava, Slovakia, 8 December 1997.

Štruůbl, Pavel. Major General, Advisor to the Minister of Defense, Army of the Czech Republic. Interview by author. Tape recording. Ministry of Defense, Prague, Czech Republic, 9 December 1997.

Tuchyňa, Jozef. Colonel General Engineer, Chief of the General Staff, Army of the Slovak Republic. Interview by author. Tape recording. Ministry of Defense, Bratislava, Slovakia, January 1998.

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Vášáryová, Magda. Board Chairman, Slovak Foreign Policy Association. Interview by author. Tape recording. Slovak Foreign Policy Association, Bratislava, Slovakia, 19 December 1997.

Weiss, Peter. Deputy Chairman, Slovak Democratic Left. Interview by author. Tape recording. Parliament, Slovakia, 17 December 1997.

# VITA

Eva Strelka Jenkins was born in Bratislava, Slovakia on 4 May 1966. Her parents are Ladislav and Kamila Strelka. She married Robert Steven Jenkins on 23 June 1989 and they have one daughter, Katarina Eloise, born on 2 June 2001. Eva received her elementary education in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and her secondary education in Pompano Beach, Florida. In December 1988 she received her Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from the University of Miami. In October 1994 she received her Master of Arts degree in computer resources and information management from Webster University, Missouri. In January 1996 she was admitted to the Graduate School of the University of Miami where she was granted the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in August 2003. Eva is an intelligence officer who has been serving on active duty in the United States Air Force since 1989. She currently holds the rank of major.

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