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WORDS, DEEDS AND PLANTED SEEDS: THE LESSONS AND LEGACIES FROM THE END OF THE COLD WAR FOR 2017

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JCSP 43

Exercise Solo Flight

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INTRODUCTION

The opening of the Berlin Wall, itself a consequence of a highly unlikely series of events, set in motion subsequent events of enormous reach and import. Although an end to the division of Germany had not been on Gorbachev's agenda, the developments of 9 November suddenly put it there. Other leaders also had to reassess their priorities and to decide swiftly on their next steps. It was as if a starter's gun had suddenly signalled the beginning of a race that no world leader had been expecting to run: the race to define the political structure of post-Cold War Europe.

- Mary Elise Sarotte – *The Collapse*¹.

On the question of negotiation with the Soviets on German membership of NATO posed by Chancellor Kohl: "What worries me is talk that Germany must not stay in NATO. To hell with that. We prevailed and they didn't. We can't let the Soviets clutch victory from the jaws of defeat."

- President G H W Bush, at the Washington and Camp David Summit, 1990.²

The end of the Cold War saw the beginning of a unipolar era, a period of unequivocal peace, the end of history, and the collapse of the great evil. It was an unexpected result for the West and a win for the United States, but to paraphrase former Chinese premier Zhou Enlai, it may be too soon to appreciate the overall impact.³ The benefits of victory may have been temporary; today's American leadership feel under threat militarily, economically and informationally as the only superpower in a world where, owing to globalisation and the information age, attacks from non-state actors happen from greater range, at no-notice, with costly results. Britain after 1945 offers a similar historical comparison; despite being victorious, within 25 years it had lost superpower status and most of its empire. Given America's posturing as triumphant

¹ Mary Elise Sarotte, *The Collapse – The Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall*, (Basic Books, a Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2014) p. 169.

² Svetlana Savranskaya and Thomas Blanton, *The Last Superpower Summits – Gorbachev, Reagan and Bush – Conversations that Ended the Cold War*, (National Security Archive Fund Inc., Central European University Press, 2016), p. 576.

³ It should be noted that even this quote when speaking to Nixon in 1972 is disputed; there are those who say Enlai was really referring to the events of May 1968 not the French Revolution of 1789. Irrespective of this, the attribution of meaning to Enlai's description of Chinese longer-term political thinking is the intended meaning for this paper and the coincidence of attributed meaning, rather than perhaps actual meaning, will be explored throughout. [Link to historytoday.com](http://historytoday.com)

victors of the Cold War⁴, it is a useful time, if too early to be conclusive, to review the situation from a perspective of events from 1989-1991. This will provide analysis of the legacy of words and deeds as guidance for future policy makers to enable understanding their meaning today. This second part may not stand the test of time but will provide a link between current events and the end of the Cold War as one of many contributing factors.

President Putin's Resurgent Russia⁵ is NATO's alliteration of choice when describing its most tangible threat today. Despite the uncertainty of our congested, contested and connected⁶ world and the ever-present Russian enemy, this was not inevitable. The opportunity for Russia to emerge from behind the Iron Curtain, hang up its title as NATO's enemy and unify Europe did occur, albeit briefly. Debates exploring the end of the Cold War, limited in this paper to 1989-1991, often centre on whether Western leaders made *promises* about NATO expansion to the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and America's subsequent triumphalism. Putin refers to this as the greatest mistake in Soviet history,⁷ yet here was an opportunity to change the world. Hands were shaken, photos taken and the future European architecture was discussed, but it was not entirely successful. Researching this paper revealed elements today which are similar to those experienced during the Cold War: increasing border tension in Eastern Europe⁸; Middle East proxy war; changing spheres of influence among Russia's neighbouring

⁴ Best summarised by President Bush in this paper's second opening quote.

⁵ *The War in Georgia, Russia Resurgent* (The Economist, 14 August 2008), [Link](#)

⁶ 5 Cs used to describe future warfare: Congested, Cluttered, Contested, Connected, Constrained, *Future Character of Conflict – Strategic Trends Programme*, (MOD, DCDC, p. 20-25). [Link](#)

⁷ "Putin took advantage of the tragedy [of the 330 fatalities at the Beslan school siege in 2004] to declare that such tragedies did not occur in the Soviet era and that 1991 was the biggest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century." Marie Mendras, *Russian Politics – The Paradox of a Weak State* (Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 259.

⁸ Which have shifted 1100 miles closer to St Petersburg since 1989. Sarotte – *The Collapse*,

states; as well as a NATO-Russia arms race. History may not repeat itself but it is replete with lessons relevant to the current moment.

This paper will analyse the words and deeds between West and East during from the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, through German reunification in 1990 to the final collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 to analyse what seeds were planted and how they grew into legacies of the Cold War affecting the world today.⁹ Analysis of this time will highlight the implications of the words and deeds of 1989-1991 and their effects 25 years later to prove the importance of considering the long-term implications for all political level activities; what became of the ‘planted seeds’.

This paper uses historical interpretive analysis based on original source documents now available covering the period 1989-1991, which collectively detail what was said and done at the political level. The two key issues, the promise not to expand NATO eastwards and subsequent US triumphalism, will frame the analysis between the principal actors, the USSR and America. These legacies influenced the events which NATO and Russia are engaged in now, and thus are relevant for today's policy makers. My conclusions here can only be partial, given the limitations of today's open-source information for Russia and NATO and those available for the chosen timeframe. However, because policy makers have always written policies without all of the information they want at hand, this paper aims to work in a similar vein. Where appropriate, potential avenues for future diplomatic effort and study will be proposed.

⁹ In researching this paper a number of authors' hypotheses noted the end of the Cold War could have been dated anywhere in a 25 year history from 1965.

1989-1991

Context.

The events contributing to the reunification of Germany, collapse of the USSR and end of the Cold War are too vast to summarise succinctly in this paper. The most important events will be identified to support historical interpretive analysis. 11 March 1985 Gorbachev is elected general secretary of the USSR's Communist Party. Bush succeeds Reagan as US President in January 1989 promising 'no foot-dragging' in improving relations yet by April Gorbachev describes Bush's policy 'pause' as 'intolerable'. On 9 November 1989, the GDR announces the opening of borders and the Berlin Wall starts to fall that night. On 9 February 1990 Baker tells Gorbachev that NATO will not expand eastwards if the USSR agrees to German reunification within NATO. In August 1990, the day after Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait the US and USSR issue a joint statement condemning Iraqi aggression and described by Baker as "the day the Cold War ended". On 25 December 1991, Gorbachev resigns as the president and symbolically the Soviet Union formally dissolves.¹⁰

These events fall into three themes: German reintegration into Europe¹¹, NATO and Russia. They are important in this order as this is how they arrived at the negotiating table and are considered by the author as the *primus inter pares* legacies of the period. *The Last Superpower Summits* starts its chronology with the election of Gorbachev to general secretary of the USSR's Communist Party.¹² This highlights two key features: Gorbachev was a catalyst for the end of the Cold War and; political leaders and leadership matter. Although it was widely acknowledged that the Cold War was going to

¹⁰ *The Last Superpower Summits*, p. xxix-xxxiv.

¹¹ This is analogous to the rest of Eastern Europe which was soon to be independent of Soviet rule.

¹² *The Last Superpower Summits*, p. xxix.

end eventually, Germany would unify¹³ and potentially the Soviet Union would fold, Gorbachev's arrival enabled all three in six years.¹⁴ The vast amount of primary source material and analysis available on this subject has been narrowed into two specific words and deeds events. They will be analysed for immediate and subsequent impact.¹⁵

A broken promise.

*"Kohl and Mitterand worked with other West European leaders – in agreement with the newly elected heads of East European states ... to find ways to allow the European Community (predecessor to the EU) to expand eastwards as well. The two most significant Cold War institutions of the West, NATO and the EC, thus retained their dominant roles in the post-Cold War world, the rhetoric about a "new world order" notwithstanding."*¹⁶

A 'promise'¹⁷ made by Secretary of State James Baker as assurance to Gorbachev on 9 February 1990 that *"not an inch of NATO's present military jurisdiction will spread in an eastern direction"*¹⁸ still captures the imagination of many, especially Putin, today. Yet this promise is difficult to qualify given it did not become policy; how it was made and recorded makes it controversial. Sarotte refers to the promise as having been recorded as a handwritten note by Baker saying: *"A changed polit[ical] NATO ... whose juris[diction] would not be eastwards!"*¹⁹ This is more open to interpretation than the

¹³ Regardless of the perceptions of writers after-the-fact which is explained by Henri Bergson's theory of Retrospective Determinism.

¹⁴ German reunification did not necessarily predetermine that the Soviet Union would collapse; Gorbachev's initial designs for Europe after the fall of the wall were as part of a quadripartite similar to Germany's first occupation. It was only when classified Soviet documents were released in the 1990s that the extent of the Soviet Union's economic over-commitment to the nuclear arms race emerged; this then became the foundation for much of today's received wisdom. Mary E Sarotte, *In Victory, Magnanimity: US foreign policy, 1989-1991, and the legacy of prefabricated multilateralism* (Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 2011), p. 485.

¹⁵ Subsequent in this case has also been narrowed to just the impact which has been felt between 2014-16. It is noted that they would have caused many subsequent 2nd and 3rd order effects but these have been considered out of scope for this paper.

¹⁶ Sarotte, *Collapse*, p. 170

¹⁷ Mary Elise Sarotte, *A Broken Promise*, (Foreign Affairs Sep/Oct 2014, Vol 93 Issue 5) p. 90-97.

¹⁸ Thomas Blanton, "US Policy and the Revolutions of 1989," in Savranskaya, Blanton and Zubok, eds., *Masterpieces of History*, p. 93-94.

¹⁹ Handwritten notes by US Secretary of State Baker taken during a meeting with Gorbachev on 18 May 1990 when discussing NATO during German reunification. Taken from Sarotte, *A Broken Promise*

promise quoted above. It is easy to see how, after Gorbachev's frustration over the slow pace of Bush's administration, he grasped at this as confirmation his vision would become reality. His subsequent actions support this. After Baker's 'promise', Gorbachev subsequently allowed Germany to reunify within NATO and American troops to remain in Europe, despite his initial resistance. The USSR, driven by Gorbachev, continued to lean into negotiations even when frustrated by increasingly unfavourable terms. As the year progressed Bush's assurances over "a Europe whole and free" being aligned to Gorbachev's "common European home with many rooms" started to fade. Sarotte refers to this as the alternate settlement architecture.²⁰ Baker summarises the sentiment well in his delayed dismissal of Gorbachev's concept of a common home as "a wonderful dream, but only a dream".²¹

There are 1,013 pages of evolving ideas, collaboration and negotiation in *The Last Superpower Summit*, not all of which survived. To say only one promise was broken from 1989-1991 is challenging. Gorbachev's leadership enabled progress in reducing tension in Europe between the USSR and America and his relationship with Reagan was important.²² During the years before 9 November 1989 Gorbachev made and fulfilled many unexpected promises²³ yet by 1991 he had been disappointed by the West in a number of areas. Designs for a reunified Germany fell to the US-German

(Foreign Affairs, Sep/Oct 2014). It should be noted that having discussed this matter with Sarotte her description of the note comes from a reputable source, not from the note itself.

²⁰Sarotte, *ibid*, p. 485.

²¹*The Last Superpower Summits*, p. 578-579.

²²The description of 1989 as the 'lost year' highlights their appreciation of this after the event. It is interesting to consider what might have been had Reagan been in power for another four years instead of Bush, or if Reagan could have impressed Bush more with the importance of the relationship with the USSR and what the benefits of cooperation could have been. *The Last Superpower Summits*, p. 587.

²³Such as troop reductions in Eastern Europe and a withdrawal from Afghanistan as well as limitations to the Soviet nuclear-warhead and missile programmes. *The Last Superpower Summits*, p. 482.

prefabricated multi-lateralism²⁴, not Gorbachev's vision of "a common European home of many rooms".²⁵ America and Germany conspired to keep Germany in NATO and Russia out, despite the soft tones during the initial discussions. These examples show the relationship eroding and explain the growing dissatisfaction for Gorbachev at home. He conceded much to America giving the appearance of capitulation rather than a negotiation between partners. This return to Soviet isolation and loss of face for the USSR cost Gorbachev his leadership and the chance to rewrite history. The broken promise was not about the words but the lost relationship and cooperation.

Trust is an essential to security and America's broken promise was a significant betrayal for Gorbachev. He had not insisted on written records of this discussion and many others, presumably owing to the level of trust he built with Reagan's administration. It could be said that a promise in politics is only a promise when incorporated into policy, agreements or formal documents. Gorbachev was given many assurances from Baker, Kohl and Bush between 1989-1991²⁶ not all of which bore fruit; the status of this specific 'broken promise' deserves further exploration. It can be seen that this broken promise is symbolic of broken trust, indeed Gorbachev trusted America more than a Soviet leader had ever done. This broken trust was a lesson for all future Russian leaders.

²⁴ Mary Elise Sarotte, *In Victory, Magnanimity: US Foreign Policy, 1989-1991, and the Legacy of Prefabricated Multilateralism*, (International Politics, Macmillan, 2011) p. 489.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 487.

²⁶ "Before saying a few words about the German issue, I wanted to emphasise that our policies are not aimed at separating Eastern Europe from the Soviet Union. We had that policy before. But today we are interested in building a stable Europe, and doing it together with you." *The Last Superpower Summits*, Baker to Gorbachev in Moscow, 18 May 1990. *The Last Superpower Summits*, p. 634.

There was a moment where Gorbachev and Bush shared a mutually-understood idealist vision of post-Cold War Europe. We then see America diverge from partnership with the USSR, despite their recognition of the benefits of keeping Gorbachev in power.²⁷ Nau suggests the Cold War occurred when principal variables diverged, in this case the ideological divide between communism and democracy; and ended when the latter prevailed.²⁸ In this case, as these two states drifted away from a shared vision for the future, Nau's theory explains the friction leading to today's conflict between America and Russia based on opposing visions.²⁹ 1989-1991 proves the essential nature of a shared vision for leaders looking for cooperation.

The details of the promise³⁰ are almost irrelevant given the impact it had in Europe at the time. The concern for the USSR's negotiators was NATO expansion; Gorbachev felt that including reunified Germany into NATO would tip the military scales, causing instability. This balance, Gorbachev asserted, had prevented major conflict in Europe for the preceding 45 years.³¹ Gorbachev aimed to maintain equilibrium and peace in Europe while bringing the USSR into the 'common European home'.³² This broken promise was not about the promise itself and more the betrayed trust and failure to maintain the productive relationship which Reagan and Gorbachev created. A counter-

²⁷ *The Last Superpower Summits*, p. 590-593 + 619-625.

²⁸ "Scholars draw on three sets of independent variables to explain international events – power or material factors, interactive or institutional factors and ideational or identity (constructivist) variables." Henry Nau, *Ideas have consequences: The Cold War and today* (International Politics, 2011) p. 486.

²⁹ Noting that conflict is defined by Encarta as war but also as difference, mental struggle and plot tension; the last three of these definitions are more applicable in this case. I suggest Nau would not claim to be able to *predict* subsequent 'conflict' between Russia and America, only explain it.

³⁰ The section of *The Last Superpower Summits* which covers this meeting in detail (p. 626-652) only mentions the details of the US's nine measures to stabilize Europe during Germany's reunification (p. 635-636). The closest mention is the fourth measure: "... for an agreed transition period, NATO troops would not be stationed on the territory of the GDR." , (Basic Books, a Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2014) p. 4.

³¹ Find quote.

³² Sarotte, *In victory, magnanimity* (Macmillan Publishers Ltd, International Politics vol 48, 4/5, 2011) p. 487

factual aside is that the expansion of NATO may not have become the ‘broken promise’ legacy had either the USSR survived or NATO negotiated further expansion limits, and kept within them. In reality, when the negotiations stopped NATO still existed³³, Germany was a member and the USSR was not. For the USSR this promise became a metaphor for a lack of American political integrity made worse for the legacy it left.

“We prevailed and they didn’t.” US triumphalism post-Cold War.

“By the end of the Cold War America was awash in triumphal shouts of victory and success. But in the 10 or so years since, we have not only seen all of those dreadful chickens come home to roost, but we have also demonstrated that we still see them as indicators of national greatness. Actually, they are really signs of declining influence, global chaos, and the continuing erosion and destruction of those norms and institutions so essential to building a civilized human community.”³⁴

Sarotte states “the decisions made by Bush, Kohl, Mitterrand and other western leaders in the wake of the opening of the Berlin Wall defined European politics for the next era.”³⁵ Yet it can be argued it was how they were projected which established the legacy. Germany’s financial aid to the USSR to support their withdrawal from East Germany is an example of Kohl’s openness to political give and take and one of many chances for magnanimity towards the Soviet Union. Before analysing US triumphalism³⁶ after the Cold War an amount of triumphalism was to be expected on all sides. What was presumably underestimated by Gorbachev was the one-sided nature of America’s victorious tone and deeds not-to-mention its reception by the Soviet public.

³³ Albeit with an uncertain/unknown *raison d’etre*.

³⁴ David J Singer, *Triumphalism and Reality in U.S. Cold War Policies*, (Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, Peace Review, 2000), p. 617. The ‘dreadful chickens’ Singer refers to here are “the menace of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, the scourge of virtually unlimited traffic in small arms and land mines, as well as the attendant miseries of anarchy, brutality, violence and futility.”

³⁵ Sarotte, *Collapse*, p. 171

³⁶ Which in this paper have generally negative outcomes. The positive effects are not considered in this paper and would make for an interesting contrast to this analysis but may have included the rush for nations to join NATO, EU and shift towards democracy in Eastern Europe.

Triumphalism appoints one party the victor; there must also be a loser. David Singer describes triumphalism as a second order, unintentional effect.³⁷ He draws attention to US foreign policy elites having behaved and spoken “from a smug and superior moral position in dealing with the rest of the world” after both the first and second World Wars.³⁸ These issues form a pattern of potentially unintentional soft-power effects resulting from American words and deeds. Although beyond this paper’s scope, this would have influenced non-Americans from 1989-1991.³⁹

American triumphalism appears most corrosive when the decisions made in designing the post-Cold War architecture are compared to the post-1940 designs. These incorporated Germany and Japan with supporting, if militarily-limiting policies. Sarotte, in *‘In victory, magnanimity’* highlights how policy makers in the 1940s considered their predecessors’ errors in 1918 which caused World War 2. She states that despite the unexpected nature of the opportunity for global redesign between 1989-1991, the aim was not to establish the USSR within the Western architecture. Bush and Baker did not share Gorbachev’s “internationalist vision for a common European home... Their decision to leave the Soviet Union on the periphery of the new European order created lasting

³⁷ These include the Marshall Plan which “was to help re-build the economies of Western Europe, but made sure that the U.S.S.R. and its newly acquired allies/satellites would decide to stay aloof—to the disadvantage of both sides in that stricken and divided continent”. David J Singer, *Triumphalism and Reality in U.S. Cold War Policies*, (Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, Peace Review, 2000), p. 614. America’s lack of destruction at home combined with its powerful military and economy allied with its central role in the creation of the UN and NATO as alliances of victors had an equivalent message.

³⁸ David J Singer, *Triumphalism and Reality in U.S. Cold War Policies*, (Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, Peace Review, 2000), p. 613.

³⁹ It should be noted that America’s Cold War was not limited to the USSR; it engaged in dozens of proxy conflicts to prevent the spread of Communism including in Cuba, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iran, Paraguay, Malaya, Korea to name a few of many. This had hard power effects in the immediate vicinity but much wider reaching soft power messages, in particular towards imperialist behaviours. David J Singer, *Triumphalism and Reality in U.S. Cold War Policies*, (Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, Peace Review, 2000), p. 614.

resentment in Moscow that has endured until today.”⁴⁰ Isolating the USSR from Europe and Western institutions cost Gorbachev his popularity,⁴¹ the chance for others to follow suit⁴² or achieve further cooperation.⁴³

What can be concluded from America’s misunderstanding of, or disinterest in, triumphalism is an equivalent lack of soft power appreciation. According to Nau, Reagan's recurring message was “*to eliminate all nuclear weapons*”.⁴⁴ His methods and communications appear to have confused supporters and opposition alike but not his intended audience: Gorbachev. This demonstrates the importance of individuals, relationships, communication and consistency, all of which contribute to soft power. Similarly important is how Reagan used hard and soft power⁴⁵ to achieve his aims. Falk explicitly states: “*soft power mattered.*”⁴⁶ Yet American policy makers conveniently forgot how the decades of diplomacy, engagement, containment, détente and restraint contributed to peace, choosing the “*underlying assumption ... that the US primarily and ultimately defeated the Soviet Union militarily...*”⁴⁷ The US treated the end of the Cold War like a military victory which entitled them to speak and act as the victor. This also

⁴⁰ Sarotte, *In victory, magnanimity* (Macmillan Publishers Ltd, International Politics vol 48, 4/5, 2011) p. 489.

⁴¹ And therefore his political career. The author is willing to speculate that had Gorbachev retained popularity and power, the window of opportunity and enthusiasm to build longer lasting and open relations between the West and Russia would have, at the very least, stayed open longer.

⁴² “*Few authoritarian leaders will share Mikael Gorbachev’s commitment to relaxing controls ... when their survival is at stake – particularly when witnessing Gorbachev’s outcome.*” , Dimitri Simes, *After the Collapse: Russia seeks its place as a great power*, (Simon & Schuster Inc, 1999), p. 252.

⁴³ Such as the joint US/USSR condemnation of Saddam Hussein’s actions in 1990.

⁴⁴ This was repeated more than 150 times over 7 years. Henry R Nau, *Ideas have consequences*, (International Politics, Vol 48, 4/5, 460-481, Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 2011), p. 469-470.

⁴⁵ Power is often referred to using the DIME model. DIME = Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic. Note here that triumphalism falls for the most part in informational and can be mitigated here but is also woven into actions within the other three.

⁴⁶ Barbara Falk, *1989 and Post-Cold War Policymaking: Were the “Wrong” Lessons Learned from the Fall of Communism?*, (Int J Polit Cult Soc / Springer Science and Business Media, 2009) – p. 295.

⁴⁷ Barbara Falk, *1989 and Post-Cold War Policymaking*: p. 294.

meant there was limited diplomatic 'give and take' which could have allowed the USSR to continue to retain its place as the second superpower.

Through America's misbehaviour and Gorbachev's over-eager diplomacy Gorbachev went from ending the Cold War to losing it, and with it the opportunity to permanently enter the West.⁴⁸ Analysis of triumphalism demonstrates the hard and soft power effects of words and deeds. Singer's history of US triumphalism probably explains how the world perceived them from 1989-1991; the opportunity for magnanimity⁴⁹ was lost and with it the chance for a partnership between the West and the USSR. Gorbachev was a charismatic and savvy politician who knew how to choose his battles⁵⁰ therefore a lack of trust towards Gorbachev is not a compelling reason for America's apparent ignorance towards the affects of its triumphalism.

Perhaps America had something to gain from triumphalism, which Bush prioritised over the European architecture; America's unipolar moment. America missed the best opportunity in recent history to redesign the world order by focussing on NATO and undermining the USSR. They chose a divergent world-view⁵¹ to Gorbachev, especially for Eastern Europe and NATO. Gorbachev lost power as a result of the broken promise and triumphalism while America lost their only ally in the Kremlin and the chance to improve relations with a Westward-leaning, non-aggressive socialist state tending (briefly) towards democracy.⁵² It is worth noting, the outcome of the broken promise and triumphalism was not a return to the Cold War, indeed many millions of

⁴⁸ Geographically as part of Europe and institutionally as a member of NATO and the EU, or their successor institutions.

⁴⁹ Churchill is quoted as saying, as the basis of the conduct of international relations: "*In war, resolution; in defeat, defiance; in victory, magnanimity.*" Sarotte, *In Victory, Magnanimity*, p. 490.

⁵⁰ He won the Nobel Peace Prize for his actions while in power but did not attend the ceremony owing to the atmospherics he was experiencing in the Soviet Union at the time.

⁵¹ Which Nau has demonstrated can lead to diplomatic and military friction.

⁵² It is interesting to consider what could have been with another Reagan term from 1989-1993.

people were overjoyed with the outcome at the time.⁵³ What was unclear on 26

December 1991 was what the seeds of the broken promise and American triumphalism would grow into.

THE COLD WAR'S PLANTED SEEDS: ANALYSING THE LEGACY TODAY.

“The Wall fell because of the decisions, both intentional and unintentional, made by the people of the GDR... In the years since, many US policy makers have undervalued, or failed to understand, this dynamic. Washington has instead seen itself as the primary author of developments that rapidly and at little risk tore down the wall and overthrew dictators. Such self-perceptions have, among other things, made relations with a still-resentful Russia difficult, and contributed to misguided attempts to “repeat” the performance.”⁵⁴

NATO membership grew from 16 to 28 states between 1999 and 2004; all new members are east of Berlin. Despite the intent of NATO's Article 10⁵⁵, many argue this contributed to regional instability. Alice Hills claims “NATO's ... double enlargement was profoundly self-defeating and short-sighted as far as pacification with Russia was concerned.”⁵⁶ Mearsheimer agrees, stating that Russia's intervention in Georgia and Crimea resulted from NATO's expansion policy while noting how “great powers are

⁵³ Despite the missed opportunities, the prefabricated multilateralism stabilized Europe with Germany in NATO did not destabilize Europe and America assumed the mantle of the only superpower with varying degrees of success (which are beyond the scope of this paper) while many former Soviet states emerged after the Cold War much happier that it was over, thus the situation can arguably be considered an improvement. America accepted the role of global policeman and invested in it and NATO continued as a force for good for most countries. At the very least, despite the opportunities missed, the situation was not worse and saw Russia begin on a path to significant growth and resurgence, despite its relations with NATO and America.

⁵⁴ Sarotte, *Collapse*, p. 183. The counterpoint to this view is that some writers have written on this subject, including Brands, Falk, Goldgeiger and Chollet all of whom have written on the time between the end of the Cold War to 9/11 and Iraq 2003. What Sarotte is indicating however is the (mis)perception of US triumphalism, a lack of understanding at the policy level and repeated failures to intervene at a national level with the same success they saw in 1989-1991.

⁵⁵ Article 10: The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty. Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the United States of America. The Government of the United States of America will inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

⁵⁶ Vincent Pouliot, *International Security in Practice – The Politics of NATO-Russia Diplomacy* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 229.

always sensitive to potential threats near their home territory”.⁵⁷ These views are not universal but are prominent today.⁵⁸ NATO forces are now based in the Baltic States and Poland where readiness exercises have taken place for the last few years on either side of the border in an echo of the Cold War.⁵⁹ Today the arms race is not measured in numbers of nuclear missiles but troop numbers and readiness levels.

In 2014 Russia annexed Crimea in response to a perceived risk threat, coincidentally timed with Ukraine’s ejection of their pro-Russian leader and ongoing courtship from and with NATO. The response was to eject Russia from the G8⁶⁰ and NATO-Russia Council⁶¹ and hold an emergency NATO summit in Wales resulting in a hardened posture from ‘assure’ to ‘deter and assure’.⁶² Russia lost the ability to communicate with the West while learning of NATO’s military escalation. This is counter to Reagan’s method of increasing communications when showing force.

⁵⁷ Mearsheimer, J. "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault." *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (2014): p. 77-89. Link.

⁵⁸ Wieslander believes that by increasing membership even slightly NATO will benefit via increases to the military force and by removing ‘security vacuums’. Anna Wieslander, *NATO, the US and Baltic Sea Security* (Ulpaper No. 3, Swedish Institute of International Affairs, 2016) p. 6.

⁵⁹ During the Cold War, European residents feared that the war would be fought in Europe, not for it, between the two super powers. Sarotte, *Collapse*, p. 34.

NATO, *Boosting NATO’s presence in the east and southeast*, 15 Mar 17. Link.

⁶⁰ G8 is an abbreviation for the ‘Group of Eight’ highly industrialised nations – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom and United States. Council on Foreign Relations, Zachary Laub, Updated: March 3, 2014, Link

⁶¹ The NRC was set up to allow consultation, cooperation, consensus building and joint decisions/action between NATO and Russia. Link NRC source.

⁶² *NATO Wales Summit Declaration*, 5 Sep 14, Article 7: “The assurance measures include continuous air, land, and maritime presence and meaningful military activity in the eastern part of the Alliance, both on a rotational basis. They will provide the fundamental baseline requirement for assurance and deterrence, and are flexible and scalable in response to the evolving security situation.” Link.

The splinters from a promise broken.

...NATO's fault rests with its failure to realize that Russia would not, and in fact could not, understand the double enlargement in the same way as Westerners. As much as expansion made sense from the NATO point of view, it made no sense to Moscow: exclusionary and delusionary [sic], the policy fitted better with the old realpolitik of Cold War containment than with the new rules of security-from-the-inside-out professed by the Alliance.⁶³

The first legacy of the broken promise is trust and behaviour. Gorbachev post-Cold War believed there were two options for NATO: incorporate Russia or; dismantle NATO. Now NATO's continued expansion, including negotiation with Georgia and Ukraine, provides anything but stability.⁶⁴ Russia is surrounded by NATO and its 'near abroad'⁶⁵ is armed with NATO's 'collective defence' Article 5⁶⁶ wielded like a weapon. Taking Russia's perspective, NATO has advanced its borders much closer to the heart of Russia,⁶⁷ in spite of the promise that it would not. This caused Putin to push-back in the summer of 2008 by invading Georgia, which Friedman argues was an attempt to "re-establish a sphere of influence".⁶⁸ Indeed Sarotte agrees that "Putin's aggressive actions in Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014 were fuelled in part by his ongoing resentment about what he sees as the West's broken pact over NATO expansion."⁶⁹ What this means

⁶³ Vincent Pouliot, *International Security in Practice – The Politics of NATO-Russia Diplomacy* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 229.

⁶⁴ Josh Cohen, *Why Ukraine's NATO membership is not in America's interests*, (Reuters, 5 May 2016), <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-nato-commentary-idUSKCN0XV2HN>

⁶⁵ Russia has had a 'near abroad' policy to its former states and CIS since 1992 which considers them closer to domestic provinces than foreign and independent. This explains their interventionist and regional hegemon approach initially in the Baltics and then in Chechnya, Georgia and Ukraine. *The Baltic Question during the Cold War*, (Edited by John Hiden, Vahur Made, and David J Smith, (Cold War History Series, Routledge, 2008) p. 195.

⁶⁶ Article 5: *The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations...* "The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C. - 4 April 1949, Link.

⁶⁷ Sarotte points out that during the Cold War Leningrad was roughly 1200 miles away and now as St Petersburg it is less than 100. Mary Elise Sarotte, *Not one inch eastward? Bush, Baker, Kohl, Genscher, Gorbachev, and the origin of Russian resentment toward NATO enlargement in February 1990*, (Diplomatic History, vol 34, no. 1, January 2010), p. 119.

⁶⁸ Sarotte, *Not one inch eastward*, p. 120.

⁶⁹ Sarotte, *A Broken Promise*, p. 1.

for regional security is NATO and Russia carrying out escalatory activities regardless of the provocative affects. The broken promise has deeply affected Russian trust in NATO while providing them an excuse to mirror NATO's expansionist words and deeds.

The next legacy is NATO's unlimited expansion. The first two tranches of NATO expansion in 1999 and 2004 did not generate a military response from Russia⁷⁰, yet Georgia and Ukraine did. The promise in February 1990 limited NATO expansion in Germany; the response from Gorbachev⁷¹ was further support for troop withdrawals from East Germany. It is suggested that redefined a limit or end-state for future NATO expansion should be discussed with the largest player in that neighbourhood and may again enable cooperation. The converse is equally true; not discussing Eastern European security with Russia, means they must make assumptions and are likely to arrive at NATO setting the conditions to isolate Russia or make more aggressive moves eastwards. This broken promise resonates in Russia because NATO expansion has not been carried out with a Russian audience in mind nor does it show signs of stopping.

This leads to the final legacy of the broken promise; the outcomes of lost trust manifesting in misunderstanding and miscommunications. Hypocrisy abounded in the Cold War with the competition between Communism and democracy leading "to both Western and Communist leaders to engage in imperialist behaviour even as they denounced such behaviour."⁷² This behaviour has returned with both sides adopting a 'do as I say, not what I do' mantra for overseas conflict, such as in Syria, and 'escalation' via exercises along the Baltic States-Russia border. In other words, they are mirroring each

⁷⁰ For context, Russia had Chechnya to consider during these first tranches and may not have been militarily capable of a response; this is no longer the case.

⁷¹ Noting there are distinct differences in ideology between Gorbachev and Putin.

⁷² Mary Elise Sarotte, *The Collapse – The Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall*, (Basic Books, a Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2014) p. 4.

other while alleging aggression on the other side, without considering their own behaviour. Punitively removing Russia from the G8 and NRC decapitated diplomacy, cut communications and with it removed chance to de-escalate and reassure.⁷³ It was Reagan and Gorbachev's trust and communication which allowed huge strides towards a shared vision and purpose. The broken promise shattered this and has left splinters of distrust; now there must be an element of risk acceptance, an olive branch, to start developing trust again. Without this NATO and Russia will continue to agitate and escalate without achieving strategic security. Open and honest communications will grow trust; given both NATO and Russia have engaged in expansionist and interventionist behaviours outside of UN approval this could be a relatively equal and pragmatic start point. This could be an opportunity similar to 1989-1991 with a chance to redesign relationships; what Gorbachev taught the world in the 1980s was sometimes opportunities occur, sometimes they need a person to put peace ahead of their political ratings to seize the initiative.

What remains is the challenge of how to offer security to former Soviet States without provocation to either side. Although NATO expansion was deemed appropriate to increase stability in 1949 I would argue from evidence here that this has not always worked. Obama's reset in 2008 provided arguably more security than any expansion, proving diplomacy is an area deserving more investment. NATO as a political organisation, as Baker assured Gorbachev, should be open to expanding to include Russia

⁷³ In Cold War terms this would have been: diplomacy, engagement, containment, détente and restraint. It should be noted, Reagan and Gorbachev and many leaders before them communicated regularly with their opponents in times of crisis. The Cuban Missile Crisis is a good example where disaster was caused by misunderstanding and averted by improved, if unorthodox, channels of communication.

or stopping expansion altogether; this is not on the horizon today.⁷⁴ Yet it could be a timely opportunity, Georgia and Ukraine are undoubtedly part of Russia's 'near abroad'⁷⁵ and any debate must include this paradigm. What is needed is an understanding of what security exists outside of NATO and how it can be assured with Russia, not despite it. It might also be opportune to openly review the Cold War aspects of NATO doctrine which do not reflect how globalisation affects the state system, the emergence of state-less terror networks and transnational non-military threats to make it more of an organisation for today. The answer to whether the Cold War ending should have triggered changes in these institutions is a resounding 'yes'. Falk's point that "*had the 'victory' of the US been less emphatic, maybe they would have changed to adapt*"⁷⁶ confirms the findings here and connects neatly to the final analysis.

⁷⁴ "*Backing Montenegro also sends a message to Russia that the U.S. and its allies will push back against Russian efforts to increase its influence in Europe. ... Moscow has described Montenegro's joining NATO as "profoundly erroneous" and against the interests of the nation. Russia has said the move will mean worsening stability for the Balkans and the rest of Europe.*" Predrag Milic, *Montenegro set to approve NATO membership in historic move*. (Washington Post, 27 April 2017).

⁷⁵ "One of Russia's goals was for the West to accept that these 'in-between' countries [note: reference was to Caucasus, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Baltic States], squeezed between East and West, should stay under some form of Russian control, by the use of military force, or the threat to use it..." Marie Mendras, *Russian Politics – The Paradox of a Weak State* (Columbia University Press, 2012), p. 258.

⁷⁶ Barbara Falk, *1989 and Post-Cold War Policymaking: Were the "Wrong" Lessons Learned from the Fall of Communism?* (Int J Polit Cult Soc 2009, p291-313, Springer Science + Business Media, LLC, 2009) p. 296-297.

The echoes of triumphalism.

“If the United States decides to use its superior power to force governments or factions to act against ... their own vital interests, it should not be surprising when the strong band together for protection against America and the weak resort to terror. Using cruise missiles ... to wrap the knuckles of uncooperative pupils may teach them an unintended lesson – that America is their enemy.”⁷⁷

American triumphalism has two enduring legacies: Russia’s need to return to the world stage and America as the lone target of world’s violence and anti-democratic rhetoric.⁷⁸ In February 2014 Russia hosted the Winter Olympics in Sochi, an opportunity pushed by Putin to announce Russia’s return to the world stage.⁷⁹ In March 2014 Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine and Putin’s approval ratings achieved their largest single increase in eight years.⁸⁰ The effects of US triumphalism appear to have reached further than the broken promise. Arkady Ostrovsky claims Russia’s Syria intervention was made with this in mind⁸¹ Events in Syria are hard to diagnose; it may be a Cold War-style proxy-war between the US and Russia or an opportunity to stand side-by-side against Da’esh, with strategic common ground and a chance to normalise relationships.⁸² These, and other global legacies, are beyond the scope of this paper yet are indicative of the reach and complexity of triumphalism. What remains is how to encourage Russia and Putin onto the world stage without using hard power. This paper has shown how leaders

⁷⁷ Dimitri Simes, *After the Collapse: Russia seeks its place as a great power*, (Simon & Schuster Inc, 1999), p. 252.

⁷⁸ This latter point is exemplified in the media and made worse when compared to Dimitri Simes’ quote above: “*The first volley of American strikes aimed at the Syrian regime prompted praise from U.S. allies, concern from Congress and condemnation from Russian and Syrian officials who slammed the attack and warned that it would only produce more terrorism and instability.*” Greg Jaffe and Missy Ryan *American strikes against Syria prompt both praise and condemnation*, (Washington Post, 7 April 17). Link

⁷⁹ In 1980 the USSR had been humiliated by the US-led boycott of the Moscow Olympics in protest of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Fiona Hill and Clifford G Gaddy, *Mr Putin – Operative in the Kremlin – New and Expanded* (Brookings Institution Press, 2015), p. 256.

⁸⁰ It should be noted this was Putin’s domestic approval ratings. *Mr Putin – Operative in the Kremlin, New and Expanded* (Brookings Institution Press, 2015), p. 259.

⁸¹ “*Russian moderates suggested ... Putin’s aim in Syria was not to alienate the West but to overcome the international isolationism caused by Russia’s actions in Ukraine and to force America to recognise Russia as an equal partner, not an irksome regional power.*” Arkady Ostrovsky, *The Invention of Russia – From Gorbachev’s Freedom to Putin’s War*, (Viking – Atlantic Books, 2015) p. 324.

⁸² Ibid.

from 1989-1991 did this mostly successfully through diplomacy and personal and political leadership. Although doable, it is not guaranteed without cooperation, trust and some Gorbachev-esque political risk.

Sarotte provides a lesson from 1989 that care should be given to external involvement in internal affairs. Her evidence shows “outsiders mattered more in the longer-term than ... shorter, and that the agency of local actors was decisive in the final instance.”⁸³ This is equally pertinent when applied to the overthrow of Saddam Hussein or the Arab Spring as for this paper to Russia, the Baltic States and Russia’s near abroad. The Cold War does not provide a ‘best practice’ example given the number of proxy conflicts America involved itself in⁸⁴, however it is representative of continued triumphant conduct which causes friction between America and many other nations. Simes proposes a solution of less foreign policy ambition⁸⁵ which could be interpreted as limiting aspiration; this should be considered alongside Sarotte’s lesson to be more circumspect with external intervention⁸⁶ to exploit relationships with neighbouring nations and achieve optimised, if not maximised, security. There is tension between the increasing reach of security not appearing to be imperialist or interfering in other state’s ‘near abroad’. Simes provides a warning for this argument but not the tools policy makers need to enact it.⁸⁷

⁸³ Sarotte, *Collapse*, p. 181

⁸⁴ See footnote 35.

⁸⁵ “*Should the United States ... pursue a less ambitious foreign policy more effectively, with more direction and consistency..., most foreign nations will be strongly disinclined to challenge American interests.*” Dimitri Simes, *After the Collapse: Russia seeks its place as a great power*, (Simon & Schuster Inc, 1999), p. 253.

⁸⁶ Be that military or diplomatic intervention or through social media.

⁸⁷ “*Approaching today’s divided, dangerous and extraordinarily complex world as if the United States is responsible for everything and everyone else should yield to us is a prescription for disaster.*” Dimitri Simes, *After the Collapse: Russia seeks its place as a great power*, (Simon & Schuster Inc, 1999), p. 251.

The final legacy of triumphalism⁸⁸ is how it changed the recollection of events. It has already been discussed how the “US's underlying assumption that it was victorious over the Soviet Union militarily, and not-so-much diplomatically, economically and through conservative restraint”⁸⁹, what also emerges is the misrepresentation of the speed of the change after German reunification.⁹⁰ The Soviet Union’s collapse seduced western planners into thinking regime change can be equally swift when the outcome is democracy; Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria demonstrate the limitations of this concept. What was lost in the euphoria of the end of the Cold War was the political-level investment of the preceding decades and the fervour which the Germans and Soviet satellite states sought independence and democracy.

In summary, this analysis shows the links between the historical interpretive analysis of two events in 1989-1991 and security today. The complexity of overlapping events and effects has been touched upon but is vast. What this paper has proven is the well accepted truism that much can be learned from historical analysis and applied to today and that it appears not all leaders consider appropriate lessons when planning their next move, missile, missive or tweet.

⁸⁸ Further legacies are beyond the scope of this paper but could include the withering of the UN on the proverbial vine while failing to intervene in the Balkans or Rwanda owing to over-commitment by Western leaders who had failed to learn the right lessons from the Cold War. Barbara Falk, *1989 and Post-Cold War Policymaking: Were the "Wrong" Lessons Learned from the Fall of Communism?* (Int J Polit Cult Soc 2009, p291-313, Springer Science + Business Media, LLC, 2009) p. 294.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid* p. 300.

CONCLUSION

History does not repeat itself, but it can look very similar. After over 40 years of contest, containment, escalation, proxy conflicts and détente, it is no wonder Bush took his time to trust Gorbachev's 'too-good-to-be-true' olive branch.⁹¹ This realist, not constructivist, approach cost the world the opportunity to rewrite the future with the US and USSR holding the pen. Had this happened Europe would be very different today. The thesis of this paper was linked to the lessons and legacies from 1989-1991 for today. They are abundant.

As Sarotte points out: “the history of 1989 shows just how many things have to go right for such a [peaceful] revolution to succeed.”⁹² This paper has provided many opportunities for historical counter-factual analysis. Had Bush been less sceptical of Gorbachev, they could have achieved a more balanced outcome without triumphalism. Had America offered more than crumbs to Gorbachev, given they acknowledged he was the key to future negotiations with the USSR⁹³, an outcome with overtures of US-USSR equality may have garnered enough domestic support to keep Gorbachev in power. This could have enabled a diplomatic settlement which would not leave the scars for Putin and others to exploit. There were also institutional as well as international opportunities such as Russia’s inclusion in NATO or Europe. Had NATO and the EU not expanded eastwards this would have denied Russia the opportunity to 'do as you do' in interventions in Georgia and Crimea. Russia closer to, if not completely at, the table would have

⁹¹ “Victory is sometimes no less a test for a great power than defeat.” Dimitri Simes, *After the Collapse: Russia seeks its place as a great power*, (Simon & Schuster Inc, 1999), p. 251.

⁹² Sarotte, *Collapse*, p. 177. Sarotte later notes that “the fact that errors were made when communicating changes to border security on 9 November 1989 as well as “confusion at Schabowski’s press conference show that significant events do not always happen for significant reasons.” p. 179.

⁹³ Reference to Bush’s acceptance that he wanted Gorbachev to stay in power. *The last superpower summits*, p. 653-655.

increased understanding of their 'back-yard interventionist' domestic foreign policy; similarly it could have allowed 'soft power' influence to moderate their approach. Russia joining Europe may have called into question the presence of American forces post-Cold War; perhaps this is why Bush's focus was more on NATO than Soviet inclusion or reunification. Although the answer cannot be known, counter-factual analysis allows some of the many available alternatives to be considered. Europe today is as much a product of American mistakes as it was Russian misbehaviour. Instead of a new Europe, Gorbachev was replaced, the USSR dissolved, war and genocide returned to Europe, a former KGB agent decided to enter the world of politics⁹⁴, all while democracy and NATO moved slowly closer to Moscow.

This paper has shown the longevity of communications. A conversation in February 1989 over NATO non-expansion has eroded trust, provoked Russia and, according to Mearsheimer, resulted in more than one war in Russia's back-yard.⁹⁵ We are in a post-factual, 140-characters-or-less-policy information age, not an era where words matter less. Indeed our words live longer electronically and travel faster and further than ever before. Although context, meaning and evidence appear not to move in the same way this does not make them irrelevant. Baker's broken promise is a metaphor for the broken trust for the entire post-Cold War settlement. What Russia and America have failed to address is this breakdown in trust which America caused. This is achievable but will need active pursuit and humble delivery.

⁹⁴ "... Vladimir Putin, the KGB officer in Dresden, returned home full of regret at how "the Soviet Union had lost its position in Europe." He began a career in politics fuelled by a desire to restore Russia, at least, to what he viewed as its rightful position." Sarotte, *Collapse*, p. 176.

⁹⁵ Mearsheimer – *ibid.*

American triumphalism is as alive and well in today's media as it was in 1989-1991, in many more mediums. Behaviours, like building a wall with Mexico, using cruise missiles to scold Syria for using chemical weapons, tweeting about Canadian milk monopolies⁹⁶ have meaning and soft power effects. The world is listening and America is broadcasting. Similarly the anticipated move from smart power⁹⁷ to hard power with the new US budget also carries a message; increasing the military budget at the expense of overseas aid has been dubbed a turn towards 'hard power' and is an example of a triumphalist double-fault making America seem simultaneously less 'good Samaritan' and more hostile.⁹⁸ These announcements resonate with triumphalism and, as this paper has shown, this does not always improve security. What the public may never know is the classified communications between leaders; Reagan for one showed the benefits to a 'carrot and stick' approach with un-equivocal communication and personal diplomacy.

Today we must be careful with when, where and how we plant seeds for the future, especially given the newfound reach of our words and deeds. Assuming our actions won't plant seeds is dangerous; legacies are inevitable, thus each crisis should be considered an opportunity. Policy makers must respect that opportunities to make the world better rarely occur accidentally and are unlikely to be signposted. The actions of three world leaders from 1989-1991 still affect us today. Forgetting lessons or, worse,

⁹⁶ "On Twitter Tuesday morning, Trump said that "Canada has made business for our dairy farmers in Wisconsin and other border states very difficult." He added: "We will not stand for this. Watch!", Caitlin Dewey, *Trump's sudden preoccupation with Canadian milk, explained* (The Washington Post, 25 April 2017). [Link](#).

⁹⁷ Smart power being the understanding, and successful balancing of hard and soft power.

⁹⁸ "In President Trump's so-called skinny budget, he eviscerated the State Department's budget and foreign-aid spending. As to the former, perhaps Trump's recent recognition of the need for diplomatic efforts (with NATO, China, etc.) will teach him that American "soft power" is a corollary to hard power. The former without the latter can be feckless; the latter without the former leaves us binary options (e.g. consent or war)." Jennifer Rubin, *The amorality and stupidity of eviscerating foreign-aid spending*, (The Washington Post online 13 April 2017).

misrepresenting them will lead to mistakes. Security is as much about how the public feels as it is about hard power; historical analysis of the end of the Cold War demonstrates that just because the world feels on a knife-edge, doesn't mean it is.⁹⁹ This aspect of the Cold War is reassuringly familiar. Very-high readiness is today's arms race; balance and stability is possible if leaders on either side of the Baltic States can empathise with each other, remain calm and determine what defines aggression/escalation.

Sarotte makes a compelling case for the post-Cold War settlement architecture, the winning design being prefabricated multilateralism.¹⁰⁰ This theory clarifies how the major powers saw their situation and the permanence with which they were thinking about the future.¹⁰¹ Building a house, especially a prefabricated one, as a metaphor indicates that, once built, it can be left to stand on its own; this justifies the race to approve a design and the lack of investment thereafter. Perhaps this mind-set did not help. An alternative theory proposed here is that had leaders considered their actions as planting a seed¹⁰² to grow something which could benefit them all, they may have been more open to a plan which, although imperfect at the time, would bear fruit in the future. This speaks to the need for cooperation, communication, mutual support and a shared vision for the future. This theory is proposed to be debated and further cultivated as a metaphor to assist responses to future security and policy opportunities. It appears today

⁹⁹ This is caveated by the need for the leaders to be in regular communication with each other to achieve the required level of understanding to maintain stability.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, Sarotte, *In Victory, Magnanimity*.

¹⁰¹ The author would like to mention here the humility with which this argument is proposed; it is to build on Sarotte's excellent metaphor while attempting to highlight the author's conclusion of the change from static to evolutionary nature of European security.

¹⁰² For example a tree in between two gardens careful attention from both neighbours would ensure it provided both shade and fruit equally without the roots damaging the fence-line. Instead of replacing the architecture metaphor, the blueprint for the future of Europe could have been more successful if the designers had been able to achieve consensus, not closed door planning, and continued to develop and work on the building incrementally, together.

that Russia remains less happy with the prefabricated house than the west; prefabricated structures are hard to improve but it is never too late to plant a seed.

NATO's existence provokes Russia in a normative way which is not well understood in the West. Even Gorbachev questioned the requirement for NATO given both sides were now cooperating.¹⁰³ Yet NATO was not dismantled, presumably because parts of its mission were still relevant.¹⁰⁴ This is an opportunity for new thinking. The question of 'what victory looks like for NATO' requires immediate consideration within NATO and academically. With Germany stable and America in Europe, victory must involve Russia: it could be simply reassuring Russia of NATO's intentions or its limit of exploitation¹⁰⁵, or even to include them in NATO. Regardless, this thinking must be shared with, not dictated to, Russia in a spirit of cooperation, to enable them to understand western actions. The conversations between Gorbachev and Reagan set the conditions for the end of the Cold War. Promises were made, as they are during election campaigns; they don't always materialise. Yet leaders who betray trust do not last long; this lesson seems to have been forgotten by America in 1989-1991 and needs to be repaired. NATO can bring Russia back into the NRC, in conjunction with the international community welcoming their return to G8 and other organisations. America and NATO can do what Gorbachev did and create the opportunity of a generation. This will take political risk and acceptance that although it may not look like victory at first

¹⁰³ "And yet, what is the purpose of NATO? It was created for a different time, what is its purpose now?" Gorbachev, *The Last Superpower Summits*, p. 635.

¹⁰⁴ Colloquially to "keep Germany down, America in and Russia out". An alternative theory is that through NATO's survival, America was able to keep a foot in Europe and retain its regional hegemony.

¹⁰⁵ For now Russia will struggle to see past NATO's recruitment of former Soviet states, placing bases there and then accusing Russia of resurgence. As uncomfortable as it sounds, NATO advancing over 1000 miles and accusing Russia of aggression is unlikely to deter them or reassure the Baltic States.

they can cultivate a secure environment of collegiate design through words, deeds, cooperation and careful cultivation of the planted seeds.

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