

NATO Enlargement and Ukraine

by Dr. Volodymyr Furkalo

Extracts from an address given at the University of Ottawa, Chair of Ukrainian Studies, Sept. 12, 1997.

Development of cooperation with NATO occupies a very special place in the list of priorities of foreign policy of Ukraine. Shaping up its attitude towards NATO Ukraine proceeded from the recognition of profound transformation undertaken by NATO since the end of the Cold War and its continued adaptation to meet the changing circumstances of Euro-Atlantic security.

We recognize and welcome NATO's positive role in maintaining peace and stability in Europe and in promoting greater confidence and transparency in the Euro-Atlantic area, its openness for cooperation with the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, an inseparable part of which is Ukraine.

As Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine H.E. Hennadiy Udoenko noted in his address at the seminar of North-Atlantic Assembly, "Regional stability and security" (Kyiv, September 14, 1996), "Today most effective and most attractive security structure in Euro-Atlantic region for the newly democratic countries would, no doubt, be NATO. This Organization, which we consider the Alliance of democratic countries that poses no threat to Ukrainian national security, has already demonstrated its ability to adapt to new realities and challenges in today's world, succeeded in overcoming organizational limits of an isolated defence alliance and practically became a leader in initiating new cooperation forms in security sphere.

The establishment of the NACC and the PfP program became important steps in creating new European security architecture, instrumental elements of European integration. Without these structures it would be almost impossible to imagine the present and the near future of our continent.

NATO has gained a considerable experience of cooperation with many countries in military, technical, scientific, environmental and other spheres, experience in harmonizing varied interests and relations, seeking compromises and strategic solutions, experience in collective responsibility and

solidarity, and, at the same time, respect for national peculiarities and national interests of different member-countries. All this make the Organization, on one the hand, truly effective and, on the other flexible enough in order to become the pillar of new

European security structure capable of adequately responding to new challenges and threats.

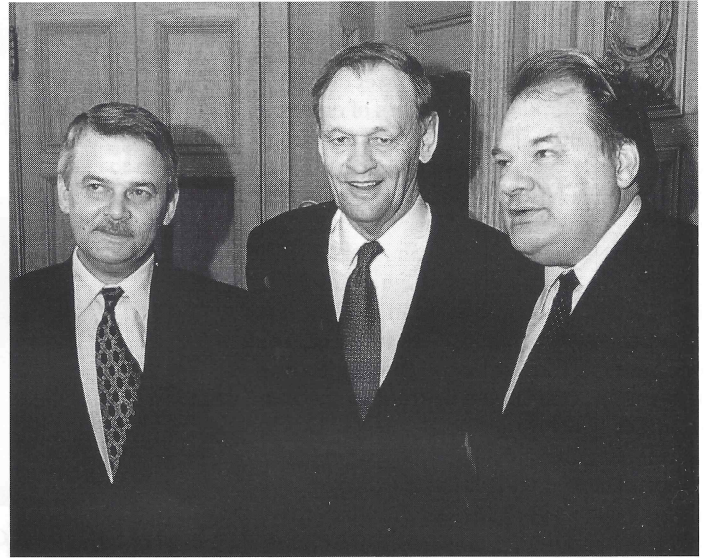
Therefore, NATO enlargement will have key importance in formation of a new European security system - both for its new members and for the rest of the countries in this region."

The 1997 Madrid will remain in history as the venue which has seen the dividing line inherited from the Cold War disappear from the very heart of the European continent. The historic decision to invite the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to join the North Atlantic Alliance was made there. And Ukraine considers those three its closest neighbors, partners and friends.

Thus Ukraine welcomed NATO's decision to admit new members ... Given the still unfinished process of creating a united Europe, it is very important to avoid drawing new division lines (especially confrontational ones), new "Berlin walls" as well as to avoid creation of any new "zones of influence" or "spheres of special interest" when establishing a new security architecture.

It is quite important for Ukraine to find its proper and deserved place in geopolitical environment which is developing now. For Ukraine the answer is in establishing very special relations with NATO, which reflect its unique and distinctive position in Europe.

Ukraine has chosen a truly European path of development, based on respect of



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
Ambassador Volodymyr Furkalo (l) at a meeting last spring between Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chrétien (c) and Ukraine's Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udoenko (r), now at the UN (see page 4).

human democratic values, since 1990 when the Declaration of State Independence was adopted ...

Practical realization of the chosen course requires solving of whole range of problems, most important of which are the following:

- ◆ comprehensive restructuring of the political system aimed at transforming the totalitarian society into law-abiding democratic state with the aim to ensuring fundamental human rights and basic freedom as well as implementing the highest democratic values;
- ◆ economic reform aimed at transition from a centrally planned management system to the development of market-oriented economy;
- ◆ the most serious and, perhaps, the most difficult -- transformation of the psychology of every citizen from a mentality of a subject of totalitarian regime to a liberated psychology for the free member of society law and justice guided by this.

In the sphere of foreign policy, the course to integrate into European and Euro-Atlantic structures as a strategic and irreversible one was reflected in major documents guiding the principles of Ukrainian foreign policy. This course is a dominating priority of our policy, and on this road we have already achieved considerable progress -- in developing relations with the European Union, becoming a member of the Council of Europe and the Central-European Initiative, actively developing cooperation within