

HSA

Hungarian Studies Association

www.hungarianstudies.info

January 2010

NEWSLETTER

Election Results:

Emese Ivan was elected as vice president, Steve Jobbitt and Catherine Portuges were elected to serve on the executive board, and I was reelected as secretary/treasurer for the next two years. Thank you and congratulations to the others elected.

Thus, the current leadership is:

President: Paul Hanebrink, Rutgers U., Term: 2010-2011. Email: hanebrin@history.rutgers.edu

Vice-President*: Emese Ivan, St. John's U., Term: 2010-2011. Email: emese.ivan@gmail.com

Secretary-Treasurer: Susan Glanz, St. John's U., Term: 2010-2011. Email: glanzs@stjohns.edu

Executive Committee:

Steve Jobbitt, California State U.-Fullerton., Term: 2010-2011. Email: sjobbitt@fullerton.edu

Catherine Portuges, U of Mass. -Amherst, Term: 2010-2011. Email: portuges@complit.umass.edu

Julia Bock, Long Island U., Term: 2009-2010. Email: Julia.Bock@liu.edu

Béla Bodó, Missouri State U., Term: 2009–2010. Email: belabodo@missouristate.edu

* According to our by-laws on January 1, 2011, Emese Ivan, our current VP, will automatically assume the position of the president.

Report from the Treasurer:

Opening balance 12/1/2008	\$2,978.59	
<u>Income:</u>	<u>\$1024.91</u>	
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>\$4003.50</u>	
Expenditures*:		
Central Europeanist meeting at AAASS		\$375.00
Business meeting at AASS		\$122.24
PennyWise Consulting (website)		\$160.00
<u>Bank Service fee</u>		<u>\$ 5.00</u>
<u>Subtotal</u>		<u>\$662.24</u>
Closing balance 12/22/2009	\$3,341.26	

The check for the *article award (\$200.00) was mailed, but has not been cashed yet.

The Book Award:

In 2010, the HSA will be awarding the Book Award. Nominations should be forwarded directly to the Book Prize Committee:

Paul Hanebrink, hanebrin@history.rutgers.edu

Arpad von Klimo, aklimo@zedat.fu-berlin.de

Mark Pittaway, M.D.Pittaway@open.ac.uk

To be eligible for the Book Award the book must be in English and be published in the last three years. To be considered for the article prize in 2011, scholars early in their careers will be given preference.

Three reminders of conference deadlines:

1. The deadline for submitting panel and roundtable proposals for the **2010 AAASS conference is January 15, 2010**. The will be held in Los Angeles California, from Thursday, November 18, to Sunday, November 21, 2010 at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel and Suites. To help create panels we have set up a bulletin board. The link to the bulletin board is: <http://hungarianstudies.info/forum/2009/11/conference-topics/>. Please post your topic and email address in the box so that members can directly contact you.

2. Hungarian Studies Association of Canada (HSAC),

In 2010 the Canadian Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences' Congress will be meeting on the Sir George Williams Campus of Concordia University, in the heart of Montreal, from **May 28 to June 4**. For further information visit the Congress' website: www.congress2010.ca.

Please indicate your intention to attend our conference (and visit Montreal) before the end of the 2009 fall semester giving the title of your proposed paper. In January 2010 you can send in an abstract of your paper along with a short c.v. You should also indicate what audio-visual equipment you will need. You can send these to me, Nándor Dreisziger (chair of the program committee): nandor@kingston.net or to one of the committee's other members: Judith Szapor of Montreal's McGill U. (judith.szapor@mcgill.ca), or Christopher Adam of Ottawa's Carleton U. (christopheradam@sympatico.ca).

3. **35th Annual Conference of the American Hungarian Educators Association (AHEA)** will be held from June 3 – 5, 2010, at the University of Szeged, Hungary. Submission deadline is January 15, 2010. Proposals should consist of an abstract of not more than 250 words; a brief scholarly biography, including degrees, scholarly fields (50-100 words); any audio-visual requirements; and full contact information. Proposals must be submitted as an email attachment (Word only) to the Program Chairs.

Cultural Studies: Louise Vasvári (louise.vasvari@sunysb.edu)

Education: Judith Kesserű Némethy (jn2@nyu.edu)

History: Julia Bock (Julia.Bock@liu.edu)

Literature: Enikő M. Basa (eniko.basa@verizon.net)

Music/Folklore: Kálmán Magyar (magyar@magyar.org) and Judy Olson (JudyOlson@aol.com)

Political Science/Economics: Susan Glanz (glanzs@stjohns.edu)

For more information visit the AHEA website: <http://ahea.net>.



Other, previously unannounced, conferences:

1. A Bridge Too Far? Teaching Common European History, Themes, Perspectives and Levels, 17th **EUROCLIO Annual Conference** and Professional Training Development Course in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, from March 22-28, 2010.

Registration deadline Wednesday, **February 10, 2010**.

More information is at: <http://ac2010.euroclio.eu/joomla/index.php>

2. **1st International Symposium on History Education**. The topics of the symposium are: History education, History of Education, and Historiography. Please visit the web-page, <http://beta.atauni.edu.tr/tarihigitimi> for more information
Deadline for abstracts/proposals: **March 7, 2010**.

3. English and German Nationalist and anti-Semitic Discourse (1871-1945), on November 10-11, 2010, at Queen Mary, University of London

Deadline for abstracts/proposals: **April 15, 2010.**

http://www.sllf.qmul.ac.uk/research/nationalismproject/november_2010_conference.shtml

Contact name: Dr Stefan Baumgarten

Abstracts are invited on topics in the analysis of pre-1945 nationalist, colonialist or anti-Semitic discourse. The conference hopes to foster debate on points of contact between linguistic and historical analyses of ideological discourse.

4. The Conference on the Politics of Fear; Fear of Politics to be held September 15-17, 2010 in Brighton, UK. This interdisciplinary conference seeks to do two things: to describe and analyze the contemporary spheres and roles of fear as it is played out in social, cultural, intellectual and day to day life and to offer ways of escaping those fears. Organized by: Centre for Applied Philosophy, Politics and Ethics (CAPPE), University of Brighton

Deadline for abstracts/proposals: **February 22, 2010.** Website: <http://www.brighton.ac.uk/CAPPE>



Presentations and publications by members:

István Deák reviewed *Tibor Frank's* Double Exile: Migrations of Jewish-Hungarian Professionals Through Germany to the United States, 1919–1945, published by *Peter Lang/Exile Studies Volume 7*, and *Kati Marton's* Enemies of the People: My Family's Journey to America, published by Simon and Schuster, in the November 19, 2009 issue of *The New York Review of Books*.

Tibor Frank, *Double Exile: Migrations of Jewish-Hungarian Professionals Through Germany to the United States, 1919–1945*, published by Peter Lang/Exile Studies Volume 7.

Joseph Held was the translator of *Romanians in Historic Hungary* written by Ambrus Miskolczy and published by East European Monographs.

Nagy Károly, *JÁRATLAN UTAKON, AMERIKAI SZIGETVILÁGBAN*, című estjére Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeumban, December 14, 2009.

Eric Beckett Weaver, 'Say it Softly: Hungarians abroad and the failures of the centre-right in Hungarian elections', in Tomasz Kamusella and Krzysztof Jaskulowski (eds), *Nationalisms Today* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), 71-88.

Stanley B. Winters donated documents of Newark's Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council to the Newark Public Library.

The materials cover the area's social and political history from 1956 to 1966. The core of this unique gift comprises minutes, announcements, news clippings, correspondence, meeting notes, and public statements. Also included is organizational information about the Council: election of officers, block-branch officers and activities. Along with these historical documents, Mr. Winters presented the Library with a generous monetary donation.



In the November 2009 Newsletter I published a website from the Newsnet. Géza Jeszenszky's reaction and reply are below:

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeszenszky Géza [mailto:geza@jeszen.hu]

Sent: Mon 12/7/2009 4:47 AM

To: chnm@gmu.edu

Subject: comment on 1989

Dear Colleagues:

Your site on 1989 was recommended by colleagues; since I was closely involved in the events and I teach it, I looked it up. I am sorry to say that I found it rather superficial, especially deficient concerning Hungary, and not showing how the events were interconnected.

Permit me to send you the outline I used this year teaching the story, and my letter on the subject to the Atlantic Council of the U.S. Attached is my piece on the collapse of communism written for *The Berkshire Encyclopedia*.

Sincerely

Géza Jeszenszky

Professor of History, Corvinus University of Budapest

Foreign Minister of Hungary, 1990-94, Ambassador to the U.S.A., 1998-2002

Week 11

Hungary's Role in the Fall of the Communist Dominoes

The "domino theory" was feared on both sides: 1956, 1968 (Brezhnev Doctrine) - and it did occur in SE Asia after the fall of South Vietnam.

In the mid-1980s "socialism" was in obvious crisis: falling production, rising corruption and crime, heavy pollution, deteriorating health conditions, decreasing population, apathy and cynicism, growing bureaucracy, - while the West was overcoming its internal problems and the electronic revolution started to penetrate the East.

The communist bloc was no longer a colourless, but threatening mass; there were big differences among the states. "Orthodox," or rigid: Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, GDR – against the "reforming" ones: Poland and HU, and partly SU. But the "geopolitical cage" was still a formidable, threatening reality.

Gorbachev (coming from the KGB as the protégée of Andropov) wanted to save the system by controlled change, to make it more effective, to advance its obsolete technology and to enable it to continue the arms race (the "star wars"). Hungary was a testing ground, its feeble attempts at economic reform and its apparently successful agriculture. Openness (glasnost') exposed the depth of the crisis, "restructuring" (perestroika) tried to reduce the Party and to increase the role of elected central and local bodies, also to use the people against the reactionary *nomenklatura*. G. refused to support the Old Guard in the satellite countries, too, which were in crisis.

"Whodunit?" Success has many fathers: Wojtyla, the Polish Pope, who understood the evil nature of communism and inspired not only his countrymen, not only Christians, but a large number of non-Christians, too? Reagan, Mrs. Thatcher with their uncompromising opposition to Communism? But they got on well with the Soviet leaders. Gorbachev? He wanted to save, not to overthrow the system. Kohl

continuing Brandt's "Ostpolitik" and ready to pay for it? Bush in early 1989 deciding to visit Warsaw and Budapest rather than Moscow?

The most effective weapon of the West was prosperity, its consumer goods (esp. the car, the most important status symbol), its pop music, its high and low culture. That won over the citizens of the communist countries, even their leaders became keen on western contacts, scholarships and visits to the department stores. It became obvious that the SU will never catch up with the West, let alone bury it, as promised by Khrushchev in the early sixties. In Poland these ties were frozen following martial law and the Hungarian leaders did not want a similar fate, so in their economic crisis they abandoned the plans for arresting the movement for further change. Also the massive foreign debt owed by HU (and the growing business ties) made the communist leaders interested in survival through change. The old beliefs were totally gone, the desire to make profit in order to have ever more private property was on the increase even in the SU. [A typical joke: "What is socialism? The longest and most painful road from capitalism to capitalism"]

Milton Friedman, Mrs. Thatcher, Kohl and especially the King of Spain, his peaceful transition not hurting the officials of the previous regime, came to inspire the leaders of the modernizing CEE countries. Reagan's "Evil Empire" language and Thatcher's rhetoric appealed to the non-communist "silent majority" and inspired it.

The CSCE follow-up conferences of Madrid, Geneva, Budapest were utilized by the "dissidents" and, in the wake of Poland, alliances were formed between (Jewish) intellectuals, conservative patriots, religious groups and discontented workers.

The dramatic reburial of Imre Nagy (June 16, 1989) was much more than traditional communist "rehabilitation", was not only an internal event, the whole world watched it. In the summer of 1989 the government started the "Round-Table Discussions" with the opposition parties, and by the end of September practically a new constitution, a negotiated, peaceful revolution was completed.

The more enlightened wing of the MSZMP, the old Communist Party, tried to compete with the opposition in the race for capturing the would-be voters and in claiming the legacy of 1956. On June 27 Foreign Minister Gyula Horn, together with his Austrian colleague A. Mock, ceremoniously cut the barbed wire of the Iron Curtain, but crossing that border was still prohibited for the citizens of East Germany.

Between June and December 1989, Hungary played an unprecedented role in the history of the world. The story of the "Pan-European Picnic" of August 19, 1989 has been largely forgotten, although it gave the spark for all the dramatic events of the next five months. What was meant and planned by the Hungarian opposition at the border town of Sopron, a meeting between Austrians, West-Germans and Hungarians, a genuine picnic by the fire and eating roasted bacon, drinking good Austrian and Hungarian wine and chatting amicably, was turned into a sensation by the breakout and escape of some six to eight hundred East Germans. Luckily the Hungarian border guards, who had standing orders to prevent any unauthorized crossing of the border and to shoot those who did not obey, acted in a sensible and human way, they did not use their weapons.

It was the example of these East Germans that prompted tens of thousands of their compatriots to rush to Hungary by train and by their fuming *Trabant* cars. The cartoon of *The Economist* was most telling: two East Germans stand haplessly in front of the Berlin Wall with the notice on it "No Exit. Try Hungary"

Those East German "tourists" were camping out in the parks of Budapest, they were given temporary shelter by religious organizations, by individual Hungarians. There was growing pressure on the Hungarian

government to do something about them. There was no way to turn those Germans back and to repatriate them to East Germany (the "GDR") by the police, by force. The Hungarian opposition parties were demanding their release. The Government had to disregard or renounce the secret treaty with East Germany, which guaranteed that East German citizens would be prevented from escaping to Austria. That situation led to the decision of the Government on September 10 to permit the East Germans to use their passport to leave Hungary via Austria, starting on September 11. That led to the final destabilization of East Germany. The successful escape of tens of thousands of East German citizens made it pointless to keep the Berlin Wall closed. When a reformist GDR leadership decided to open it the people tore the Wall into pieces on Nov. 9.

That was too much for the Czechs to watch: the "velvet revolution" ensued.

A memorial meeting on Nov. 17 turned into a mass demonstration against the system, with the police dispersing it, but continued in the next days, now directed by the Civic Forum formed on Nov. 19 and the Slovak Openness against Violence. Nov. 26: demo with 750,000 people, next day a general strike. On Nov. 29 the government started negotiations with the opposition and in Dec. agreed about a new government of national agreement, headed by the reformist communist Calfa, and the old parliament elected Havel, the "dissident" playwright, provisional President on Dec. 29.

By that time Ceausescu was dead. The violent overthrowing of one of the most disgusting communist dictatorships, that of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu of Romania took place at Christmas. Bulgaria and Albania, like ripened fruits, followed suit rather peacefully. The apparently most open and enlightened communist country, Yugoslavia split into two already in 1990, although largely unnoticed then: the western republics moved towards a western-style democracy with non-communist parties winning free elections, while the Serbs led by Milosevic retained "Socialism" aligning it with nationalism, in the fashion of Hitler's "national socialists."

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in December, 1991

Something similar happened in the Soviet Union: following the failure of the coup of August 1991 only the Baltic States transformed into genuine democracies with an increasingly well-functioning market economy. Russia and the other former Soviet republics were unable to come to full grips with the communist legacy.

The CSCE, detente, Reagan, Thatcher, Bush and of course Gorbachev all contributed to the historic changes, to the victory of the West in the Cold War, but it was the people of Central Europe who took the risks and made good use of the crisis of "Socialism." It was not all heroism; western prosperity, the desire for a better life, the attraction of the consumer goods played a major role in that. Poland and Hungary, the two pioneers of change, pushed the dominoes over.

From: Atlantic Council of the United States [mailto:press@acus.org]

Sent: Friday, November 06, 2009 6:20 PM

To: geza@jeszen.hu

Subject: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to Deliver Keynote Policy Address at Atlantic Council Awards Ceremony in Berlin - Sunday, November 8, 2009



ATLANTIC COUNCIL

November 6, 2009 - For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Peter Cassata - press@acus.org / 202-778-4991 202-778-4991

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to unveil democracy agenda at Atlantic Council awards ceremony Freedom's Challenge dinner in Berlin will commemorate fall of the Wall, honor Walesa and Havel

Washington, D.C. - Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will deliver a major foreign policy address on the administration's new agenda for freedom and democracy promotion at the [Freedom's Challenge](#) dinner and awards ceremony in Berlin on November 8.

In celebration of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Atlantic Council will present Freedom Awards to former Presidents Lech Walesa and Vaclav Havel, honoring their struggles for democracy in Poland and the former Czechoslovakia. Freedom Awards will also be accepted by Secretary Clinton on behalf of the American people, Supreme Allied Commander Europe Admiral James Stavridis on behalf of NATO troops, Vice Chancellor Guido Westerwelle on behalf of the German people and Mayor Klaus Wowereit on behalf of the citizens of Berlin.

The Council honored former U.S. President George H.W. Bush and former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl with its Distinguished International Leadership Award in April for their historic roles twenty years ago.

Frederick Kempe, President and CEO of the Atlantic Council, said, "Presidents Walesa and Havel sparked a wave of democratic revolutions across Eastern Europe. Today, the United States and its allies must continue to stand up for democracy and freedom through constructive leadership and cooperation; the Atlantic Council Freedom Awards proudly honor those who helped make the fall of the Berlin Wall a reality."

Held at Berlin's Hotel Adlon, the event will be attended by government, military, business and cultural leaders from across the Atlantic Alliance. Former U.S. Secretary of State and Atlantic Council Board member Dr. Henry Kissinger will introduce Secretary Clinton. Former U.S. National Security Advisors Brent Scowcroft and Zbigniew Brzezinski, respectively chairman and member of the Council's International Advisory Board, will also be present.

President Barack Obama contributed to an Atlantic Council publication, *Freedom's Challenge*, which will be launched at the ceremony to provide analysis on the enduring significance of the Berlin Wall's fall, German reunification, the peaceful end of the Cold War, the expansion of NATO and the spread of Euro-Atlantic values. The publication features contributions from leading Atlanticists, including Atlantic Council Chairman Senator Chuck Hagel, Zbigniew Brzezinski, George H.W. Bush, General James Jones, Frederick Kempe, Helmut Kohl, General Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, Lord Robertson, Brent Scowcroft, Horst Teltschik and Margaret Thatcher.

Founded in 1961, the Atlantic Council aims to renew the Atlantic Community for 21st-century global challenges through constructive U.S.-European leadership and engagement in world affairs. The Council embodies a network of policy, academic and business leaders who foster transatlantic ties through non-partisan and cross-national discussions and studies.

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Journalists interested in covering the event are required to register by e-mail with the Press Office of the U.S. Embassy in Berlin at press@usembassy.de no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, November 6, 2009, stating name, affiliation and contact details (including cell phone number). Please note that for reasons of space, access on the day will not be possible without prior registration and may have to be limited. Embassy Press Office staff will contact all journalists who submit credential applications to confirm that attendance is possible and to provide details of the program and access requirements.

Atlantic Council of the United States - 1101 15th Street, NW, 11th Floor - Washington, D.C. 20005 - www.acus.org

My response:

I am very pleased to learn about the ceremony in Berlin and about the awards, especially those given to former Presidents Havel and Walesa. On the other hand I am saddened that no Hungarian was found worthy of such an award, and Hungary is not even mentioned in your communiqué. That is an unforgivable distortion of history.

As a reminder I send you a part of my address I'll give on November 9 at the NATO School at Oberammergau. In that I give a summary of Hungary's seminal role in the demolition of the Berlin Wall and the fall of all the European communist dominoes.

Whereas in Hungary several people (both from the side of the government and the opposition) could be singled out as deserving special recognition for the release of the East Germans, one person should not be forgotten: the late József Antall, Head of the Hungarian Democratic Forum and Prime Minister from 1990 until his untimely death in December, 1993. He initiated the highly important Visegrad Cooperation, and through that the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, thus ending the Cold War with the victory of the free world. I hope that at least somebody will mention Hungary and its brave leader, Antall, during the ceremonies.

Sincerely

Géza Jeszenszky

Foreign Minister of Hungary, 1990-94, Ambassador to the U.S.A., 1998-2002

By the 1980s a new generation emerged in Hungary who, having heard something about the hidden past, wanted to know more about it. Films, university lectures, underground publications gave more than hints: facts about the crimes of Communism, about the Gulag Archipelago, about the Hungarian victims of communist repression. The "war cry" of the growing opposition was 1956. A Committee for Historical Justice was formed; it demanded the exhumation of the executed leaders of the 1956 Hungarian revolution, Imre Nagy and his fellow martyrs, from their unmarked graves, and also a new trial for them. In May 1988 Kádár, the man who betrayed the revolution in 1956 and, becoming a Soviet puppet, introduced terrible

reprisals, was sent into retirement. The cover page of *The Economist* showed a truckload of 1956 Hungarian freedom-fighters with the caption "It is Hungary Again," and that was fully justified. Soon the first political parties challenging the old order were formed: Fidesz (Young Democrats) and the Hungarian Democratic Forum), followed a few month later by the Alliance of Free Democrats. All three parties swore by the principles of the '56 revolution. For us 1989 was 1956 under more promising external circumstances.

In February 1989 Imre Pozsgay, the popular leader of the umbrella organization "Patriotic People's Front," made a stunning statement: 1956 was not a counter-revolution but a popular uprising. The dramatic, solemn reburial of Imre Nagy and his fellow-martyrs on June 16, 1989, was much more than a traditional communist "rehabilitation"; it was an international event. The whole world watched it, many foreign dignitaries attended it. It was a unique expression of national unity, the reform-leaning government of Miklós Németh provided security, and some members of the government (all members of the communist party) were included in the guards of honor standing by the six coffins. The boldest speech was given by the young leader of Fidesz, Viktor Orbán, calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. That issue was considered a taboo; even the Polish Solidarnosc – aware of "the geopolitical cage" - had not raised it. The burial was much more than paying homage to the heroes and martyrs of 1956, it was a call for radical change. It was also a call for Kádár, the traitor of 1956, to face his responsibility. In less than three weeks he was dead.

In the summer of 1989 the government started the "Round-Table Discussions" with the opposition parties, and by the end of September an agreement was signed on the complete transformation of the political system. In the following weeks the Parliament passed a series of cardinal laws, practically adopted a new constitution, and thus a negotiated, peaceful revolution was made. All the aims of the 1956 revolutions were met or were on the right course to be realized.

In Poland the semi-free election held in June 1989 resulted in the overwhelming victory of the opposition Solidarnosc. With the appointment of the first non-communist since 1948, Tadeusz Mazowiecki as Polish Prime Minister in August 1989, and the September agreement in Hungary on the peaceful winding down of the communist system, it was still only those two traditional pro-Western states where the days of communism were apparently numbered. In December 1989 the European Community initiated economic help for the two reformist countries. The name, PHARE, (Poland and Hungary – Assistance with Restructuring the Economy) indicated that. But the wind of change, also deliberately blown from the two, soon led to the collapse of the whole artificial edifice called "Socialism" like a house of cards. Why and how did it happen?

A turning point in history

Excerpts from a recent interview in the BBC: "in March 1989, Hungarian Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth told the Soviet leader he planned to dismantle the barbed wire along the border, as it was rusting and the replacement would be costly. Mr Gorbachev reacted calmly and said border security was Mr Nemeth's problem, not his. The Hungarian prime minister took it as a green light. But could things have gone differently? 'Absolutely, we had worked out a lot of scenarios,' Mr Nemeth told me. 'For me, the most important thing in those days was how I judged the position of Gorbachev in power. If he's being toppled, kicked out of power, that would have been a different story, I can tell you.'"

The so-called Pan-European Picnic was planned for Aug. 19, 1989 at the Austrian-Hungarian border upon the initiative of the opposition parties, but was endorsed as patron by Otto von Habsburg (then a Member of the EP) and the leading Hungarian reformist communist, Minister Pozsgay. It was originally meant only as a symbolic meeting between Germans, Austrians and Hungarians by a fire: a call for a Europe where borders can be crossed easily. At 3 o'clock in the afternoon the organizers, including Wallburga von

Habsburg, arrived and a temporary gate was to be opened in what was still a border fence made of barbed wire, when the unexpected happened. I quote from a recent article. “Lt-Col Arpad Bella, who was in charge of the Hungarian border post, saw a crowd of men, women, even children rushing towards him. Before his eyes, the first wave of East German refugees pushed through a barbed wire-topped wooden gate into the West. Some cried, laughed, or embraced each other. Others kept running because they could not believe they were in Austria. Without clear instructions from his superiors, Lt-Col Bella decided not to shoot. ‘It was terrible for me!’ he said. ‘Those two hundred people were just ten meters away from freedom. So I took the decision that I thought was best for Hungary and for my own conscience.’”

The breakout and the successful escape to the West was a sensation which filled the western media. The news prompted tens of thousands of “tourists” from the GDR to come to Hungary, hoping that they, too, could follow their compatriots. I recall a cartoon from the Economist: two people stand in front of the Berlin wall sign on it: “No exit, try Hungary!” That unmanageable mass of people camping in the garden of the West German Embassy in Budapest, but also in parks, loitering in the border area, compelled the still communist Hungarian Government to start talks both with the *Bundesrepublik* and with the Soviet leadership. Gorbachev told that it was up to the Hungarian government what to do. The East German government protested and demanded Hungary to repatriate all those East German citizens, referring to a bilateral agreement. Hungary had recently signed the Geneva Convention on refugees, not thinking of Germans but of Hungarians escaping from Ceausescu’s Romania, and that came in handy. Finally on September 10 the Hungarian government decided to permit all East Germans to leave Hungary through the border with Austria. At least seventy thousand left in a few days. By that time many East Germans stopped in Czechoslovakia and demanded similar treatment. The Prague government gave in and opened its western border. All that had a tremendous impact upon the population of the GDR. The *Neues Forum*, modeled on the Hungarian Democratic Forum, now emerged as an umbrella organization demanding changes. The October visit of Gorbachev was discouraging for the dictator Honecker. The successful escape of tens of thousands of GDR citizens made it pointless to keep the Berlin Wall closed. When a new, reformist leadership in East Berlin decided to open it, the people smashed the Wall into pieces on Nov. 9.

That was too much for the Czechs to watch: a memorial meeting on Nov. 17 turned into a mass demonstration against the system, with the police dispersing it, but the demonstrations continued in the following days, now directed by the Civic Forum formed on Nov. 19 and the Slovak Openness against Violence. On Nov. 29 the Prague government started negotiations with the opposition and in December agreed to form a new government of national unity, headed by the reformist communist Calfa, while the old parliament elected Havel provisional President on Dec. 29. That was the “velvet revolution.”

By that time Ceausescu, the Romanian “Conducator” was dead. In December, a Hungarian Calvinist pastor at Timișoara/Temesvár refused to give up his parish, and the people, both Hungarians and Romanians, demonstrated in his support. Bloody reprisals followed, but a mass rally in Bucharest, convened by Ceausescu, turned into a demonstration against him and ended in the helicopter escape of the dreaded dictator. He was soon captured and summarily executed. The Council of National Liberation was headed by his former close ally, Iliescu, nevertheless the desire of the people to abandon communism was genuine. Bulgaria changed more gradually (Zhivkov was replaced on Nov. 10), and Albania in two steps by 1991. The failed coup of August ’91 in Moscow was just an aftermath, completed by the restoration of the independence of the Baltic States in September, and the break-up of the Soviet Union itself in December.

I think it needs no further argument to say that there is a direct connection between the Hungary of 1956 and the Hungary of 1989. But that is not enough. 1989 was undoubtedly a turning point in world history. Both world wars and the Cold War had started in Central Europe, this time it was where the Cold War came to an end. 1989 was not inevitable, just as the Soviet seizure of the eastern half of Europe between 1944 and 1947 was not unavoidable. The end of the Soviet colonial empire was indeed inevitable, as all empires

disappear eventually, but it could have come much later and under far less peaceful circumstances. The transformation in Poland and Hungary was the model followed by the other communist-dominated countries. By May 1990 most were already free, and the Age of Fear and Lies, the Age of the Stupid and Vicious Party Apparatchiks, of the Irrational Command Economy, the Age of the Cultural Wasteland was over. The Poles and the Hungarians made the greatest contribution to winning the Cold War, without a shot being fired. But I think 1989 belongs not only to a few countries and their leaders. As a close American observer, Robert Hutchings stated: "That the Cold War ended peacefully and on Western terms was an achievement without parallel in modern history." The changes were not caused by U.S. or western policies, "they were deeply rooted in history and driven by the heroic efforts of democratic opposition leaders in Central and Eastern Europe." (Hutchings, Robert L.: *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War, 1989-1992*. Baltimore and London, 1997. pp. 1-2.)

Géza Jeszenszky:

The Collapse of the Soviet Empire and Communism

The sudden death of an ideology and an empire

Entering 1989 the Soviet Union and its informal but very real empire was already facing serious economic difficulties and a lack of confidence about attaining the ambitious aims of its official philosophy, called Marxism-Leninism: the creation of a new socio-political order based on communal property and abundance. However, no politician or analyst foresaw that by the end of the year all the communist one-party states of Central and South-eastern Europe would renounce dictatorship and switch to political pluralism. In 1990 they all held free elections won by parties opposed to the communists, discarded even the vestiges of Soviet-type Socialism, and started restoring capitalism, i.e. the market economy, while proclaiming their aim to return to the basic values of the West and the institutions built upon them. On 1 July 1991 the Warsaw Pact, the political-military organization of the Soviet Empire was dissolved by common consent, approved by Gorbachev, the President of the Soviet Union. On 25 December the Soviet Union itself was officially dissolved and its member states became internationally recognized sovereign, independent countries, all professing a commitment to political pluralism and the market economy. Never in human history did an empire disappear so suddenly and without bloodshed, and no profound political, economic and social changes took place in such a short period over such a large territory.

The causes of the collapse of the communist system are complex, they can be listed under the following headings: inherent or systemic, fundamental or substantive, incidental and immediate.

Inherent faults

The Soviet experiment of turning Karl Marx' (1818-1883) vision into reality was doomed from the outset. George F. Kennan argued already in 1947 "that Soviet power, like the capitalist world of its conception, bears within it the seeds of its own decay, and that the sprouting of these seeds is well advanced. ("X" article in *Foreign Affairs*, 1947)." "Of all the reason for the collapse of communism, the most basic is that it was an intrinsically nonviable, indeed impossible, project from the beginning. [...] And the perverse genius of Marxism is to present an unattainable utopia as an infallibly scientific enterprise (Malia in Edwards 2000, 71)." In pursuit of the attractive aims of utopian communism ("from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs! - Marx in his Critique of the Gotha Program, 1874)" "the Communists violated everything we know from anthropology that human beings, even in the most primitive circumstances, desire and practice. They virtually outlawed religion, property, and free speech, which are common to all societies (Pipes in Edwards 2000, 46)."

Right from the beginning the system was built on intimidation, repression and terror inflicted upon the whole society – measures and methods that can work only temporarily, because people never genuinely acquiesce in them. The strongest appeal of communism for the poorer section of society was the promise of

improvements in their standard of living, first by exploiting the well to do, and eventually by creating abundance in all material goods. But an economic system that banned all private property, and stifled individual initiatives, was unable to improve living conditions. For more backward national communities, primarily for the Russians, but to a lesser extent for all people living in the eastern half of Europe, communism held out the hope of catching up with the advanced West and even overtaking it. But with growing prosperity in the West this promise evaporated; and by the 1980s hardly any in the communist world believed in a bright economic future.

Fundamental shortcomings

Lenin and his Bolshevik party, having attained power in a coup on 7 November (25 October, old style) 1917, sincerely believed that communism would quickly spread to the rest of the world, but were realist enough to know that “power grows out of the barrel of a gun,” so they tried to advance the world revolution also by war. Initially the Bolsheviks owed much their victory to the non-Russian population of the Czarist Empire, for whom they promised self-determination and the right to secede. By 1922, however, the Bolsheviks brought most territories of the former Russian Empire under their control, and established the Soviet Union. Nominally it was a federation, but in fact it was a strongly centralized state run by Russians or people assimilated to the Russians, like the Georgian Djughashvili, assuming the name Stalin. Once he eliminated all his potential rivals in the “Great Terror,” and defeated Hitler, Stalin directed his Red Army, relying on a few local communists, to impose the communist system on all the countries in the eastern half of Europe, which came under Soviet control by the end of World War II. But “Marxism-Leninism was an alien doctrine imposed on the region by an imperial power whose rule was culturally repugnant to the dominated peoples (Brzezinski in Edwards, 21).” The “captive nations” made serious efforts to escape from the oppressive system (Hungary with the uprising in 1956, Czechoslovakia with the “Prague Spring” in 1968, and Poland on several occasions), but the armed intervention of the Soviet Union and the “Brezhnev Doctrine” assured continued Soviet domination – for the time being. These interventions shattered many illusions about Soviet communism in the West and in the “Third World,” discrediting the slogans, which were propagated by paid agents and credulous intellectuals.

After the death of Stalin (1953) many of his crimes were revealed by Khrushchev, his successor, and cautious economic reforms started. Détente apparently signaled the end of plans to launch an invasion of Western Europe, but in Latin America, Africa and Asia Soviet policies continued to spread revolution and the doctrines of communism. That, however, put a great strain on the flagging Soviet economy. With the easing of terror intellectual opposition grew, helped by the publicity given to it by the western media, especially radio broadcasts, notwithstanding the jamming of them. The writer Solzhenitsyn, the physicist Sakharov (the “father” of the Soviet “H” bomb), the historian Amalrik and many others defied persecution, prison and psychiatric abuse, enlightening the public inside and outside the Soviet Empire about the crimes and fallacies of “the system.” Despite recurring campaigns to wipe out all dissent (the latest in the mid-1980s by ex-KGB chief turned Soviet leader Andropov) the desire for freedom proved impossible to restrain.

From the 1970s on an increasing number of scholars and researchers, mainly from more open satellite countries like Poland and Hungary, were able to travel to the West, thanks to scholarships and academic exchanges sponsored by the Ford Foundation, the Fulbright Commission and other American institutions. They were followed by economic bosses and even by party apparatchiks, widening business and improving political relations. These visitors became aware of the superiority of the West both in the quantity and the quality of goods, a stark contrast to the empty stores and general scarcity typical of their own countries. Prosperity proved to be one of the most powerful weapons of the West in the later phase of the Cold War. The affluence of the West became obvious to the everyday citizens, too, in the countries closer to the Iron Curtain -- a wall that could prevent them escaping, but could not keep away the images broadcast by western television. With the coming of satellites the communist blockade of the mind was gone.

The West also impressed the population of the communist bloc, especially but not exclusively the young, by its culture, films, fashion and especially pop music. While rock’n’roll was still banned throughout the

Soviet Empire in the 1950s, later it penetrated the walls and the barbed wire. America was now admired in the Soviet bloc not so much as the land of the pioneers, the noble native Indians and the skyscrapers, but as the home of the best music and the most attractive film stars. Starting in the late 1970s bands appeared on the Soviet and East-Central European stages, often playing music with an unmistakably political, even rebellious message.

Incidental causes

Marxism declared the victory of communism as historically inevitable, but a system based on coercion, economic irrationality and incompetent leadership was bound to fail on the long run. There were also quite a few providential incidents, mainly related to individuals, which helped undermining the system and brought closer its demise.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was meant by the Soviets to consolidate and legalize the division of Europe, but it backfired. The signing of the Helsinki Final Act and the follow-up conferences gave a boost to dissent all over the communist bloc, by “firmly entrenching human rights on the diplomatic agenda (Kovrig 1991, 167).” The election of a Pole, Karol Wojtyla as Pope in 1978, electrified not only his restless compatriots but all people in Central Europe. He spoke out for human dignity and eternal values, challenging the very foundations of Communism. His visit to Poland in 1979 undoubtedly contributed to the birth of a genuine workers’ movement, the ten million strong Solidarity Free Trade Union, led by the charismatic personality of an electrician in the Lenin Shipyard at Gdansk, Lech Walesa.

Most political leaders in Western Europe (except British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher) acquiesced in the division of Europe, and did not even dream of „winning” the Cold War. In the 1970s the United States started to venture beyond merely containing the Soviet threat, when two foreign-born national security advisers, Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski, initiated differentiation within the Soviet bloc, rewarding any country that diverted a bit from the Soviet line. “Most Favored Nation” status and, as a concomitant, increasing exports to the U.S. was a real carrot for the command economies always in dire need of convertible currency. Polish-born Brzezinski advised President Carter to show at least as much interest in Eastern Europe as the Soviets were showing towards Latin America. The insincerity of Soviet slogans about détente were exposed by their increasing activity in the “Third World,” building up their fleet, commissioning a large number of nuclear submarines, and by the deployment of medium range SS-20 missiles in the western region of the Soviet Union and (unannounced) in the Central European satellites. The response of NATO was deploying the newly developed cruise missiles and Pershing-II rockets on the territory of their West European allies, disregarding the protests of a large number of well-meaning but gullible people. The election of Reagan in 1979 as President placed a man at the helm of the U.S. who had strong convictions about communism, and he undiplomatically called the Soviet Union “the Evil Empire,” which it really was in the eyes of the peoples whose misfortune brought them under its control. Reagan did not like the doctrine of “Mutual Assured Destruction,” the prospect that in case of a nuclear war fought between the two superpowers, both sides had the capability to destroy the other, even after suffering a first blow. Being aware of the great strides the U.S. had made in high tech weapons as well as in computer and space technology, he ordered work on SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative), to build a protective shield over the U.S. so that incoming enemy missiles and their nuclear warhead could be destroyed in space, never reaching their targets in the U.S. That was a project the Soviet Union was unable to answer. Its economy was incapable to bear the costs of this new phase of the arms race, and Soviet scientists lacked the technology to meet this challenge. That, and not Soviet concern for the well-being of the citizens, compelled the Soviet Politburo to seek new ways to make the Soviet economy perform better, in order to keep pace with the U.S. in the arms race and especially in space technology.

The man who was expected to reform the Soviet system without changing its basic nature was Mikhail Gorbachev, a man raised in the Communist Party apparatus and the KGB. He was elected Secretary General (de facto leader) in 1985, at the relatively young age of 54. By that time "socialism" was in an obvious crisis all over the Soviet Empire: production figures were falling (or at best stagnating), there was rising

corruption and crime, rampant alcoholism and heavy pollution led to deteriorating health conditions and decreasing life expectancy. The most serious nuclear incident of history, the meltdown at the Chernobyl plant in 1986, the efforts to keep it secret, and the catastrophic consequences revealed the weaknesses of the Soviet system. The mood of the population was characterized by apathy and cynicism, people were fed up with the ever growing bureaucracy, and with the extravagant lifestyle of the Party apparatus, the “new ruling class.” The falling birth-rate of the Russian half of the population was upset by the increasing number and proportion of the non-Slavs, particularly the Islamic Central Asians, but that was rather alarming. At the same time the West was overcoming its internal problems, the militant wing of the New Left, the terrorist “Red Brigades,” were brought under control, and the electronic revolution started to penetrate the East. Gorbachev hoped to save the system by controlled change, to make it more effective, to advance its obsolete technology and to maintain its status as a superpower. His much acclaimed “openness” (glasnost’) exposed the depth of the crisis, before the Soviet public and before the whole world. The other device, “restructuring” (perestroika), tried to reduce the influence of the incompetent, corrupt and increasingly senile Party leadership and to increase the role of elected central and local bodies (in 1988 he arranged for contested elections for a new legislature called Congress of People’s Deputies), in order to use them against the reactionary *nomenklatura*, so as to build up a new Party, completely loyal to the personality and ideas of the new Soviet leader, soon to assume title of President of the Soviet Union. People in Western Europe were elated to see such an enlightened Soviet leader, especially when he started a “peace offensive” by unilaterally reducing his armed forces in Central Europe, and recognizing the right of every country (by implication also of those in the Soviet bloc) to choose their own political course.

The immediate cause: Poland and Hungary pushing over the communist dominoes

Undoubtedly the most effective weapon of the West in the later phase of the Cold War was prosperity, its consumer goods, especially the car, the most important status symbol. That won over the citizens of all the communist countries, even their leaders became keen on western contacts, scholarships, and visits to the department stores. It became obvious that the Soviet Union would never catch up with the West, let alone bury it, as promised by Khrushchev in the early sixties.

It was against that background that Poland and Hungary, two nations who had already defied communism and Soviet domination in 1956, and were ahead of all other members of the bloc in tolerating diversions from communist orthodoxy, bending to popular pressure, introduced measures which went much further than any previous attempt at change.

In Poland since 1956 the strong Catholic Church was no longer persecuted, the peasants were allowed to keep their private farms, and limited cultural freedom was tolerated. There were repeated local riots against food price rises, culmination in July 1980 in a massive strike in the coastal town of Gdansk. Its outcome was a genuine working class movement (the dream of Marx), the Solidarity Free Trade Union. The authorities were compelled to recognize it when its membership rose to ten million in a country having then 36 million inhabitants. This was rightly termed a “self-limiting revolution”, since its avowed aim was not to overthrow the hated regime but to improve the living conditions, and to guarantee the right of the workers to strike. Walesa proved not only a charismatic but also a sensible leader, balancing between radicalism and compromise. This “dual power” lasted for one and a half years. The Soviet Union did consider military intervention, but with the war in Afghanistan and the need for European technological and humanitarian aid, that was not feasible. The alternative was martial law introduced on 13 December 1981, planned and carried out by General (by then Prime Minister and party leader) Jaruzelski. This was indeed “war on Polish society,” with Solidarity banned and 10,000 in detention, but was far from being a repetition of the brutal repression of the Hungarians in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. Western sanctions (prompted by the U.S.) hit the economy and especially the party cadres. Finally a compromise was reached between the communist leadership and the still banned Solidarity leaders at the roundtable discussions in 1989, leading to the “semi-free elections” in June which were won by Solidarity. On August 24, 1989 President Jaruzelski felt compelled to appoint Mazowiecki, a non-communist Solidarity adviser as Prime Minister. Poland immediately started a return to the market economy.

Since the mid-1960s the repression in Hungary was eased and feeble economic reforms were introduced. Elements of the market and some private initiatives, especially in agriculture, were permitted. Gorbachev, whose earlier responsibility was agriculture, found that promising. With economic stagnation and with prices starting to reflect real costs, the Hungarian leaders had recourse to massive borrowing in order to prevent a decline in the standard of living. By the end of the 1980s foreign debt owed by Hungary amounted 21 billion dollars for a population of ten million. Growing business ties with the West made the Hungarian communist leaders interested in survival through change. The example of Spain, where a peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy took place, not hurting the officials of the previous regime, came to inspire the leaders of the modernizing Central and East European countries. The CSCE follow-up conferences of Madrid, Geneva, and Budapest were utilized by the Hungarian "dissidents," too, who openly criticized the regime, and a kind of alliance was formed between them, the conservative patriots, religious groups and discontented workers. Kádár, the party leader who betrayed the revolution in 1956 and was responsible for the subsequent repression, but later became a cautious reformer, was replaced in May 1988. The leader of the 1956 revolution, I. Nagy and his fellow-martyrs were given a moving re-burial on 16 June 1989 - attended by the world media, inspiring also the neighboring countries. Round-table talks started between the communist leadership and the by now legally recognized opposition parties. President George H. Bush gave strong encouragement to the movement for change by visiting Poland and Hungary in July 1989. By September the political talks resulted in an agreement changing the constitution, restoring a multi-party democracy and scheduling free elections for spring, 1990.

A social event organized by opposition parties in Hungary for 19 August 1989, the "Pan-European Picnic" was utilized by close to a thousand East German citizens to escape through that temporary hole in the Iron Curtain. That prompted tens of thousands of their compatriots to come to Hungary, hoping they, too, could leave for the West. Pressed by that crowd, also by the political opposition and by the Federal Republic, the Hungarian government announced on 10 September 1990 that the citizens of the "German Democratic Republic" would be permitted to cross the border and leave for the West. On 23 October, 1989, 33 years after the ill-fated Hungarian Revolution started, the Republic was proclaimed, replacing the "People's Republic."

In the GDR an umbrella organization demanding changes, *Neues Forum*, emerged and in mass demonstrations demanded changes and the right to visit their fellow Germans in the Federal Republic. Gorbachev declined to help to East German leadership. The successful escape of tens of thousands of East Germans made it pointless to keep the Berlin Wall closed. When a new, reformist leadership decided to open it, the people tore the Wall into pieces on 9 November 1989. That monstrosity, the symbol of the division of Europe, was gone, and a new democratic coalition was formed in Berlin, preparing the way for the reunification of Germany.

All that was too much for the Czechs to watch passively, and a series of mass demonstrations in Prague in late November led to the "velvet revolution" directed by the Civic Forum and by the Slovak Openness against Violence. On 29 November the communists started negotiations with the opposition and agreed to form a new government of national unity, headed by a reformist communist, while the parliament elected the well-know dissident playwright, Vaclav Havel, provisional President on 29 December 1989.

By that time the dreaded Romanian dictator, Ceausescu was dead. In mid-December bloody reprisals followed protests against the removal of a popular and outspoken Hungarian Calvinist pastor in the southwestern town of Timisoara. A mass rally called by the dictator in Bucharest turned against him and ended in his escape by helicopter from his palace. After widespread fighting between his security forces and the insurgents Ceausescu and his wife were captured and summarily executed. A Council of National Liberation, headed by a former close associate of the dictator, Iliescu, was formed.

Under far less dramatic circumstances Bulgaria, too, changed, Zivkov, the long-time party boss was replaced on 10 November 1989 by a reformist communist. The most closed and self-isolated communist country, Albania, also discarded communism in two steps by the end of 1991.

The aftermath: the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union

Half-hearted economic and legal changes brought the Soviet economy almost to a standstill in 1990, its former satellites were moving towards the West as fast as they could, and called for the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. All the 15 Soviet republics pressed for decentralization, and the Baltic republics demanded full independence. In June 1991 Russia elected its own President, the popular radical reformist Yeltsin, and he demanded full sovereignty. The hard-liners, probably with the connivance of Gorbachev, answered by a coup on 19 August 1991, trying to restore central authority, but the people of Moscow, led by Yeltsin, took to the streets and the *coup* collapsed. The Communist Party was banned, the Baltic States declared their independence, and the other republics soon followed suit. Gorbachev was sent into retirement, and on 25 December the red flag, the symbol of communism, was lowered from the Kremlin.

The communist utopia, once firing the imagination of millions in search of a better world, but causing enormous suffering and the violent death of tens of millions of innocent victims, ended fully discredited. The only good thing that can be said about it is that its downfall did not claim more lives. Contrary to Marx' predictions it was not the state that withered away but Marxist communism.

Perspectives for the U.S. following from the end of communism

The disappearance of the communist bloc meant not only liberation for hundreds of millions of people, it also left the U.S. as the sole superpower. Is it true that it was "not just the end of the Cold War, or a passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government"? (Fukuyama 1989, 2) Did that mean the elimination of future wars in a new "Pax Americana"? President George H. Bush confidently announced the coming of a "New World Order," where the noble principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations will finally prevail, guaranteed by the authority of the U.S.

The new dangers, however, soon became manifest. The elimination or just the control of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological ones) proved impossible, and their use by rogue states or by small groups of terrorists could not be excluded. Old and new infectious diseases as well as environmental and climatic hazards also faced the post-communist world. Nor were relatively smaller "local wars" made impossible, and soon such wars, occasionally taking the proportion of genocide, appeared in the Balkans and in Africa. The breakup of Yugoslavia and the inability of the European institutions to end it showed that without military intervention led by the U.S. such national, ethnic conflicts cannot be brought to an end. The upsurge of violence in the Middle East showed that even the full engagement of the U.S., trying to be "an honest broker" under President Clinton, was not enough to bring the opponents to a compromise. The "peace dividend," a massive reduction in military expenditure, also proved illusory. The new threats needed new, even more sophisticated and more expensive weapons as well as soldiers trained for new types of war.

The solidarity of the Atlantic Alliance was strong as long as the Soviet Union presented a common danger, and for Europe a more direct one. The subsequent instability on the territory of the former Soviet Union and in the Balkans helped the preservation of NATO and its enlargement with several members of the one-time Warsaw Pact. While some Europeans feared that the U.S. might fall back to isolationism, others thought that the European Union should disentangle itself from what they called the American "hyper-power" and emerge as an independent superpower, even as a rival.

The terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September 2001 shattered the belief that the territory of the U.S. was not vulnerable, terrorism came to threaten every country. Many people drew the conclusion that the pre-1990 bipolar world was more stable, because the unruly states and groups were under control. It was forgotten that during the Cold War nuclear confrontation, with all its terrible consequences, was a real possibility. Now terrorism brought together the old enemies of the Cold War: the U.S., Russia and China. The "evil Empire" was replaced by an extremely dangerous but less manageable and more irresponsible "axis of Evil," at least according to a large part of the American body politic.

Be as it may, many Europeans, and particularly "the New Europe," the countries of Central Europe, are remaining firm "Atlanticists," committed to the maintenance and strength of NATO and its leading power,

the U.S. Based on their terrible experiences in the 20th century, they are convinced that all the new threats to peace, stability and prosperity can be answered only jointly, under the leadership of the U.S. They agree that “the only real alternative to American leadership is international anarchy.” (Brzezinski 1997) But in order to overcome the new dangers the U.S. must regain the respect and sympathy of the world, which can be attained only if “hard power” – military, economic and political strength - is matched by “soft power,” diplomacy, genuine partnership and intellectual excellence.

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Susan

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