

THE DEBATE ON NATO ENLARGEMENT

HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED FIFTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

OCTOBER 7, 9, 22, 28, 30 AND NOVEMBER 5, 1997

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

44-069 CC

WASHINGTON : 1998

For sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office
Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office, Washington, DC 20402
ISBN 0-16-056004-7

	Page
Kugler, Dr. Richard, Distinguished Research Professor, Institute For National Strategic Studies, National Defense University	152
Prepared statement	154
Slocombe, The Hon. Walter, Undersecretary of Defense For Policy	124
Prepared statement	131

HEARING OF OCTOBER 30, 1997, MORNING SESSION

NATO-Russia Relationship—Part I	183
Kissinger, Hon. Henry A., President, Kissinger and Associates, New York, New York	183
Prepared statement	186

HEARING OF OCTOBER 30, 1997, AFTERNOON SESSION

NATO-Russia Relationship—Part II	207
Matlock, Ambassador Jack F. Jr., George F. Kennan Professor, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey	230
Prepared statement	236
Odom, William E., Lt. Gen., USA, retired, Director of National Security Studies, Hudson Institute, Washington, DC	238
Prepared statement	242
Pickering, Ambassador Thomas R., Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs	207
Prepared statement	214
Simes, Dimitri K., President, Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom, Washington, DC	245
Prepared statement	248

HEARING OF NOVEMBER 5, 1997

Public Views on NATO Enlargement	261
Acheson, David C., President, The Atlantic Council of the United States, Washington, DC	294
Prepared statement	296
Ciccolella, Charles S., Assistant Director, National Security and Foreign Relations Division, American Legion, Washington, DC	305
Prepared statement	306
Doubek, Robert W., President, American Friends of the Czech Republic, Washington, DC	277
Prepared statement	279
Harmon, Col. Herbert N., USMCR, National President, Reserve Officers Association of the United States, Washington, DC	315
Prepared statement	317
Harris, David A., Executive Director, American Jewish Committee, New York, New York	310
Prepared statement	312
Joyce, John T., President, International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, Washington, DC	313
Prepared statement	314
Karatnycky, Adrian, President, Freedom House, New York, New York	297
Prepared statement	298
Koiva, Mati, member, Board of Directors, Joint Baltic American National Committee, Incorporated, and President, Estonian American National Council, Rockville, Maryland	283
Prepared statement	284
Koszorus, Frank, Jr., board member, Hungarian American Coalition, Washington, DC	270
Prepared statement	272
Moskal, Edward J., President, Polish American Congress, Washington, DC	266
Prepared statement	269
Nowak, Jan, Representative, Central and Eastern European Coalition, Anandale, Virginia	262
Prepared statement	264

The Polish Ministry of National Defense, for which it was vitally necessary to assess NATO membership costs, determined that modernization, integration and the adoption of new methodology will require an expenditure of \$1.26 billion. Adding payments for the NATO civil and military budgets, as well as costs of joint missions, total costs are estimated at \$1.5 billion, which, if spread over 15 years until the year 2010, amounts to 4% of Poland's 1995 military budget.

These figures may, indeed, seem minuscule when compared to other estimates. The Poles, however, recognize that the costs of modernizing its armed forces or of reorganization are not validly calculated as NATO-related expenses. On the contrary, those are expenses that must be made under any circumstances. In fact, an even larger investment in modernization would surely be insufficient to defend the nation without the security inherently provided through NATO. It is not surprising, then, that the Defense Ministry of Poland has stated with clarity that it is ready to pay the largest part of costs arising from its NATO admission.

In the brief time that Poland has enjoyed independence, it has already taken necessary steps for the improvement of its internal defense industry. That development, however, is hampered by the inability to fully adopt international standards until its membership status is solidified.

Similarly, the Polish communication infrastructure, purposefully inadequate under the recent occupation, is being modernized and expanded with surprising alacrity. A program known as the National Communications System, funded by private domestic and foreign corporations, will assure total communications interoperability with NATO nations within only a few years.

Regarding transportation, Poland already has a highly developed rail system, is expending over \$15 billion in highway construction, and has a long-term plan for development of twelve interconnected airports. This plan provides for air traffic control and safety, including state-of-the-art radar systems, all of which are demonstrable assets which Poland brings to NATO, benefits which are not properly added to the actual costs of admission to the alliance.

Two conclusions must be made. First, Poland is well aware of the direct costs arising from admission to NATO. It has considered them, implemented plans to deal with them and accepts its responsibility in regard to these costs. Second, modernization of the Polish military forces is required in any event, Poland is already moving seriously in that direction.

I have not mentioned the political implications of NATO expansion only because we recognize the need to address sincere questions relative to monetary consideration. Nevertheless, I would be remiss if I did not conclude by acknowledging their importance. The contribution of NATO to the peace and stability of Europe, and thereby the world, is unquestioned. What a wonderful boon to mankind it will be when the actuality of the spirit found in the NATO alliance is expanded to Central Europe. The antithesis is readily witnessed in the sad situation of Bosnia, where it has already cost us over \$5 billion in an ongoing attempt to restore the peace. It proves, once again, that expenditures to maintain the peace are a bargain, whether counted in dollars or in lives. It would be another of history's great errors and omissions, if unfounded fears were to deter us from ensuring a wider zone of cooperation, peace and stability.

Senator SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Moskal. We appreciate your testimony.

We are pleased to be joined by Senator Robb and Senator Kerry. I wonder if either of you has a question.

Senator ROBB. No, not at this time, Mr. Chairman.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, but no.

Senator SMITH. Then we thank you.

Mr. MOSKAL. Thank you.

Senator SMITH. We will now call up Mr. Frank Koszorus. Mr. Koszorus is a board member of the Hungarian American Coalition. We welcome you, sir. Please proceed.

**STATEMENT OF FRANK KOSZORUS, JR., BOARD MEMBER,
HUNGARIAN AMERICAN COALITION, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. KOSZORUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you to address the vital issue of United States security.

The Hungarian American Coalition enthusiastically supports the enlargement of NATO to include Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. We believe this historic step will serve the geopolitical interests of the United States.

As a military alliance for the Euro—Atlantic Community, NATO has succeeded in keeping the peace in Europe by deterring outside aggression. The United States has provided NATO with strong leadership because it has recognized that threats to European security constitute threats to U.S. security as well.

In fact, the two hot wars and the cold war in Europe resulted from aggression emanating from Europe and it cost America dearly, both in terms of lives lost and treasure expended.

Today, there is a security vacuum in Central and Eastern Europe. That vacuum will be filled. The only question is who will fill it.

NATO enlargement will shore up the new democracies, insure stability of the region, and help facilitate market economies and prosperity—ingredients of a peaceful and secure Europe.

NATO enlargement does not threaten Russia. NATO has always been a non-threatening defensive alliance. Moreover, the West, including the United States, has continued to demonstrate its good faith toward Russia through generous assistance programs and by entering into the Founding Act, which we must insure will give Russia a voice, but certainly not a veto, over NATO matters.

In fact, stability on Russia's Western border translates into greater security for Russia, as well.

The costs of expanding NATO are modest, considering the defense budget, and, further, as an insurance policy against future instability, tensions, and conflict, the price tag is indeed inexpensive and a wonderful bargain.

Mr. Chairman, I had the great pleasure of recently visiting Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic as part of a joint Department of Defense/Department of State fact finding mission. It was striking to observe the desire of the military leadership of the three countries to be part of and to contribute to NATO and to the security of the region.

This desire was evident, for example, in Hungary, where the young, reform minded officers who recently had been promoted to senior ranks enthusiastically spoke about steps they had taken to restructure the military better to conform to NATO standards.

We were particularly impressed as they and their junior officers briefed us in English.

The majority of Hungarians welcome NATO membership because they want to be part of a successful and defensive alliance. Mr. Chairman, they recall how their quest for freedom and independence was brutally crushed by Soviet tanks in 1956 because Hungary was on the wrong side of Stalin's dividing line.

Now having testified about NATO's preeminent role in promoting peace, I would be remiss if I failed to mention an often ignored and misunderstood, but significant, element of security in the region.

NATO enlargement is a building block, indeed the cornerstone of stability in Europe and, there by extension, in the United States. An enlarged NATO alone, however, is not a panacea for ethnic peace. While an enlarged NATO that sticks to its core function will promote interstate stability in Central Europe, the alliance cannot alone resolve tensions caused by discriminatory policies and practices of majorities toward ethnic minorities, the historical source of conflict and stability in the region.

The United States, therefore, can cement long-term stability by not only enlarging NATO but also by promoting the ability of minorities to enjoy the fruits of democracy.

A sure way of defusing ethnic tensions in Central and Eastern Europe, protecting the territorial integrity of the States, and promoting democracy and good neighborly relations is to grant ethnic minorities group rights, such as the ones exercised by Western Europeans. Such policies, as opposed to basic treaties between the countries of the region, would serve U.S. strategic interests in Central Europe and dispel our fears of perpetual conflict. They would also insure the continued strength and vitality of an expanded NATO.

Mr. Chairman, as we approach the 21st Century, we simply cannot afford to squander an historic opportunity to safeguard long-lasting stability and democracy. We can win the peace this time. If only to avoid being drawn back into exacerbated controversies, the United States should not ignore the challenges posed by Central and Eastern Europe.

This means that NATO enlargement should be ratified quickly and overwhelmingly and the democratically expressed aspirations of ethnic minorities to enjoy the fruits of Western style minority rights should be actively and vigorously promoted.

These steps would constitute inexpensive, yet vital, insurance policies for the United States. Our failure to exercise leadership, on the other hand, will insure a post communist evolution far less congenial to our interests.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Koszorus follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. KOSZORUS

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, it is a great honor and pleasure to appear before you to address the vital issue of the security of the United States which is closely linked to European security. Mr. Chairman, the Hungarian American Coalition ("Coalition") enthusiastically supports the enlargement of NATO to include Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. We believe that this historic step will serve the geopolitical interests of the United States. In order to be successful, the enlargement process must take into consideration the unique history of the region and espouse West European norms relating to the ethnic communities of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Coalition is a consortium of organizations and individuals which disseminates educational and cultural materials about Hungarians, U.S. relations with Hungary and the Hungarian minorities living in the Carpathian Basin.

The Coalition strongly believes that the long-term national security and budgetary interests of the United States require an unequivocal commitment to the transition of Central and Eastern European countries to fully democratic and free market status. That commitment requires the United States to be actively engaged in the region.

The Coalition further believes that peace and stability throughout Europe serve the national security interests of the United States. In this century, the United States was called upon to fight two hot wars and a 45-year Cold War—conflicts

which emanated from the heart of Europe—in the furtherance of those vital geopolitical interests. These wars, which resulted from uncertainty and instability in the region, cost America dearly in lives lost and treasure expended.

In addition to the institutionalization of democracy and market economies in Central and Eastern Europe, the prevention of any large power dominating any part of Europe are the best means of guaranteeing that there will be no further European conflicts which will entangle the United States. We believe that with the collapse of communism and the Soviet Union, the objectives of peace, stability, and democracy in Europe are achievable if we exercise leadership.

Among the most visible and effective forms of our engagement is our continuing involvement in the security issues of the region. We believe that the general stability and security of the region can be accomplished through the enlargement of NATO to include Hungary and other countries which desire to join the Alliance and meet the criteria for membership.

Mr. Chairman, I had the great pleasure of visiting Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic two weeks ago as part of a joint Department of Defense/Department of State fact finding mission. It was striking to observe the desire of the people, including the military leadership, of the three countries to be part of and contribute to NATO and the security of the region. This desire was evident, for example, in Hungary where young, reform-minded officers recently had been promoted to senior ranks and enthusiastically spoke about steps they had taken to restructure the military better to conform to NATO standards. We were particularly impressed as they and their junior officers briefed us in English.

The majority of Hungarians welcome NATO membership because they want to be part of a successful and defensive alliance. They recall how their quest for freedom and independence was brutally crushed by Soviet tanks in 1956 because Hungary was on the wrong side of Stalin's dividing line.

Today, we must not permit Central and Eastern Europe to languish in a security vacuum. Russian interests are not threatened by the expansion of a defensive alliance. Moreover, stability and economic growth on the borders of Russia can only benefit Moscow. Russia should not be isolated and mechanisms, such as the Founding Act between NATO and Russia, should dispel any lingering concerns Moscow may entertain about an enlarged NATO. Russia, however, should under no circumstances be permitted to exercise a "veto" in NATO matters.

Russia is in a fluid state with voices of nascent expansionism being heard in some quarters. Failure by NATO to accept the invited countries will redraw the lines imposed by Stalin and signal Russian imperialists that they, in fact, enjoy a "sphere of influence" in Central and Eastern Europe. The consequences of rejecting Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic would be contrary to U.S. geopolitical interests in a secure, integrated, and democratic Europe.

NATO enlargement is a building block—indeed the cornerstone—of stability in Europe. An enlarged NATO alone, however, is not a panacea for ethnic peace. As a military alliance, NATO's role has been to defend its members from outside aggression. An enlarged NATO that sticks to its core function will promote a large degree of interstate stability in Central Europe. The Alliance alone will not resolve tensions caused by discriminatory policies and practices of majorities toward ethnic minorities—a historical source of conflict and instability in the region. The United States, therefore, can cement long-term stability by not only enlarging NATO, but also by promoting the ability of minorities to enjoy the fruits of democracy.

NATO enlargement should not be seen as a means of sweeping minority rights under the rug; the enlargement process must not apply a different standard to new members as has been applied to current members. It should be recalled that the scope of collective—i.e., ethnic or group—rights of the Catalans and Basques of Spain, the Welsh and Scots of Great Britain, the South Tyroleans of Italy, the Walloons of Belgium or the Swedes of Finland are significantly greater than those sought but denied to ethnic communities, especially Hungarians, in Central and Eastern Europe.

The Soviet Union cynically suppressed minorities while loudly proclaiming that socialism had solved the nationalities question. A NATO expansion process which ignores the legitimate and democratically asserted aspirations of minorities will leave them frustrated and dissatisfied. They once again will feel abandoned as they did in 1920 when borders were drastically redrawn and millions of minorities created without their having a say in the determination of which states they would live in. If NATO enlargement is to serve U.S. interests, it must not become a vehicle of instability by ignoring the rights of minorities in Central and Eastern Europe.

In order to promote lasting stability in Central Europe, the United States must do two things in addition to enlarging NATO. First, it must recognize that improved

interstate and interethnic relations are a function of democracy and enlightened minority policies.

Second, the United States must use its influence to convince the states in the region that if they want to join Western institutions, including NATO, they must conform to Western minority rights practices. Central European minorities must be granted the same rights as the rights exercised by Western European minorities. Dismissing the aspirations of Central Europeans to enjoy such rights virtually guarantees that our worst fears may become self-fulfilling prophecies.

The surest way to defuse ethnic tensions in Central and Eastern Europe, protect the territorial integrity of states and promote democracy and good neighborly relations is to grant ethnic minorities group rights such as the ones exercised by Western Europeans. Such policies—as opposed to basic treaties between the countries of the region—would serve United States strategic interests in Central Europe and dispel our fears of perpetual conflict. They would also ensure the continued strength and vitality of an expanded NATO.

As we approach the 21st century, we simply cannot afford to squander a historic opportunity to safeguard long-lasting stability and democracy. We can win the peace this time. The adverse consequences of our withdrawal from Europe at critical times in the past are well known. Had the United States reacted firmly to the turmoil threatening peace in Europe prior to the First and Second World Wars, many American lives and resources would have been spared. Similarly, the Cold War would have been far less expensive and dangerous had the United States not pulled back from the heart of Europe and had we resisted domestic pressure to “bring the boys home” before the European political order had been settled.

If only to avoid being drawn back into exacerbated controversies, the United States should not ignore the challenges posed by Central and Eastern Europe. This means that NATO enlargement should be ratified quickly and overwhelmingly, and the democratically expressed aspirations of ethnic minorities to enjoy the fruits of Western style minority rights should be actively and vigorously promoted. These steps would constitute inexpensive, yet vital insurance policies for the United States. Our failure to exercise leadership, on the other hand, will ensure a new world order far less congenial to our interests.

Senator SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Koszorus. We really appreciate your testimony.

Are there questions?

Senator KERRY. I would just ask one quick question, if I may, or a couple.

The first tranche is fairly accepted now and I think will most likely move rapidly through the Senate. But clearly the first tranche changes what NATO was and its fundamental rationale at one time was, though you say it was defensive, it clearly shifts in this post soviet era. So the question is with respect to the other nations, you have differing degrees of problems that arise with their possible entry. I think the great issue is not necessarily the initial tranche and the difficulties faced by that—I feel as though those have almost sort of taken care of themselves—but what follows.

Do you have any opinion about whether or not the sanguinity expressed by many people about Russia's acceptance of this first tranche would change significantly as it grows larger and particularly as you get to the point of thinking about Baltic States?

Mr. KOSZORUS. Senator Kerry, NATO enlargement has been a self-selecting process. It has enlarged over the years without threatening Russia itself.

I think NATO enlargement must be, should be, has to be open to all countries of this region which meet the membership criteria and want to contribute to the alliance itself.

I do not believe that an enlargement of this defensive alliance itself will pose a threat. Quite to the contrary, I think once stability of the region, once prosperity of the region is insured, I think that

will only benefit Moscow and I think Moscow will see the advantages of a strong, stable region.

So I do not see that as any long-term problem.

Senator KERRY. But if they don't, if they said we don't, if they were to continue to express a particularly strong attitude, and if the perception were that it was having an impact on your implementation of arms control agreements, if your perception was it was playing a serious hand in terms of internal Russian politics, is it conceivable that your attitude might then be different about the Baltics?

Mr. KOSZORUS. Well, I think we have to work with Russia, certainly through mechanisms such as the Founding Act. I think that those types of confidence building measures will diffuse those types of problems.

What is the alternative? Do we assign these States to the Russian sphere of influence once again? Do we open that door again? I don't think that would be a wise policy from our perspective. I think that with mechanisms—the Founding Act, continued cooperation, continued interaction, continued assistance—I think we can bring Russia along to acceptance.

Senator KERRY. But that does not presume that that is the only alternative. I mean, you might extend Partnership for Peace. You might have any number of other things. It may be that the Western European entity becomes more viable. I mean, there are other possibilities, are there not?

Mr. KOSZORUS. Certainly there are other possibilities and, of course, we are going into an area of speculation at this point. I think, considering the history of Europe, considering the history of U.S. relations with Europe, NATO has been the engine of stability, has been the engine of security in the region. I think if a sovereign State, an independent State, which has won its independence from the Soviet Union wishes to be part of NATO, it should certainly be given every opportunity to do so.

Senator KERRY. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Koszorus. You know, Senator Kerry asked a very important question that this committee, I am sure, will grapple with over the next 4 years. I wonder if Mr. Nowak, who has lived through this, who has seen us win a war and lose a peace, would care to answer Senator Kerry's question. If you would, answer it for me based on what you have experienced in your life.

Then I would like to say we will stand in a brief recess. The three of us need to go and cast a vote in just a few minutes.

Mr. Nowak, would you care to speak to that?

Mr. NOWAK. I strongly believe that to limit the NATO enlargement to only 3 States would mean the division of Europe into two spheres of influence. The Russian perception will be that these States are in something like the situation of Finland at the time of the cold war.

The Russians—rather, the Soviets—did oppose every stage of NATO enlargement, including the foundation of NATO itself. There were threats, bordering on ultimata. Even when Spain was going to join, there was an opposition.

Once they faced an accomplished fact, however, they accepted it. I believe they accepted it, practically speaking, by signing the Founding Act, the enlargement of NATO as far as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland are concerned. I am convinced that they will accept also continued enlargement.

There will be protests. There will be an opposition. But they will finally accept it—on one condition, that they will not be isolated. Enlargement has sense only if it is linked with growing cooperation with Russia itself.

I just said that we believe in the new security architecture that would be based on close cooperation between an enlarged NATO and Russia. I am confident that, once it is over, Russia will accept it and it will have a considerable impact on the Russian mentality, particularly of its ruling class. It will get reconciled, finally, with the loss of its empire because they will see no realistic possibility otherwise.

Senator SMITH. Thank you very much.

Senator KERRY. Mr. Chairman, if I could just make one comment.

Senator SMITH. Of course.

Senator KERRY. I spent a very interesting weekend with former Secretary Perry, Secretary Christopher, Ashton Carter, General Joulwan, General Scowcroft, and a host of people—maybe 15 or 20 people—out at Stanford. We spent an entire Friday and Saturday talking about this.

I was struck by the breadth of experience that was there talking about it and the breadth of disparity of opinion with respect to where we go as we go down the road. You know, NATO is one thing today. It is something that we can define. It is something that is tangible. It's something where we can clearly understand its mission.

But every expansion poses as yet undefined and unanswered questions with respect to that future mission. It is an organization that, as we know, works on consensus. That consensus may be harder and harder to draw as the mission definition changes.

So I think it is a little more complicated than perhaps some people have yet come to grips with. I am not suggesting that only those people have a sense of its complexity. But I do think, as we go down the road here, there are some very significant questions. I mean, Russia is a major cooperator with us in Bosnia. I think you have to be thoughtful about what really will matter to the whole series of relationships that we have with Russia and that we need to have with respect to a lot of other issues as we go down this road.

So I, for one, am unwilling to suggest that a decision as to what NATO will be or who will be members will be up to only those countries that decide they want to join. I think we have to be very careful about that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. NOWAK. Senator, I believe that NATO will be much stronger after these three countries and others are included because they are traditionally pro-American and pro-Western. Therefore, the balance of power within NATO will shift to the advantage of the United States, its presence in Europe and its leadership.

I believe that as I know these countries.

Senator KERRY. Let me say that I absolutely agree with you. I have no question but that NATO will be stronger for the admission of the countries that we are currently considering admitting and that I am convinced, obviously, will be admitted. We will ratify it. I have no doubt about that.

But I think there are, as yet, a series of unanswered questions about what comes next. That is all I am suggesting, that we should not be in automatic gear here. We need to be very thoughtful about it.

Senator SMITH. Thank you, Senator.

Thank you very much, Mr. Nowak.

We will stand in brief recess. We will be right back and will carry on, hearing from Mr. Bob Doubek.

[Recess]

Senator SMITH. The committee will come to order. We apologize for the recess, but we were sent here to vote and we did it as quickly as we can.

We are going to have to ask, in order to accommodate everyone who wishes to be heard, when you give your testimony, please do so as quickly as we can. Obviously we would appreciate that.

Now we will call forward Mr. Bob Doubek, President of American Friends of the Czech Republic. Mr. Doubek, welcome.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT W. DOUBEK, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. DOUBEK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am President of American Friends of the Czech Republic and I thank you for the opportunity to testify. By way of identifying myself, I served in Vietnam as an Air Force officer and I was a leader of the effort to build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Mall. In 1986, the Senate voted to award me a Congressional Gold Medal.

I speak today in behalf of Americans who support the Czech people. This includes 140 major corporations, who have invested over \$1 billion, thousands of Americans who work and live in the Czech Republic, thousands of Americans of Czech birth, millions of Americans of Czech descent, and millions of Americans who are otherwise friends of the Czech people. We support NATO enlargement and the membership of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary.

The Czechs will be great allies. This is because they have a deep and abiding friendship for the United States, because our countries share many historical ties, and because we share many key values, especially civil and religious liberty.

The strategic location of the Czech Republic, its political stability, and its human and industrial resources will strengthen NATO. The Czech State has been part of the West for over 1,000 years. It was part of the Holy Roman Empire. The Protestant Reformation had its roots there with the teachings of John Hus. After 3 centuries of national subjugation, the Czech people fought with the allies in World War I and achieved their independence. The Czechs, then, with the Slovaks formed what became the only democracy that functioned in Central Europe through the Munich Agreement. Czechoslovak soldiers and airmen fought on the allied side in World War II, suffering 10,000 combat deaths.