

# European Security in the Post-Soviet Age: The case against NATO

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As its sub-title suggests, this book looks at an aspect of US imperialism that is not often analysed: NATO as the vehicle for that imperialism as opposed to the more common perception as simply directed against the Soviet Union.

Graham Hallett is a retired lecturer and a former Research Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. He believes that the Founding Fathers of the USA made a crucial contribution to democracy with the separation of the executive and legislature, and a written constitution, and considers anti-Americanism to be the most heinous political sin in Britain today. Although apparently somewhat ambivalent about NATO at first, once it had been formed it seemed to him that as long as the Soviet Army was on the Elbe, it was sensible to keep it. CND never attracted him, although he has now joined it. His criticisms, therefore, may carry more weight than those of most "peaceniks".

In the immediate post-war situation, British and American policy was based on a gross exaggeration of Soviet military power and a belief that there really was an intention on the part of the Soviets to over-run Western Europe. NATO was therefore set up in such a way as to make Europe a US protectorate. The subsequent developments are summarised and analysed succinctly. The creation of NATO did nothing to support democracy in Western Europe; the argument that NATO caused the absence of war in Europe from 1945 to 1990 is questionable.

America's many wars since 1945 are described, dividing them into large wars, small wars and covert operations, and including a table of war deaths going back to the American Revolution for comparison. Three chapters are devoted to the break-up of Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Kosovo. A catalogue of errors, misleading reports and bad faith emerges. The current impasse over Kosovo's future status is a not surprising outcome.

The concept of "humanitarian intervention" is examined and a number of examples judged under various criteria. The author concludes "that military intervention has done incomparably more harm than non-intervention, and is appropriate only in very exceptional cases."

The "war on terror" is shown to be a catastrophic blunder, based on delusions and lies. Hallett traces this both to the effects of unconstrained power, but also to a strain of Messianism in American society. In its pursuit of global hegemony, the US has changed NATO from a defensive to an aggressive organisation. "With its rejection of the UN Charter and endorsement of aggressive war NATO has become a criminal organisation." And the

European members of NATO have become "vassal states".

Finally, Hallett quotes with approval the late Frank Blackaby, Abolition 2000 President and World Disarmament Campaign (WDC) Vice-President, on "Alternative Futures". This essay forecast exactly what has happened, and posed the alternative of a law-based future. A number of essential elements of this are spelt out, but without much hope of them being implemented. But perhaps if Gordon Brown could be persuaded to read this book, he might modify his view of "our closest ally".

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*Reviewed by: Frank Jackson (Vice-President for Uniting for Peace)*