

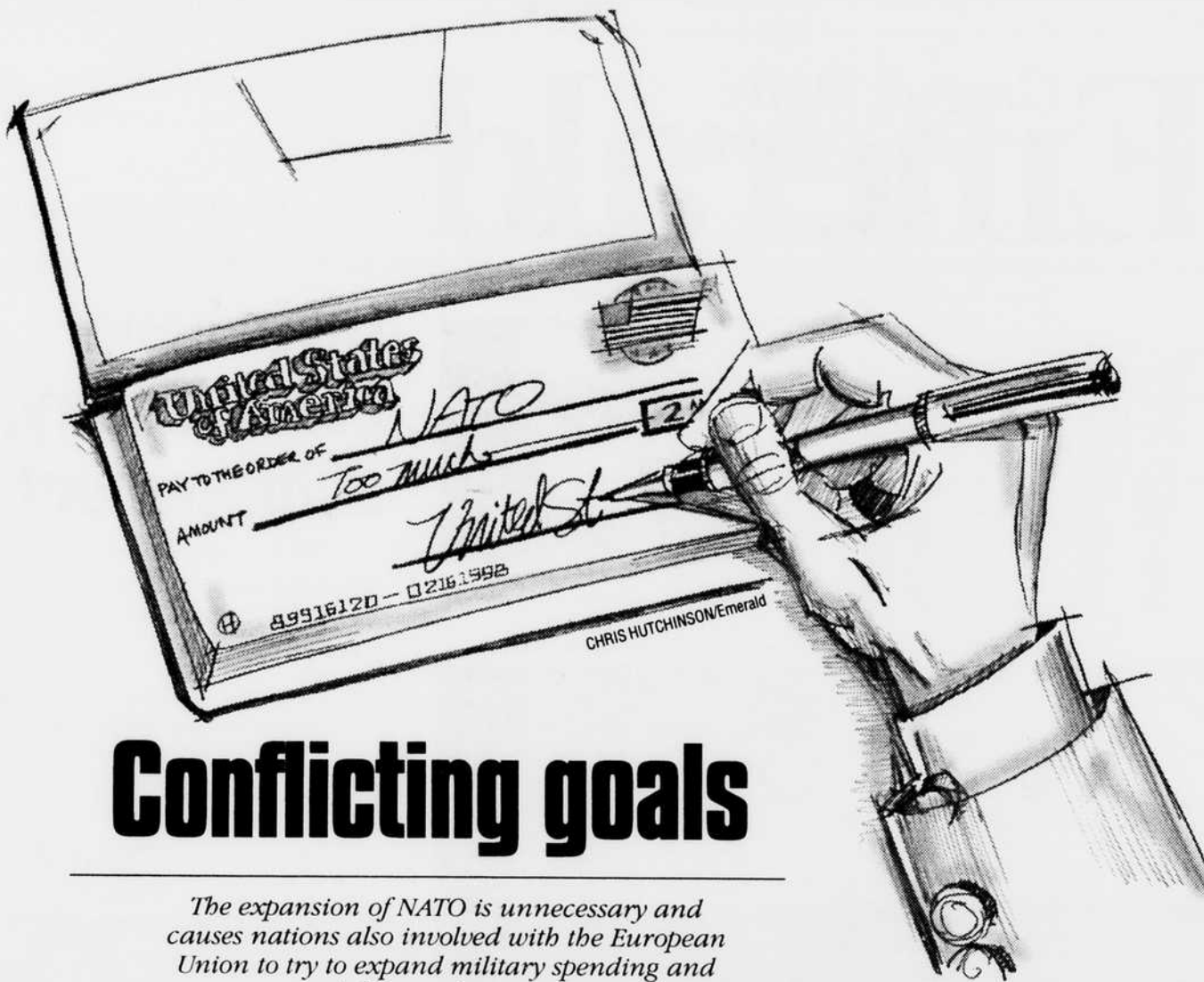
CONTACTING US

NEWSROOM:
(541) 346-5511
E-MAIL:
ode@oregon.uoregon.edu
ONLINE EDITION: www.uoregon.edu/~ode

ADDRESS:
Oregon Daily Emerald
P.O. BOX 3159
Eugene, Oregon 97403

PERSPECTIVES

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Sarah Kickler
EDITORIAL EDITOR
Mike Schmierbach
NIGHT EDITOR
Nicole Krueger



Conflicting goals

The expansion of NATO is unnecessary and causes nations also involved with the European Union to try to expand military spending and cut deficits at the same time

AN EMERALD EDITORIAL

The world is changing. This much is impossible to deny. What that change will mean has been a subject of debate for average people and policy-makers alike. For Cold War strategists and arms merchants who made their fortunes by calling for aggressive posturing against the Soviet Union, the last few years have been a period of desperate scrambling.

Near the top of many foreign policy experts' lists of "New World Order" concerns has been the role the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will play in the future political landscape.

NATO was a favorite toy for many of those playing military games at the height of Cold War paranoia. The organization, which currently includes the United States, Canada and a number of Western European powers, provided a ready source of military power, a willing market for U.S. manufactured arms and ostensibly served to help "contain" the Soviets.

These days, of course, there is no Warsaw Pact threat to be used to justify spending billions of dollars to facilitate NATO containment. Worse, many members of NATO have proven reluctant to continue spending billions of dollars on arms to defend against a threat U.S. leaders are still struggling to invent.

Enter Eastern Europe and Russia. No longer considered the enemy, these nations are now viewed by many foreign policy pundits as backwoods cousins who, with the right schooling and the proper possessions, could become valuable allies (otherwise known as consumers).

Late last year, NATO decided to admit three of these nations into its hallowed halls to receive the appropriate reeducation. The proposal, to admit Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, now awaits approval from the U.S. Senate.

The issue stretches beyond that vote and those nations, however. Admission to NATO requires passing certain entry exams, which include political, finan-

cial and military requirements. Like International Monetary Fund and World Bank loans, NATO memberships have enough strings attached to entertain all the cats in New York.

Despite these requirements, the governments of many Eastern European nations want to join the club. Therefore, many nations, including the Baltic states and Romania, are making the requested alterations with the hope of one day joining the organization.

In other words, the dual forces of NATO requirements and European Union mandates are shaping the developing democracies of Eastern Europe far more than the newly found voice of the people. In particular, the European Union insists nations minimize their deficits, while NATO requires high military spending. For many of the countries hoping to enter both circles, this means slashing social spending to stay in the black while pouring billions into updating run-down military infrastructure.

Perhaps this sort of behavior could be justified (however inadequately) if there was a visible strategic need for NATO. Unfortunately, the most likely scenario to come from NATO expansion (assuming it continues to reject Russia) is to threaten and alienate the region's former superpower. If politics and military posturing succeed at pushing Russia into a militant, defensive mode, the only people who benefit will be the foreign policy experts who see the geopolitical order they claim to comprehend restored.

If expansion won't help the region or the admitted governments, who stands to gain? Certainly not the American taxpayer. Estimates of the cost over the next 12 to 15 years range from the Department of Defense's \$27 billion to the Congressional Budget Office's mark of \$125 billion.

Even those estimates may not put an accurate price tag on expansion, however. Among the many factors that could raise the cost is reluctance on the part of

other current NATO members to help pay for extending the alliance. If France, the United Kingdom and others don't want to provide funding for armament and training of newly admitted nations, the country most likely to write the check is the United States.

Sadly, the United States is probably willing to bear that burden. The reason? Heavy lobbying by military contractors. As we mentioned earlier, the end of the Cold War has left many companies looking for new markets in which to unload weapons. Eastern European nations bound to meet NATO's demands for military strength are just such a market.

With their political clout, defense industry lobbyists are likely to provide significant soft money incentives for the Senate to approve expansion. If this happens, someone will suffer.

The political situation in Europe will only become more unstable. Worse, the people of Eastern Europe, who desperately need government services to help them through currency problems and the pain of transition, will instead watch as their tax dollars are spent on American-made tanks, guns and missiles.

If the new nations are ever unable to pay for these toys, the price for the United States could rise. It is possible, even likely, that Congress and the White House would approve loans to the governments that, in part because of tight restrictions, could eventually result in default.

Clearly, then, the only groups who will benefit from proposed expansion are the corporations, politicians and military leaders who have been pushing for the free-market globalism currently popular. In other words, the rich will get richer by hurting the general population.

That scenario, rapidly changing world or not, is one thing that always seems to stay the same.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Support activists

From an outsider's perspective, the whole town of Eugene, including the University, is a bit messed up regarding this particular case of sexual assault. No more so than any other town or college, but messed up nonetheless. I have a few suggestions/tidbits to share:

1. Rape is a crime, people. We're not talking about cheating on a test or noise complaints. A University has no business handling a rape case, as evidenced by your school president's lack of confidence in your decisions. But if a school is ill-equipped to handle rape cases, the courts are certainly not much better. If they were, maybe more people would press charges. Institutionally, there are things we still need to talk about when a community's lawyers, citizens and press care more about whether the victim was wearing provocative clothing or whether they personally choose to be sexually active. Unwanted penetration constitutes rape. Maybe the sexual history of the accused in rape cases should be picked apart as thoroughly and publicized in the press as tastelessly as with this case.

2. Students need to know the definition of rape. Since at least four-fifths of all rapes are committed by people whom the victims know, date rape should be clearly defined early in an academic career. How Oregon views date rape in the courts is also relevant. What is the maximum penalty for a date rapist in this state? These are things people need to know.

3. Students should know that a University or college need only reveal to the public (i.e. prospective students) cases that are reported to the police. They would prefer to handle all public safety cases in order to keep their reputation a positive one. For instance, at my alma mater, Connecticut College, there have been, according to public records (which the deans quoted), only two rapes in the past 15 years. I would guess that at least two occur on that campus every weekend. With 10 times the student population at the U of O, it doesn't take a math major to figure out how prevalent date rape is. I think I smell the potential for a national movement to change this policy on all college campuses.

4. Students should know the town's conviction rate for sexual offenders. That's usually a good indicator of how victims are treated by the community, and whether they should press charges.

5. Students should know that if they are brave enough to come forward as a victim, they will not receive support from administrators, certain student groups and especially not the press. I'm sickened by the one-sided support in The Register-Guard and the inability of readers to cut through the bull and realize that it is not fun to be a victim of rape, and it is not easy to come forward.

6. If you want to change anything on this campus, whether it be behavior codes, the abysmal minority hiring practices of this school — and subsequent homogeneous course offerings — this stupid quarter system, or anything else, remember one thing: You have only two to three years to get the job done (unless you're a particularly political first-year student, then you have four to five), and the administration knows this. This means that you need the infrastructure to hold rallies, vigils, sit-ins and distribute PR quickly. This also means that you have to insist on being on more University committees, and in general, support student activism. If you're already active, invite some of your apathetic friends to a meeting or two. Get going!

Please support survivors of rape and, for that matter, all student activists. Don't make them have to do all the work to change things. Some of them actually have to worry about other things, like maintaining faith in human compassion. You're a campus community (with an emphasis on the community part).

Jeff Klein
Eugene