

CHAPTER 2

A Survey of Overall U.S. Democratization Programs and Military Democratization Efforts in the Postcommunist States

This chapter will survey the military democratization programs that the United States has developed to facilitate the transition to democracy of the military institutions of postcommunist states. The goal is to present an overview of these programs so that their effectiveness can be fully evaluated in the case studies of the Czech Republic and Russia that will follow in chapters 3 and 4. The overall approach of the United States to assisting the transitioning states will also be surveyed within the context of the overall Western aid effort. The aim here is to put the military programs in proper perspective with respect to efforts focused on the overall political and economic transition of the postcommunist states to democracy.

The result is a survey of missed opportunities at every level to assist the transitioning states. The evidence will show that the military effort was plagued by the dual challenge of adapting Cold War era programs to post–Cold War contingencies and creating new military democratization programs with an incomplete conceptualization of the problems associated with transitioning from authoritarian to democratic political systems. It will be demonstrated that incomplete coordination between programs and confusion over mission areas have constrained the effectiveness of U.S. military democratization programs. Finally, the case will be made that the idea of the interoperability of existing democratic forces with the partner states of NATO has been narrowly focused on the achievement of strategic professionalism issues. Not enough attention has been paid to ensuring that partner states develop norms of democratic accountability. Though widely stated, democratization objectives at every level of assistance—political, economic, and military—have been poorly conceptualized and, consequently, ineffectively carried out.

Needs vs. Response: The Overall U.S. Approach to Assisting the Postcommunist States

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and subsequent collapse of the Warsaw Pact has triggered a complete reappraisal of U.S. national security strategy. Particu-

larly fascinating has been the dramatic shift in policy toward the postcommunist states. The previously routinized geopolitical rivalry between the United States and Soviet Union, centered on the zero-sum game of containing Communism, has gradually shifted to the post-Cold War strategy of full-scale engagement aimed at fostering stability and prosperity in the region by encouraging processes of democratic development and market reform.

In August 1994 the Clinton administration released the new national security strategy of the United States in a policy document entitled *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*. Its authors argued:

Our national security strategy is based on enlarging the community of market democracies while deterring and containing a range of threats to our nation, our allies, and our interests. The more that democracy and political and economic liberalization take hold in the world, particularly in countries of geostrategic importance to us, the safer our nation is likely to be and the more our people are likely to prosper.¹

The strategy of engagement called for pursuing security through “enlargement,” a policy based on the concept predominant in recent years in political science literature that “democracies don’t fight one another.”² Those who have documented the “democratic peace” have been able to establish that the relatively peaceful relations of democracies toward each other are not spuriously caused by other factors such as wealth or alliance ties.³ At the same time, the democratic peace research shows that democracies are not more peaceful in general and that they are as likely to enter war as any other polity—but not war with another democracy.⁴

The theory of the democratic peace has guided the Clinton administration’s foreign policy.⁵ However, some research in the field contends that such an approach might actually be counterproductive. Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder argue in a widely circulated *International Security* article that states undergoing a transition to democracy are more war prone, not less, and were 60 percent more likely to go to war than states that were not democratizing.⁶ This research suggests that the U.S. policy of promoting democratization in states attempting to make dramatic shifts from authoritarian rule might mean a heightened risk of war in the short run.⁷ The conclusions of the democratic peace literature, then, apply only to consolidated democracies—not democratizing states. Policy implications of these complementary findings require placing a top priority on the conditions that lead to relatively peaceful democratization and focusing on creating these conditions through external aid.⁸ According to the democratization literature, such conditions include giving golden parachutes to elites who lose in the transition process—especially the military—and encouraging the development of a level playing field for political debate.⁹

U.S. assistance to the postcommunist states has been couched largely in strategic terms, with democratization itself viewed as a strategy.¹⁰ Thomas Simons, State Department Coordinator for Assistance to the New Independent States (NIS), characterized the objective of the assistance program as putting “behind us the greatest threat which our republic has faced in its whole history by working with twelve new independent states to help them shed the legacy of decades of despotic communism and to become free, equal, and reliable partners in a better international community for the next century.”¹¹ Ralph Johnson, Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Eastern Europe, defended aid to the former Soviet Union’s satellites similarly: “It was only a few years ago that these countries were members of an alliance that threatened us and threatened our European allies as well. Now they have separated themselves from that alliance and they are rapidly building bridges to Western institutions, including the European Union and NATO.”¹² Clearly, U.S. policy reveals a strategic interest in promoting the successful democratic transitions of the postcommunist states of the former Eastern bloc. However, the addendum to the democratic peace literature suggests that the United States should stay focused on achieving the long-term goal of enlarging the zone of stable democracies while also paying attention to minimizing the dangers of the process of democratic transition. What shape has this effort taken, and how effective has it been?

Beginning in 1989 Congress and the Bush administration proposed increased assistance to Central and Eastern Europe. This effort culminated in the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) Act, signed into law in November 1989, which appropriated \$900 million in assistance over three years.¹³ This was followed by some limited assistance to the Soviet Union beginning in December 1990 to show support for reform efforts there. With the passage of the Freedom Support Act in October 1992, U.S. support increased substantially following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991. This legislation authorized the expenditure of \$400 million across a range of activities to include humanitarian assistance, the promotion of democratic reform, economic privatization, and environmental protection.¹⁴ The Nunn-Lugar program was also initiated in this time frame, becoming law in December 1991. This initiative supported the denuclearization of four Soviet nuclear successor states and will be discussed in greater depth in the section detailing U.S. military assistance.

In April 1992, President George Bush pledged \$24 billion in aid to Russia,¹⁵ but from fiscal year (FY) 1990 through FY 1995, only \$13.45 billion in grant, donation, and credit programs had been obligated in aid to the former Soviet Union.¹⁶ When assistance did arrive, its direct effect on reform was minimal.¹⁷ U.S. government programs that focus specifically on the FSU include Freedom Support Act activities and the Cooperative Threat Reduction program, which together comprise only 5 percent of all authorized moneys. The rest of

the assistance has come through more than 130 worldwide programs administered by more than 30 separate government agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) food programs, Economic Support Fund financed programs, programs of the Export-Import Bank, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), and other federal agencies.

U.S. assistance programs to Central and Eastern Europe have offered \$3.85 billion through the Support for East European Democracy (SEED) program from 1990 through 1998.¹⁸ The U.S. Congress has appropriated \$432.5 million for the SEED program for FY 1999.¹⁹ Originally designed for application in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, SEED programs have been carried out in fifteen countries to include assistance to the independent states of the former Yugoslavia. Once a recipient state has moved far enough in the direction of a free market democracy, that country "graduates" from the SEED program. Estonia "graduated" in 1996, followed by the Czech Republic and Slovenia in 1997.²⁰ Hungary and Latvia were slated to graduate in 1998.²¹ U.S. priorities have been privatization and private sector development with only a limited emphasis on public administration, which has been the focus of the EU's (European Union) assistance.²²

According to the State Department's own account, the prime areas of emphasis of U.S. assistance have been in strengthening democracy through support for local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the development of a free and independent media, exchange programs, technical assistance to local governments, establishment of enterprise funds for the encouragement of private investment, and advice on the creation of social service systems. "For the most part, the U.S. government provides technical assistance, not cash, to the nations of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. It is trade, not aid, which will provide the bulk of hard-currency capital that the region so badly needs."²³

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been the primary administrator of aid across the postcommunist states and has been roundly criticized for its misapplication of third world development principles to those states between the First and Second Worlds. The GAO report previously cited documents a litany of complaints against the USAID from other government agencies involved in the assistance process. "Agency officials [non-USAID] provided numerous examples of frequent and lengthy disputes between USAID and other agencies over money and policy. Many of the agencies we spoke with were highly critical of USAID and expressed strong reservations and concerns about their relationship."²⁴

USAID has also come under fire for its lax oversight of aid dollars in the FSU. Charges of corruption against the USAID-funded Harvard Institute of International Development rocked the Western Russian assistance community in the summer of 1997. USAID was charged with inadequate oversight of the \$57

million grant allocated to the Harvard group. These charges culminated in U.S. foreign policy embarrassment when Anatoly Chubais requested that the U.S. government cease all market reform work funded through the Harvard organization.²⁵

Moreover, the emphasis on assistance aimed at bolstering trade and investment in the region, while governments stall on improving the business environment, has led to speculation that prime beneficiaries of U.S. aid dollars are U.S. corporations optimizing the financial backing of the U.S. government to participate in business enterprises.²⁶ Grass roots indigenous reform organizations are often ignored by the organizations receiving USAID contracts, which themselves have no experience in Eastern Europe or the FSU.²⁷ Consequently, much of the U.S. aid is wasted on contracts with Western companies that fund expensive feasibility studies and crowd out private sector investment, but do little to develop market institutions in Russia.²⁸

Assistance to the postcommunist states has also been generally criticized for lacking focus and strategic planning. Most democracy assistance organizations tend to assume that the definition of democracy is self-evident and that therefore the goals of democracy assistance organizations do not require extensive elaboration. The management of the assistance programs to the transitioning states has featured duplication of effort, bureaucratic infighting, and weakly focused objectives. The result has been much activity of dubious merit.²⁹

Most of the aid to the postcommunist states has come from a much maligned joint effort of the Western democracies. In 1993 the Group of Seven (G-7) industrial countries promised \$43 billion in economic assistance to Russia to include \$15 billion of debt relief. The West made good on only the debt relief portion of the offer plus \$5 billion. Much of the aid was tied to International Monetary Fund (IMF) objectives that could not be met.³⁰ Overall, Western aid to Russia has been criticized for being absent at times when Russian reformers were in a position to implement reforms (January 1992–December 1993) and so tied to the achievement of IMF objectives that most of the promised aid was never delivered.³¹ The combined effectiveness of the multilateral effort of Western democracies to assist the political and economic transition of the postcommunist states is beyond the scope of this study, but it is important to describe the magnitude and general impact of the overall effort in order to understand the relative contribution of the specific U.S. effort.

Similarly, a full accounting of U.S. assistance programs to the postcommunist states exceeds the intent of this study, but the purpose of briefly surveying them as a prelude to an in-depth analysis of U.S. military democratization assistance programs has been several-fold. First, it is important to highlight the great size of the larger effort in order to keep the relative scale of the military's program in perspective. Second, many of the administrative problems

that will be documented in the military's program are also found across the interagency coordinative effort of the main program. Finally, it is important to note that the military's democratization initiatives, beyond Nunn-Lugar, are largely left out of accounts of U.S. assistance to the transitioning states. These efforts are uncoordinated with the civilian-based programs and are virtually unknown, with the exception of the Nunn-Lugar program, to those who have not directly participated within them.

Needs vs. Response: The U.S. Military's Approach to Assisting the Postcommunist States

I have argued that post-Cold War U.S. foreign policy has redirected the instruments of foreign policy toward achieving the goal of enlarging the community of democracies within the international system. Although the responsibility for U.S. assistance to the emerging democracies of the former Eastern bloc clearly falls within the audit of the State Department and USAID, the military instrument of foreign policy has also assumed a significant role. U.S. foreign policymakers have come to realize that, while military institutions in evolving democracies cannot by themselves ensure an overall democratic outcome, a dysfunctional, non-democratically motivated military institution can become a formidable obstacle to the achievement of democratic consolidation in the postcommunist states.

The democratization goals stated in the National Security Strategy of the United States are complemented further in the National Military Strategy and in the various strategies of the U.S. military commands and theaters.³² From the three primary objectives of the National Security Strategy—enhance security, promote prosperity, and promote democracy—flow the military objectives of the National Military Strategy—promote stability and thwart aggression. Finally, the U.S. military objectives in Europe outlined in the U.S. European Command's Strategy of Engagement and Preparedness are to engage in peacetime, respond to crisis, and fight to win.³³ The aim of engagement in peacetime is to shape the future security environment in order to reduce the likelihood of armed conflict. Security assistance, programs of military to military contacts, and the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies are the primary activities through which the European Command's strategic concept of peacetime engagement is implemented.³⁴

Security Assistance

The military instrument of foreign policy, short of direct military intervention and the stationing of troops abroad, has historically been centered on the transfer or sale of arms from one nation to another when such a step was perceived

to be in the national interests of the provider nation. This type of aid is called security assistance. It is important to note, however, that the specific term *security assistance* does not incorporate all of the U.S. military's assistance to foreign militaries. This term applies specifically to programs approved and administered by the U.S. State Department and carried out by the DOD and the Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA). Specifically, security assistance includes arms transfers, Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Direct Commercial Sales (DCS), and International Military Education and Training (IMET).³⁵ Military to military contacts do not fall under the security assistance purview.

Eventually grant aid was replaced by foreign military sales to economically capable allies with the goal of protecting vital national interests in the form of U.S. oil imports from the Middle East and the containment of communism worldwide. The promotion of democracy in the Cold War era was achieved as an indirect and unwitting benefit of these security assistance programs rather than as the result of a program created with this explicit goal. In some cases, such as the failed Vietnam effort, democratization was not achieved at all. The tendency was to equate the containment of communism with the protection of democratic values in the West in the short term. The long-term hope was for the eventual collapse of communism in the East. The demise of communism behind the Iron Curtain from 1989 to 1991 prompted the general flow of foreign assistance to the region along with traditional security assistance and military to military cooperation programs.

The economic weakness of the postcommunist states precluded the possibility of foreign military sales to the region rendering the traditional form of security assistance inappropriate for these nations. Yet, the burden of transition from communism to democracy was recognized as an overwhelming aim that would require outside assistance. In FY 1994, democratic development was included for the first time as a funded category in the security assistance budget.³⁶

Democratization through Military to Military Programs

The U.S. military was charged with a democratization role in the aftermath of World War II when it was charged to denazify Germany and democratize Japan. In these earlier instances, the U.S. military had the advantage of being an occupying force on conquered territory, yet these postwar reform efforts only partially fulfilled their goals. In recent years, the idea that the promotion of democracy should be an *explicit* mission of the U.S. military has been gradually institutionalized throughout its military cooperation and security assistance programs.

However, it is interesting to note that the post-Cold War initiative did not originate in the Pentagon from some do-gooder policymakers far removed from the field, but from practitioners in the European theater eager to use their re-

sources to address needs observed in their area of responsibility. This time the military's effort to play a role in the democratization process would be necessarily less direct since the West did not have the leverage of being a victor in war and had to deal with regimes attempting to carry on with their inherited tools and resources from the Communist era.

The potential for increasing military contacts with the reforming Soviet Union became possible in the late 1980s when American and Soviet generals began to exchange visits. The need for some sort of assistance to the postcommunist militaries of Central and Eastern Europe was recognized in the early 1990s on high-level visits to these states made possible by the collapse of the Iron Curtain. General James P. McCarthy, then Vice CINC of the U.S. European Command (EUCOM), visited Poland in April 1990 where Polish military leaders requested to buy F-16s. Though eager to modernize their inventory with American fighter jets, the Poles neglected to consider their lack of any sort of airspace management system to handle them. General McCarthy told the Poles that the request would have to be denied for this reason, but that he would immediately send in a team of experts to help them devise a modern airspace management system.³⁷

The next year, while attending the CSCE Conference on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), high-ranking officers of the Albanian military repeatedly approached high-level American officers and requested assistance on restructuring their forces. The Albanians were eager to accept preliminary ideas mapped out on napkins over meals in Geneva. After a similar experience in Czechoslovakia, and as the August 1991 coup began to unravel the Eastern bloc, it became increasingly clear to the leadership of the U.S. military that a window of opportunity was at hand.

From the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), General Colin Powell, on down the leadership of the U.S. military recognized that change was inevitable in the previously closed societies of the East and that the United States should maneuver to be an influential force. Interagency Working Groups (IWGs) had been meeting at the Pentagon to approve each individual contact made with the postcommunist states, but this mechanism proved insufficient for the volume of contacts that was beginning to overwhelm the system. Realizing that a lack of coordination was sending a poor impression to the East, General John Galvin, CINC EUCOM, directed that a more centralized program be launched to coordinate at least the contacts in EUCOM's Area of Responsibility (AOR), which included Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltics, but not the rest of the former Soviet Union.³⁸

The "military to military" concept became the cornerstone of the U.S. military's democratization strategy toward the former Eastern bloc. This approach seeks to exploit the common bonds of military professionalism across states in order to influence institutional processes and behavioral patterns within transi-

tioning postcommunist states. Democratization objectives have also been incorporated into the U.S. security assistance mission through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. The U.S. military effort has four main elements: defense and military contacts conducted under the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, the Joint Contact Team Program (JCTP), the International Military Education and Training Program (IMET), and the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies. Each of these programs will be discussed in turn.

Defense and Military Contacts Program for the FSU

The current defense dialogue with the former Soviet Union began during the 1987 Washington Summit when Soviet General Staff Chief Sergei Akhromeyev called on Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci. Secretary Carlucci reciprocated with several meetings with Marshal Akhromeyev in 1988. Military to military contacts began with Akhromeyev's July 1988 visit to the United States. Admiral William Crowe, JCS Chairman, and his Soviet counterpart established a two-year plan of contacts that was signed in Moscow in June 1989.³⁹

The purpose of these contacts was to alleviate conditions that might have led to conflict. This goal was furthered through the signing of an agreement on dangerous military activities at this time. With the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 came the opportunity to expand the contacts begun in 1988 with the successor states, primarily Russia. This early progress is the basis of the program in place today in the FSU.⁴⁰

The overall foreign policy contexts that form the backdrop for each program have led to substantial differences in program activity, and especially in the funding available for each program. Although pledges were made to treat each region separately, in reality, overall policy toward Central and Eastern Europe was subservient to Russian interests. Policymakers assumed that progress in Russia was inextricably linked to progress within its former satellites. Resources and general attention subsequently favored Russia over the Central and East European postcommunist states. By mid-1995 policymakers realized, however, that progress was occurring in the former satellites, especially in Central Europe, despite the United States' relative neglect of the region and the lack of progress in Russia.⁴¹ Eventually, the launching of the Partnership for Peace initiative in January 1994 at the Brussels Summit started to funnel aid more in the direction of states eager to move more quickly toward the West.⁴²

The opportunity to facilitate the denuclearization of a former adversary has been the primary goal of the defense relationship between the United States and the FSU. The 1991 passage of the Soviet Nuclear Threat Reduction Act, better known as the Nunn-Lugar Act, initiated the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program under which the DOD was authorized to transfer up to

\$400 million in its first year to facilitate “the transportation, storage, safeguarding and destruction of nuclear and other weapons in the Soviet Union . . . and to assist in the prevention of weapons proliferation.”⁴³ Since 1992 \$2.3 billion has been appropriated under Nunn-Lugar,⁴⁴ which has led to the dismantlement of over 4,700 nuclear warheads and 800 launchers as well as other progress across the CTR program.⁴⁵

This legislation also proved to be a relative windfall in funding for military to military initiatives with the nuclear powers of the FSU (Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus). In addition to the four major purposes of the CTR program—destruction and dismantlement, safe and secure transport and storage of nuclear weapons and materials, nonproliferation, and defense conversion—the initial legislation set aside \$15 million for defense and military contacts in the eligible states.⁴⁶

The purpose of this aspect of the program is “to increase understanding and promote more stable military relations between the U.S. and the FSU states, to encourage support for reform and the development of military forces under civilian control which are more responsive to democratically elected officials, to promote denuclearization of forces in the FSU, and to encourage cooperation in regional crises.”⁴⁷

The defense goals stated at the onset of the contact program with the FSU were to facilitate a military responsible to democratically elected civilian authorities, a demilitarized market economy, and a smaller military with defense-oriented forces. Additionally, it was recognized that such a program could influence the military, which is an important factor in the transitioning societies; encourage the downsizing of defense establishments; help the military to better understand Western society; and increase U.S. understanding of defense activity in the newly independent states.⁴⁸

Though the programs for Defense and Military Contacts with the FSU and the JCTP have virtually identical broad policy guidance, each program is overseen by separate interagency working groups (IWGs). The decision not to let the FSU, with the exception of the Baltics, fall under the purview of the USEUCOM Joint Contact Team Program was a deliberate decision rooted in differing schools of thought within the DOD political-military bureaucracy.

The military attaché corps assigned to the Soviet Union was comprised of a large group of Soviet experts who lobbied to keep the military contact mission away from the “nonexperts” at EUCOM. Those involved in the process of continuing contacts with the FSU wanted them to remain under strict Joint Staff guidance. Although the EUCOM effort was respected for its enthusiasm, the perception also existed that it could be too eager to act and was not always as solicitous of the U.S. Embassies’ Chief of Missions’ preferences as it could have been.⁴⁹

As a result, the military to military contacts aspect of the overall military

cooperation program with the FSU has been run by the attachés in-country. While these officers have linguistic and area training superior to their EUCOM counterparts serving in the JCTP, conducting and facilitating military contacts are just a portion of their overall responsibilities, and they cannot give the attention to this aspect of their duties that full-time specialists could. However, as the in-depth study of the effectiveness of military to military initiatives in the Russian case study will show, the lack of enthusiasm for these contacts among the leadership of the Russian military somewhat alleviates this problem since the unsupportive climate limits the number of contacts that are possible.

The Joint Contact Team Program

General Colin Powell sent a message to General John Shalikashvili, then Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, outlining his ideas to create a program akin to a military peace corps so that the transitioning states would have the alternative to turn away from Russia and toward the United States.⁵⁰ Later Powell approved the need for a Brigadier General and a staff of thirty to manage the process. Brigadier General Thomas Lennon, who was slated to become Wing Commander at Homestead AFB before Hurricane Andrew destroyed it, was sent to EUCOM to lead the office created to oversee the program.⁵¹

The EUCOM Commander used funds set aside for his discretionary use to launch the Joint Contact Team Program (JCTP), and the first Military Liaison Team (MLT) was sent to Hungary in July 1992 as a trial. One year later, a total of ten MLTs were operating in Central and Eastern Europe. Today, there are fourteen MLTs working in Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.⁵²

In the first year the program operated with \$6 million from CINC (Commander in Chief) initiative funds.⁵³ The JCTP operated with an appropriated budget of \$10 million in FY 1994 and \$16.3 million in FY 1995.⁵⁴ Beginning in FY 1996 the JCTP's funding was no longer a specific line in the budget for the JCTP. Instead, it was decided that funding should come from the \$60 million allocated to the CINCs for discretionary spending. Whether or not this is a positive or negative development for the program has depended on the willingness of each CINC to support it. Since the shift in the funding method has occurred the JCTP has received \$15 million annually from CINC activity money. An additional \$5.5 million comes from the Reserve Component budget to pay the salaries of reservists in the program.⁵⁵

The JCTP was initiated in the final year of the Bush administration, before the Clinton administration, which was eager to make the promotion of democracy a key military mission, came on board. There was some concern at the State Department that the JCTP should not proceed, because this would "put

the military ahead of the political process.”⁵⁶ While there was an appreciation at State that contacts between militaries could have positive results, State felt that it had to remind DOD that it was not charged with foreign policy constitutionally and that the military should be careful not to take the lead on foreign policy issues—even those with a national security aspect to them.⁵⁷

As the program began, a new national strategy had not yet been written, nor had the “Bottom-Up Review” been conducted—mechanisms that would help sustain the program past its first year when influencing “dangers to democracy and reform, in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere” would be touted by the new administration as a main pillar of its defense policy.⁵⁸

The fact that the program was launched in a less than perfect political climate is testimony to the firm grasp of the military institution’s role in a democracy held by the leadership of the U.S. military. They understood the importance of the military to the processes of transition happening all around them and acted to try to positively influence their counterparts in the postcommunist states. However, as evidence presented later in the study will show, despite attempts to focus program activity on theater objectives, policymakers still do not sufficiently understand how to specifically assist postcommunist militaries transitioning to democracy. Political turf battles plagued the program at its onset and still affect it today, but the recognition that *something* must be done as soon as possible ensured that a program, even an imperfect one, be set in motion to begin to address the U.S. military leadership’s goals of influencing the emerging democracies of the East.

The stated objectives of the JCTP have not appreciably changed in the course of the program. They are to assist governments of Central and Eastern Europe and some assigned countries of the FSU to transition to democracy, promote positive long-term relationships, encourage civilian control of the military, establish frequent contacts with mid- to lower-level officers and NCOs, and encourage participation in NATO activities.⁵⁹ Its mission statement, “to assist the governments of Central and Eastern European countries and the republics of the former Soviet Union in developing civilian controlled military forces which foster peace and stability in a democratic society,”⁶⁰ highlights the JCTP’s broad mandate and has also remained consistent over the years.⁶¹

The democratization mandate evident in mission statements and program objectives has its roots in the law chartering its activities. Title 10, Section 168, “Military to Military Contacts and Comparable Activities,” authorizes contacts to encourage the democratic orientation of the military and defense establishments of other countries.⁶² The legal basis of the program clearly supports military democratization activities aimed at influencing the ideological orientation of the participant states.

On the one hand, the JCTP accepts responsibility for encouraging further

democratization within transitioning militaries by exposing host militaries to the civic virtues characteristic of military professionals in democracies.⁶³ Yet, the JCTP also pursues strategic professional goals, such as enhancing participants' interoperability in NATO. As the process of NATO expansion has progressed through increased Participation in Partnership for Peace activities, the JCTP has increasingly steered away from its original democratization mandate to support PfP (Partnership for Peace) objectives. However, its mandate and legal basis as a military democratization program has not changed. As a result, the military democratization function, which this study will show was poorly conceptualized and unfocused in the first few years of the program preceding the theater emphasis on PfP, is no longer the main focus of the program. Meanwhile, key problem areas in the process of military democratization remain unsolved as the PfP states focus on the military interoperability requirements of NATO accession.

The analysis of JCTP policy oversight, guidance, and assessment will be broken into two distinct eras—the “pre-reform” and “post-reform” eras. The “pre-reform” era covers the period from the program's inception to mid-1997 when country work plans subject to the European theater's concept of focused engagement began to be implemented. The “post-reform” era includes the period from mid-1997 to the present.

JCTP Oversight in the “Pre-reform” Era

In the “pre-reform” era, JCTP activity was monitored by the oversight of an interagency working group composed of representatives from the National Security Council (NSC), Department of Defense (DOD), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Department of State, Joint Staff, and the Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA).⁶⁴ In theory, this group was supposed to screen proposed events to ensure that they were supportive of the stated democratization goals of the program, but, in reality, the only events screened out were ones that might “get the program in trouble.”⁶⁵ Those involved in the policy review process agreed that it had become routine, that the group no longer met in person, and that policy implementers at EUCOM safely assumed that their proposed event would be approved unless it involved specific unauthorized activity.

Events were proposed according to the in-country coordination described earlier, but the menu of possible events was generated by representatives of the U.S. military units, primarily in Europe, that were tasked to support each activity. The U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) is the USAF command that supports JCTP activity by providing the manpower that executes individual events. USAFE described its understanding of EUCOM policy guidance as promoting

“contact initiatives at all levels and across the entire spectrum of specializations.”⁶⁶

USAFE briefing papers noted that it was understood that EUCOM policy prohibited events in which training of foreign troops took place or events that could be categorized as combat-related. Consequently, the focus areas in table 3 were listed as the main areas from which MLTs and host nations could expect support for program activity.

Several reactions should have been immediately evident to policy overseers charged with ensuring that the program was focused on its mission of facilitating democratization goals. The first is that any list of “focus areas” twenty-four items long is arguably unfocused. Second, the focus areas did not seem to pay any particular attention to democratization goals. Indeed, what the areas appeared to operationalize were categories of nonlethal military activity, thus ensuring that policy implementers steered clear of the prohibited areas of training and aid with combat-related military assistance. The prominence of the types of events listed above in JCTP program activity was indicative of both an inability to operationalize democratization goals and the inappropriate equating of nonlethality with democratization. Without a strict process of event prioritization, how did the JCTP achieve its program goals?

The answer is that it did not, nor did it seem overly concerned with achieving them. The chief policy overseer at the Joint Staff, a Navy Commander, admitted that the policy from the start of the program had been “not to have a deliberate policy.” This was in keeping with General Powell’s initial vision that “all contacts are good” and that in the long run lots of interaction will pay off.⁶⁷ There may have been some value to this approach, but it begged the question of maximizing the program’s effectiveness.

Players involved in the policy chain in Washington agreed that no master plan existed at the Joint Staff for the program. Representatives at the level of the individual services complained that their only role was to sign off on the

TABLE 3. JCTP Supporting Units’ Areas of Focus (As stated in USAFE briefing papers obtained at the Pentagon in May 1995)

Airspace Management	Information Management	National Guard/Reserves
Air Traffic Control	Inspector General	Personnel Management
Civil Engineering	Legislative Liaison	Public Affairs
Communications	Logistics	Resource Management
Education and Training	Meteorology	Safety
Environmental	Military Chaplaincy	Search and Rescue
Fire Fighting	Military Legal System	Security Police
History	Military Medicine	Services

supportability of EUCOM's proposed list of events. The services complained further that the lack of more specific guidance frustrated their attempts to carry out their roles responsibly at service-specific levels for policy oversight and implementation.

This approach was flawed on several counts. First, American taxpayers did not get what they paid for. Funding was granted to the program with the assumption that it would directly support the *democratic* transition of the assisted states. Policy overseers openly admitted that they deliberately decided against focusing program activity through the operationalization of its democratization goals and assessing the program's progress accordingly, yet they stressed the worth of working to facilitate democratic civilian control when the program came up for funding every year.

Another problem was the inability to distinguish between program events that might make a military more democratically accountable and encourage democratic military professionalism and those that could conceivably make an ideologically flawed military a better military. The result could be that U.S. military assistance actually contributed to the military buildup of potential foes, whose ideologically based behavior had not changed—all in the name of democratization. The policy oversight as it stood for the first five years of the program's existence—a crucial window of opportunity for influencing the newly democratizing states—was not only less than effective in meeting its stated goals, it was potentially dangerous.

JCTP Policy Oversight in the "Post-Reform" Era

Near the end of 1996, EUCOM policymakers took administrative action in an effort to ensure that JCTP activity supported the new Theater Security Planning System (TSPS) framework that was just being implemented in the European Command's area of responsibility. TSPS is an effort to translate national security strategy, national military strategy, and EUCOM's theater strategy into specific engagement activities in support of these varying layers of objectives.

EUCOM policymakers had finally realized that JCTP program activity had been unfocused and consequently almost impossible to assess.⁶⁸ The solution included the addition of another level of policy review at HQ EUCOM to ensure that work plans drawn up in each country also supported EUCOM's theater objectives. The third level of review at the Inter-agency Working Group in Washington, in place to ensure complicity with legal parameters, remained the same.⁶⁹

While this reform resulted in the development of detailed work plans for each country that included the enumeration of specific objectives and metrics to assess them, an analysis of specific program activity conducted in the "post-reform" era revealed a heavy emphasis on military interoperability events vs.

democratization events and continued poor operationalization of the democratization events that remain.⁷⁰

For example, USAFE's "post-reform" era strategy to support the JCTP begins by listing NATO's PfP objectives: transparency, democratization, and interoperability. It goes on to note that transparency and democratization are political objectives and that "it is in the area of 'interoperability' where the military has its primary responsibility to accomplish concrete PfP results."⁷¹ "Focused engagement" directed at enhancing PfP military interoperability may have been accomplished, but at the cost of the continued pursuit of military democratization goals.⁷²

How the Joint Contact Team Program Works

The main concept involves deploying teams of U.S. military personnel into the countries in order to perform the dual missions of providing infrastructure building information and presenting the U.S. armed forces as a role model of a highly effective military that operates under civilian control. "The continuous contact with these former enemies demonstrates American values and ideals while encouraging increasing openness, as ideas and experiences are shared in a natural positive dialogue."⁷³

An inherent assumption of the program's designers is that ideals and values associated with military service in a democratic political system and the imparting of democratic civic virtues can begin to take root through a series of military contacts. However, the events that occur are largely focused on improving the strategic professionalism and military effectiveness of the transitioning states. The latter goal is the primary motivation of the host countries' participation, while the former goal of imparting democratic values forms the basis of U.S. taxpayers' support of the program. The program's ineffectiveness in achieving its democratizing mission can be traced to the fundamental conflict of goals between assisting and assisted states and the conflict between both missions within the assisting state's program.

The key program element is the Military Liaison Team (MLT), which consists of four to six U.S. military members drawn from all services to include active duty, reserve, and national guard components. These personnel are deployed in-country for six-month intervals with the mission to facilitate visits to the country by U.S. military experts in the form of Traveling Contact Teams (TCTs), and from the country to U.S. military installations either in Europe or the CONUS by host-nation military personnel through familiarization (FAM) tours.

The MLT works in facilities provided by the Ministry of Defense of the host nation—not the U.S. Embassy. The American team is typically supplemented by English-speaking members of the military of the host nation. Such

cooperation is essential for ensuring that the host nation's needs are made known and also to ensure that events are well coordinated in-country.

Event programming is constrained by the "nonlethality" and "no training" prohibitions imposed on the JCTP at the start, which severely limits the effectiveness of the program. These limitations stem from internal bureaucratic battles and are rooted in the State Department's monopoly on training foreign military personnel.⁷⁴ Program managers feared that infringing into the State Department's mission area could have jeopardized congressional funding for the JCTP. However, American officers in-country thought that these constraints prevented the host nations from seeing the "real" U.S. military. The role-modeling function is limited when U.S. participants can't really "model" to the point of training. For instance, a pilot exchange might occur, but policy constraints prohibit the pilots from the United States and the host country from flying together, discussing tactics, or exchanging technical information.⁷⁵ This is especially important for impact in some of the democratic military professionalism aspects of reform. Important leadership lessons could have been learned from seeing U.S. squads in action and if U.S. units were allowed to actually teach.⁷⁶

Interviews with host nation military personnel from across the region indicated that the utility of information-based exchanges had been exhausted as early as the summer of 1994 and that what they needed was specific follow-up training to incorporate proposed ideas into real reforms. Major Johannes Kert, Chief of Kaitseliit (Estonian National Guard), complained that the MLT should "teach us to fish—not just give us bread."⁷⁷ While the restriction against training has not been lifted, JCTP country work plans currently include an emphasis on planning events that explain the "how to" as opposed to the "what to" do.⁷⁸

Involvement of National Guard and Reserve Forces

In July 1992 the United States was asked to participate in a NATO/NACC-sponsored assistance visit to Latvia. Representatives from five NATO countries comprised the delegation, and the United States was given the specific task of addressing the topic "Military Support to Civilian Authorities." Since the National Guard is primarily responsible for performing this function, the National Guard Bureau (NGB) prepared briefing materials on the subject to be used by the U.S. team. The Latvians were impressed with the concepts that were briefed and expressed an interest in learning more. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy subsequently asked the NGB to prepare an assistance plan.⁷⁹

At the same time, USEUCOM was working on finalizing its plan for military contacts in Central and Eastern Europe. An alliance between these two

groups was formed to garner the congressional support necessary to fund the contacts beyond the first year when CINC initiative funds would be spent. It was agreed that the National Guard would take the lead in contacts with the Baltics, but their initiative would fall under the umbrella of the overall USEUCOM Military to Military Contact Program—the JCTP.⁸⁰

The National Guard initiative concentrated initially on assistance to the Baltics. These states looked to the U.S. National Guard as a good model for building some military capability without relying on a large standing army. Besides evoking the negative experience of the years of Soviet occupation, large standing forces would have been impossible within the financial constraints of the Baltic states' democratic transitions. The National Guard also performs a civil defense mission in the United States that is relevant to the needs of these states. In addition, the postcommunist states have large ecological cleanup requirements in which their militaries will be used. There is a great need for the assisted states to learn how to work with civil authorities in these areas.⁸¹

The National Guard's involvement, supported by the services' reserve components, has developed into a regionwide effort called the State Partnership Program. U.S. state National Guards have been paired with partner states participating in the JCTP on the basis of ethnic ties and climatic, geographic, and economic factors. For instance, Illinois has been linked with Poland due to the high concentration of Polish-Americans in Illinois. Additionally, Guard and Reserve members make up one-half of the manning of the JCTP's MLTs.⁸²

The rationale for the state partner dimension of JCTP activity is to build a grass roots relationship between local communities in the United States and postcommunist partner states to facilitate the development of local governmental, academic, industrial, and people-to-people contacts that would not otherwise be possible through the support provided by the active duty components.⁸³ Guard and Reserve participation in JCTP program activity additionally eases the active components' operational requirements. The JCTP has increasingly relied on Reserve Component resources to staff its events. Reserve Component participation has increased from four percent in FY 1993 to a high of 30 percent in FY 1996.⁸⁴ Twenty-one state partnerships have been formed with nations in the former Eastern bloc.⁸⁵

EUCOM's alliance with the National Guard and Reserve forces was a necessary concession for securing the support needed to ensure the continuation of its own efforts in the region. EUCOM program developers realized that the NGB's ability to lobby congressional support exceeded their own and would be an essential element in the JCTP getting off the ground. There have also been fears throughout the life of the JCTP that its funding would not be renewed from year to year, but that some guard dimension of the effort would likely remain in such a contingency.

In a perfect funding environment it is likely that EUCOM would have pre-

ferred to have launched its initiative alone without the complications of merging the separate cultures and expectations of guard and active forces. There have been problems with some of the state political issues that have carried into the program regarding program activity and the quality of personnel deployed to fill the Guard MLT billets.⁸⁶ States have also been known to bypass EUCOM bureaucratic procedures, in some cases acting almost as sovereign nations conducting their own foreign policy in the region.⁸⁷

Given the inability of the active forces to fully embrace the JCTP concept with funding and topflight personnel, the National Guard and Reserve enthusiasm for and participation in the program has been a necessary, though sometimes complicating, factor for its continuation. However, the National Guard is even less prepared than the active forces to staff the policy-planning aspect of its participation or to appreciate the need to think through which activities will make a greater contribution to imparting the ideals and values essential to militaries in democratic political systems.

General George Joulwan, Commander of EUCOM, has stated:

When our servicemembers arrive on the ground the fact that they are citizens of the United States gives them special capabilities. Because they come from a nation of federated states, they understand instinctively the advantages and challenges of many governments working together. . . . American reservists are a unique group, and as citizen soldiers they represent in their persons the concept of a military subordinate to civilian authority.⁸⁸

Unfortunately, this is the type of thinking that has underpinned the JCTP since its inception. "Special capabilities" derived from American citizenship do not necessarily make every contact with Americans a democratizing experience. Only a coherent, focused plan of action based on an understanding of the specific elements required for a military in a democracy will result in program activity that furthers the goal of ensuring the transition of postcommunist militaries to democracy. The Guard's involvement can largely be attributed to budgetary and personnel resource issues. The inclusion of a disparate military component conducting program activity in twenty-one separate U.S. states has made it more difficult to control and focus the events that have occurred there.

The International Military and Education Training (IMET) Program

IMET is a State Department program administered by the Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA). IMET is a component program of the United States Security Assistance Program and provides military education and training on a

grant basis to students from allied and friendly foreign nations. Other key components of U.S. security assistance include the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Program, Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), and the Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund (NPD).⁸⁹

Since 1950 IMET and its predecessor programs have provided education and training for over 500,000 international military students.⁹⁰ “The training ranges from basic technical skills to professional military education and is designed to advance the efficiency, professional performance, and readiness of the recipient armed forces.”⁹¹ In recent years the United States has funded the education and training of over 5,000 students annually from over 100 countries at funding levels ranging from a high of \$56 million in FY 1987 to a low of \$21.25 million for FY 1994.⁹² The cut of 50 percent in the funding for FY 1994 was the result of Congress’s perception of duplication in military assistance programs. In fiscal years 1996 and 1997 \$39 million and \$43.5 million was allocated respectively to IMET activity in over 100 countries. In fiscal years 1998 and 1999, IMET’s funding level has held steady at \$50 million.⁹³ The 23 post-communist states of the former Eastern bloc have received between 32 and 34 percent of the total IMET budget in recent years.⁹⁴

The philosophy behind IMET is that through participation in U.S. military training and education courses designed for members of the U.S. military, foreign students will be exposed to U.S. military professionalism within the context of American life and culture.⁹⁵ The hope is that these individuals will eventually rise to prominence within their own militaries and will positively influence public policy and foreign relations decisions that favor U.S. interests.⁹⁶ Program administrators admit that it is impossible to rigorously prove that such influence actually takes place and that there have been a few instances in which IMET graduates rose to prominent positions and followed policy courses that were disloyal to civilian governments. Overall, though, analysts agree that IMET participation has positively predisposed many foreign officers to U.S. values and interests.

This long-standing program was extended to include the states of the former Soviet bloc beginning in 1991.⁹⁷ Since that time IMET has been funding nationals of postcommunist states to study in U.S. military education and training programs to expose students to democratic principles prevalent in the U.S. military. The approach of IMET had never been to directly teach foreign students about the U.S. democratic system or U.S. democratic military professionalism, but to expose participants to these concepts by living within the wider U.S. culture and its military subculture.

IMET funds have made possible the training of foreign students in U.S. military institutions and training programs, but the emphasis with this program has been on the training itself. For instance, an allied country may receive several slots at a U.S. pilot training base with the hope of having several pilots re-

turn to their country trained to U.S. standards. What these officers may have picked up with regard to how the military operates in a democracy was incidental, or perhaps irrelevant, if the allied student was not even returning to a democratic regime. For instance, many students from such countries as Saudi Arabia and Iran have participated in this program.

Beginning in FY 1991 a portion of IMET expenditures was earmarked for a new IMET focus area dubbed "Expanded IMET" (EIMET). This initiative expanded IMET to allow the participation of civilian defense officials as well as that of civilians from nondefense ministries and legislatures and individuals from relevant organizations outside of the government, such as the media. These participants take part in courses aimed at enhancing the management of military establishments and budgets, the promotion of civilian control of the military, and the creation of military justice systems and codes of conduct that are in accordance with internationally recognized standards of human rights.⁹⁸ The allocation for EIMET has been 10 percent of the total IMET budget⁹⁹ for each state although it can be a higher portion of the IMET grant in states with greater democratization needs.¹⁰⁰

It is important to emphasize that IMET and the JCTP are separate programs administered by different parts of the U.S. defense bureaucracy. The State Department funds and oversees the administration of IMET while the JCTP is funded by DOD with policy oversight from the Joint Staff. Though each program has invested in the achievement of democratization objectives in the postcommunist states, the efforts have been incompletely coordinated, and both programs have competed for the same limited resources.

The Marshall Center

The greatest long-term role in trying to overcome the lack of education in democratic principles of officers and civilian defense personnel of the postcommunist states will most likely be played by the George C. Marshall Center for European Security Studies in Garmisch, Germany. The Marshall Center is a separate initiative from the military to military contact programs and IMET and focuses on educating senior military officers and defense ministry personnel through their participation in courses that stress a broad sense of national security and defense planning in democracies to include political, economic, and military aspects. Its goal dovetails with the mission of the military to military contact programs that emphasize short-term assistance through the establishment of contacts at the middle ranks.¹⁰¹

The inaugural group of 50 officers and 25 civilian officials from the foreign and defense ministries of 23 countries graduated in December 1994. Since 1994 more than 600 defense, security, and policy officials have graduated from the Marshall Center's courses.¹⁰² All of the CEE/FSU cooperation partner

states of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council along with students from Bosnia-Herzegovina have participated.¹⁰³

The Marshall Center conducts two five-month courses of study per year along with shorter courses and conferences aimed at specific audiences and topics. It is patterned after the conceptual basis of the Marshall Plan except that intellectual capital is being offered instead of money. The center has targeted rising stars—officers and civilians expected to hold senior leadership positions within their countries' transitioning defense infrastructure—as its preferred students.¹⁰⁴

Initial reaction to the training was largely positive with a few reservations. "It's a very good initiative," said Gregori Saytsev, who oversees disarmament at the Russian defense ministry and was the spokesman for the six Russian students in the first class. "The course is very one-sided, but it's interesting and important to hear the opinions of others, particularly from CIS countries." He noted, though, that "it's a painful experience to see that the Russians are blamed for everything." A Polish officer from the Polish general staff added that the exchange of ideas possible at the center impressed him most. "I have never experienced a situation like this before, where everybody gives their personal opinion, rather than that of their government."¹⁰⁵ The Marshall Center has adapted its curriculum at the suggestion of some of its alumni by providing more student-driven electives, greater emphasis on Central Asian regional security concerns, and increased student participation.¹⁰⁶

Funding is provided by the German and American governments, mainly through the U.S. Army budget, with oversight and command and control coming from the headquarters of the U.S. European Command in Germany. Nunn-Lugar funds pay the costs of students from Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan.¹⁰⁷ Since the program started conducting courses it has been funded at a level of \$16.1 to \$16.8 million dollars annually.¹⁰⁸

Because the program targets only a few individuals yearly from each participating state, success will ultimately depend on the quality of participants, their future positions within their military institutions, and the student reactions to the education received. These factors are largely dependent on decisions made within the participating states and may limit the effectiveness of the effort. In July 1998 the Marshall Center initiated an alumni association to encourage networking among its graduates. The Marshall Center also posts on its web site follow-on positions obtained by its graduates and their specific achievements according to information voluntarily provided.¹⁰⁹

Other Military Assistance Efforts

Though not aimed specifically at the goal of democratizing postcommunist militaries, it should be mentioned that substantial funds have also been allocated

to further the NATO membership goals of the postcommunist states participating in the Partnership for Peace program. This commitment stems from President Clinton's promise made in Warsaw in July 1994 to seek funds to promote the interoperability of PfP states with NATO. Known as the Warsaw Initiative, this program has provided about \$100 million per year beginning in FY 1996 to support these efforts in 23 partner states.¹¹⁰ Finally, beginning in FY 1997, the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act earmarked \$30 million for foreign military financing grants for the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland and \$20 million to subsidize the lending of up to \$242.5 million for the purchase of defense items.¹¹¹

Despite the importance of the political objective of insisting that the admission of partners as full members be contingent on the progress of democratization, specifically the achievement of democratic political control of the armed forces,¹¹² little activity at the NATO level has focused on these goals.¹¹³ Specific criteria for democratic civilian control of the partner states began to be developed in the fall of 1995, pushed largely by the U.S. Mission, and some Partnership for Peace resources are beginning to be channeled to achieve this goal.¹¹⁴ The need for both ideological and military interoperability is finally being recognized as a necessary condition for the enlargement of NATO.

Conclusion: The Effectiveness of the U.S. Military's Democratization Approach

This chapter has introduced the U.S. military democratization programs and suggested that their design flaws have limited the achievement of their aims. The following chapters will illustrate how these programs fall short of meeting the democratization needs of two specific cases, the Czech Republic and Russia, in terms of achieving both democratic political control and democratic military professionalism.

Although it has been demonstrated that democratization is a strategic aim of U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War era, the achievement of this goal is elusive in U.S. military democratization programs primarily because there is widespread confusion over how to achieve democratization objectives. These programs, particularly the military to military contact programs, were flawed from the start due to an inability to conceptualize the problem of military democratization. Policymakers understood neither the imperative of democratic political control nor democratic military professionalism. As a result, inconsistent mission statements were born containing elements of furthering both the development of democratic civic virtues and strategic professionalism under the auspices of military democratization programs. Furthermore, the deliberate decision to refrain from assessing the programs until mid-1997¹¹⁵ led to the perpetuation of poor program designs and the continuation of the bureaucratic in-fighting and underfunding that has plagued the effort.

Even with the advent of the “post-reform” era in 1997, the goal of pursuing a focused and theoretically sound policy for the fostering of military democratization in postcommunist states remained elusive. “Focused engagement” and the implementation of the programs through the Theater Strategic Planning System only shifted the emphasis in program content to NATO military interoperability goals. In addition, the Program of Defense and Military Contacts with the FSU falls outside the parameters of EUCOM influence and is consequently unaffected by any improvements that may have occurred in the European Command’s area of responsibility.

In the “pre-reform” era success was often determined by tracking the frequency of events. It was assumed that the more events that took place, the closer the program was coming to achieving military democratization in its target countries. While the “post-reform” program emphasizes assessing contributions to specific goals laid out for each country, many of these objectives and assessment metrics are insufficiently focused on tracking how well the interactions taking place address specific preexisting obstacles to reform. Progress made toward overcoming obstacles and facilitating headway toward democratic goals is sporadic because the underlying principles and theory that should drive the program are not universally understood.

Personal contact and the opportunity to discuss democratic principles can contribute to a greater understanding of these concepts in the East, and certainly much progress has been made merely by removing the barriers to isolation that once existed, but some still remain. The lack of a formal training program for members of the MLTs inbound to serve in-country limits the effectiveness that they can have. In fact, field research revealed how unfamiliar many team members were with the overall democratization goals of the program. While these goals exist in briefing documents available at the program’s headquarters in Stuttgart, they did not seem to loom very large in the planning scheme of MLT members in-country. The reality of their day-to-day life is that they are staff officers “making events happen,” which means that logistical details consume their time rather than lofty goals of helping to create democratic institutions. One of the positive benefits of developing country work plans is that specific objectives for each country are circulated at the grass roots level.

However, the in-depth case study analysis of chapter 5 will show that there are still problems conceptualizing which events are best suited to the achievement of particular objectives. Personnel serving in-country still are not sufficiently familiar with the post-Soviet model that they are confronting and the precepts of the American model that they represent. This is especially important considering that the deployments for most MLT members are only six months long, meaning that by the time a serviceman or servicewoman learns these lessons it will be time to redeploy to the West. A positive trend in this dimension of the problem has been the lengthening of the deployments to one year for the Team Chiefs and their deputies beginning in 1997, but these

assignments are still unaccompanied and the officers serve in a Temporary Duty (TDY) status.¹¹⁶

Issues of incomplete coordination and internal turf battles continue to plague the overall effort of influencing the postcommunist states. Parts of the U.S. defense bureaucracy that have traditionally played a role in political-military relations are reluctant to share their role or delegate substantial powers to the program. For example, defense attachés have not universally supported the program. The attitude of some of them actually undermines the effectiveness of the program and sends the signal to the host militaries that U.S. defense structures are not complementary or united in purpose.

Additionally, self-imposed limitations, such as providing only information that falls short of actual training, also limit the effectiveness of the military to military programs. The host militaries universally expressed their concern that they do not have a continued need for information briefings, while their need for real training will persist indefinitely. Program constraints and bureaucratic shortcomings such as frequent rotations of most of the MLT members prohibit the fulfillment of more advanced needs. Personnel are also assigned to participate either on the deployed staff or as “experts” in their particular fields without any specific training on the transition in progress that they are charged with influencing.

The success of the U.S. military’s effort to facilitate the democratic consolidation of militaries in the postcommunist states depends on many factors. Even though the vast majority of Military Liaison Team members’ duties are largely administrative, training on the process of military democratization and the ability to speak the host country’s language would greatly enhance their effectiveness. They are well placed to achieve more than they have in the process of military democratization. Coordination among all members of the U.S. team in-country to include the embassy staff and the defense attachés is also important. Additionally, the attitude and support of the host military are key. How motivated are they to reorient their defense structures and processes toward Western models? How severe are the limitations of preexisting obstacles to reform? What image from the Soviet era must the military overcome? What advantages does it have due to its positive image earned in the Soviet period or in the peaceful transition to a postcommunist government? The overall condition of the web of political, economic, social, and military transitions within each postcommunist state also affects the degree of influence that external actors can have on internal processes.

If the goal of positively influencing the democratic transition of the military institutions of the postcommunist states is a matter of such national import and a major thrust of the post–Cold War defense policy, then the U.S. military should embrace this role and ensure that the most competent officers and NCOs are selected and appropriately trained to serve within the program.

Program content must be redesigned to contribute to the achievement of military democratization objectives. Democratization objectives have been overtaken with interoperability objectives. To the extent democratization objectives remain, they are still poorly operationalized. Many of the same events that were prevalent in the “pre-reform” era continue to be pursued in the “post-reform” era, while many of the democratization deficits inherited from the Communists persist. These have been enumerated in chapter 1 and will be explored through in-depth case studies in chapters 3 and 4. In sum, these programs should be engaged in breaking down and adapting the model of the military in a democracy presented in chapter 1 in light of local cultures and needs. As this chapter has begun to show and as the following chapters will bear out, the military to military programs, as currently constructed, have not maximized either their responsibility or opportunity to achieve these goals.