

“Czech National Security: Balancing NATO and EU Responsibilities”

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Introduction

In order to think in an organized way about the quandaries and questions of Czech national security policy, it is illuminating to invoke systems theory with all of its component parts. It would not have made sense to apply this analytical model in the 1990s, for Czech leaders were preoccupied with drafting architectural blueprints that would underpin the construction of their national security process and policies. However, enough time has now passed to identify more than a blueprint. Although not complete, the building that houses Czech national security policy is under construction. The foundation is in place. The outline of walls and roof is visible when one looks at it on the horizon. The builders have placed windows in ways that capture natural outside light in order to bring to life new decisions, projects, and dreams. Placement of the doors that lead into and from key international organizations is nearing completion. The hum of activity within the national security building has generated important new policies and even themes for the future.

Just as the picture of a building under construction can stir the imagination to comprehend how the individual pieces of the Czech national security puzzle fit together, so also can the parallel academic model of formal systems theory (Stillman 2004, x) be of use. It makes more sense to apply systems theory to the study of defense policy than it would to domestic policy. Political leaders have more control over the agenda and the evolution of the policy making process. In some cases, in the post-9/11 world, security issues contain stakes and threats that are higher for the population itself. In light of these realities, systems theory will be the magnifying glass through which it will be possible to view the key components of the security decision making process. For purposes of this

study, the external environment of the security system includes values that developed in both the 1989 anti-communist revolution and post-1989 foreign policy experiences. The two external pressures that press constantly upon the system include both NATO and the EU. The Ministry of Defense, with its unique demographic characteristics and changing budgetary realities, will constitute the location within which the pressures internal to the system circulate. Actual national security decisions fall naturally into the categories of high stakes, middle stakes, and low stakes games. Finally, a feedback loop, the ultimate guarantor of democracy, apprehends the sparks from some of these policies and conveys then as electricity back into NATO and the EU, the two most significant external pressures that move into and out of the doors of the Czech national security structure.

Environment of National Values

The anti-communist revolution that took place in 1989 was the critical event that made possible membership in western organizations like NATO and the EU. The western-leaning implications of that revolution echoed previous cycles of Czechoslovak history. For example, in the inter-war period of the twentieth century, the First Republic adopted into its political system many of the features of the western democracies that had emerged in the previous century and one half. After three decades of totalitarian rule between 1938 and 1968, the Prague Spring reformers again looked to the West and its democratic institutions for ideas and inspiration. Just as the seeds of the First Republic stayed alive beneath the permafrost of mid-century totalitarianism, so also the seeds that the Prague Spring reformers planted continued to germinate after 1968 beneath the veneer of normalization. In this sense, the 1989 revolution was the time when regional

and global conditions made it possible for these two dormant seeds of western democratic ideas to sprout.

In many ways the revolution itself was a singular one that differed from the other rebellions that took place within the bloc during the same year. Massive, peaceful demonstrations daily in Prague forced the antiquarian communist structures to collapse. Step-by-step the percentage of communists in the cabinet was reduced to minority status (Ash 1990, 123-124). Alexander Dubček stepped out of the shadows that had encircled him since 1968 and became a visible symbol of the seed planted during the Prague Spring. More important was the strategy making role of dissident and Charter '77 leader Václav Havel, who coordinated the revolution from a back room in the Magic Lantern Theater. In effect, the power of the people combined with charismatic leadership to put the national value structure on a path to western institutions. With backbone and restored confidence, the transformed nation could take up an integral role both in its region and on the wider European stage.

Post-1989 foreign policy experiences also became pointers to future membership in NATO and the EU. First, the break with Slovakia was a foreign policy decision that located the Czech state a bit further to the west than it had been during the long Czechoslovak period. Further, the Czechs had freed themselves from the pressures represented by the Slovak nationalist and eastward leaning Vladimír Mečiar. Second, Prime Minister Klaus and his associates made the decision to convert the centrally planned economy to free market principles in a short time, essentially through shock therapy. Western economists such as Jeffrey Sachs were recommending this type of transition for the post-communist systems, even though a number of key nations such as

Russia eventually backed away from that advice. Third, western leaders deemed the Czech Republic as one of the newly post-communist nations that was prepared to contribute to NATO very early. Therefore, the Clinton Administration welcomed the Czechs as participants in the Partners for Peace Program. Fourth, the two principal ideological threads in Czech foreign policy during the 1990s nudged the nation towards firm membership in the community of the west. The thread of ideology symbolized by President Havel emphasized a “civic foreign policy.” Based on his dissident experience, Havel focused on humanist aims, the common good, universal values, and good international citizenship for the new Czech nation. In contrast but in a complementary way, Prime Minister Klaus emphasized “free market values” as the foreign policy key that could unlock the doors to western institutions (Fawn 2003, 205-208). The forging of such values during the fast-moving events of the 1990s positioned the Czech Republic for invitations from the West into its inner circles

External Pressures from the West

The Czech Republic in the 1990s encountered a maze of external pressures and alliances that could become significant in their future historical experience. President Havel initially had a real fondness for the Organization of Security and Cooperation Europe (OSCE), as that group of nations seemed to offer a useful middle course between the defunct Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) and NATO. Also, in 1991 Czechoslovakia, along with Poland and Hungary, signed the Visegrad Declaration. This neighborhood organization bore the potential to “maintain culture and national character” at a time when larger organizations loomed on the horizon (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

the Czech Republic 2005a). Another attractive organization in the early 1990s was the Western European Union (WEU). At that time, this long-established organization offered the potential to become the EU's military organization. All of these external pressures, however, had receded from view by the latter part of the 1990s.

Eventually, the Partnership for Peace Program of NATO became much more attractive as an external organization worth joining. Finally, on February 26, 1999, President Havel signed the agreement to join the military alliance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2005b). Very quickly action commenced, for the Czechs needed to participate in planning the alliance's bombing campaign in Kosovo. Symbolic of the importance of the Czech Republic was NATO's decision to hold its 2002 conference in Prague. It was at that conference that the organization extended offers of membership to seven additional post-communist nations. By that point NATO overshadowed the OSCE, Visegrad, and the WEU as an external organizing focus for Czech defense plans.

Simultaneous with the opening offered by NATO were negotiations with the EU. On paper the discussions mainly centered on the economic goals that were at the heart of that organization's activities. However, the EU began to plan for its own military component, once the hopes lifted up by the WEU began to fade. Thus, they established a component entitled the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). After the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997 planning became more formalized. Brussels took additional control of policy formation, but the member nations received the right to veto CFSP missions if they conflicted with national interests. Within several years the Czech Republic included commitments to the CFSP in its National Program (National Program

2000). The eventual role of the CFSP in European military planning was then unclear, but it did offer promise as a military alliance that would be independent of American direction.

Before proceeding on to separate discussion of NATO and the EU's CFSP as significant external forces in the Czech national security system, it is worth speculating briefly on Czech views of the latent impact of these two organizations on Czech independence and autonomy. Karlas perceives both organizations as emphasizing crisis management and conflict prevention. NATO, in addition, had a major role in providing collective defense. He concluded that both organizations were intergovernmental regimes in their essence and not designed really to dictate policy to the individual member states. At the same time, both did possess limited power to transmit authority with regard to the agenda. NATO planners were able to create an agenda for the member states, while the CFSP additionally bore the power to push for implementation of the agenda (Karlas 2006, 35-38). If that depiction squares with reality, then the Czech Republic would not be dealing with particularly intrusive external organizations. Czech reactions to Kosovo as their first NATO operation were mixed. Initially, they waited ten days to grant airspace rights to those countries actually carry out the bombing campaign. However, the leadership eventually voluntarily supported the humanitarian goals of the operation, and this fitted in with President Havel's view that NATO in general expressed both Czech and European values (Fawn 2003, 219-221).

As NATO beckoned, a number of key new questions for Czech defense policy emerged. First, what could the Czech Republic contribute to the NATO Response Force (NRF)? The Czechs earmarked a number of capabilities for NRF future missions. Those

capabilities included ground forces units such as a mechanized battalion, a chemical defense company, a special forces company, and a mobile unit for a passive tracer system. They also committed several aircraft to include MIG 21s, MI 7s, JAS 39 Gripen, and MI 17s (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006a). Czechs also played a key role in a mission that was really tied to the Iraq war. From December 2003 until January 2005, they headed up the multinational battalion for radiological, chemical, and biological defense that was based in Kuwait. They again played the leading role after June 2006 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006a). Given vitriolic global conditions, the potential for invitations for future roles in NRF missions was high.

Second, NATO regulations loomed large in the ordering of military supplies. NATO possessed a “Basic Ordering Agreement” that restricted member states in a number of concrete ways. The Agreement included a formula for determining the prices of goods and services that might be ordered. It included a principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunity in dealing with firms that offered items for sale. It required that NATO be a preferred customer that should receive the highest quality equipment. Discovery of defective products required that the buyer explain to the supplier exactly what the reasons for rejection of the product were. There was an additional expectation that outsourcing be used as a dynamic feature of public-private partnerships (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006b). It would definitely be the case that Czech purchasing practices in the future would be somewhat changed in light of NATO membership.

Third, in the middle of 2006, there was a vigorous discussion about a possible future American anti-rocket base on Czech soil. American experts checked four sites in

the Czech Republic and seemed eventually to prefer Libavá near Olomouc. Since the experts had already visited Poland for the same reasons, there was concern in the Czech Republic about some of the issues that had emerged in Poland. Americans seemed to want the exclusive right to make decisions about use of the base, to carry out inspections, and to control information about which weapons were actually on the base. Some compared it to Guantanamo in Cuba, in terms of the lack of local control. Others raised questions whether local persons or Americans would be employed at the base. Further, might it attract future terrorist hits in the Czech nation? Czech officials were more reassuring in pointing out that mutual agreement would determine the nature of the base and that the experts were simply checking to see if the conditions in their country were suitable. Eventually, a public opinion poll revealed that 83% of Czechs were opposed to the idea of an American base. For some such a base bore reminders of the recent occupation by Soviet and WTO forces. Unfortunately, the program manager for such a base was named William Lamb, and his last name symbolized to some the role the Czech nation seemed to be playing in this discussion (iDNES 2006a).

Fourth, new events related to NATO would take place in the Czech Republic. Some of these may have been intended to generate more public support for membership in the alliance. For instance, in the summer of 2006 NATO organized a “NATO Day” in Ostrava. They provided displays of technology, air demonstrations, presentation of various formations, and demonstrations by anti-terrorist units that re-enacted how to free hostages from buses (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006c). In fact, the British Royal Air Force (RAF) performed to 55,000 people. Also, three Czech veterans who fought in the RAF during World War II were on hand as a reminder of past heroic

efforts. Such a dramatic display of firepower could reassure the public about what was available if a security threat occurred. It could also offer additional reasons to the government about the need to increase the defense budget. Overall, the day underlined the emerging special relationship between NATO and Czech defense policy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006b).

Fifth, NATO membership also carried with it the possibility of operations far from the Czech homeland and European theater. For instance, the Ministry of Defense sent one general as an observer to NATO exercises in the Cape Verde Islands. This was one of the most important operations by the NRF. The operation tested units in the air, at sea, and in unexpected humanitarian crises. One piece of the exercise involved evacuation of civilians who lived close to a dangerous volcano (iDNES 2006b). Even though only one Czech observer attended this exercise, the experience drove home the message about new activities into which NATO could sweep the Czech military.

Since the CFSP of the EU has a much shorter history than does NATO, there is less evidence yet of the role it can play as an outside pressure on the Czech defense policy system. However, it is possible to examine early Czech perceptions of the EU in general and speculate that similar views would apply to the CFSP. In 2003 the Czech Republic held a referendum on the question of accession to the EU. The parties in the governmental coalition were all in support, but there was more skepticism within the opposition ODS and Communist Party (KSČM). Adherents of the parties in the governing coalition supported entry by 80-90%. At the other end of the spectrum, members of the Communist Party allocated only 37% of their votes to EU accession

(Linek and Mansfeldová 2004, pp. 982-983). The opposition parties worried about lost Czech autonomy, a concern that surely would apply to the CFSP.

In fact, another writer (Braun 2005/2006, 13-18) discovered that supporters and opponents of the EU had very different views about the legitimation principles that underpin the organization. If the EU resulted in promoting the economic and material interests of the state, then support was generally strong. If the EU mainly stood as an expression of a broad “value-based community,” then the doubters in the Czech Republic multiply. The concern is that promotion of European values might undermine Czech sovereignty. A third method for legitimation centers on the concept of the EU as a “rights-based union.” Braun envisions this focus on human rights as containing the potential to garner additional local support for the organization. This typology does have the potential to affect Czech perceptions of the CFSP, for any potential economic benefits would likely lead to a more willing Czech response to this external pressure.

Czech preparations for participation in NATO’s NRF were paralleled by similar activities in the EU. The EU was developing certain military capacities through its Rapid Response Force (RRF). In the future there would be invitations both to play a role and to make financial contributions to such a force (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006d). Such parallelism also raises interesting questions about the potential for conflict between NATO and the CFSP in general. Could any CFSP operation be effective in the short term without heavy dependence on NATO equipment and bases? If there was such a linkage, then these two sets of external pressures might often merge into one stream as they influenced Czech defense policy.

There were some significant additional outside factors that impinged upon Czech defense policy. For example, the British invited Czech parachutists from the Prostějov 601 group to take part in summer military exercises in Belize. The highpoint included an attack on a terrorist hideout located deep in the impassable jungle. Czech participants did so well that one of their commanders was put in charge of the concluding exercises (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006c). Cultivation of relations with China also served as a desired policy goal. However, consideration of human rights issues that were indirectly related to defense considerations often served as barriers. President Havel met with the Dalai Lama four times and also held meetings with members of the Chinese dissident community as well as with the President of Taiwan. In contrast, President Klaus visited China in 2004 with the focused interest improving trading prospects for Czech firms (Gregušová 2005, 10-11). In the future Czech defense planning might include activities and actors such as these two to a greater extent than is currently the case.

In sum, NATO is the strongest outside force affecting the Czech national security system. That alliance provides a steady stream of military exercises and budget questions to which the Czechs will need to respond. Pressure from the CFSP of the EU is far less at the moment. However, once its plans become more comprehensive and active, there is a potential for conflict with the messages coming in from the NATO alliance. Given the complexity of world politics and power of globalization, additional external pressures such as a tie to China loom as significant as well.

Pressures Internal to the National Security System

Discussion of the dynamics of the Czech defense system will center on four critical factors. First, what are some of the day-to-day practical matters that preoccupy the people who play a role in the system? Second, what are some of the basic demographic characteristics of those who are employees of the Ministry of Defense? Third, what have been the budgetary trends and allocations within the system, and how do they affect its performance? Fourth, what are a few of the key ideological perceptions about the role of the defense system in future Czech plans? Exploration of each of these questions will be accompanied by conclusions about their connection to the two external pressures just analyzed.

First, a look at selected practical issues and problems that preoccupy the Ministry can help convey the flavor and tone of the defense system itself. Leadership of the Ministry is a critical issue, for the June 2006 elections resulted in the appointment of Jiří Šedivý as the new Minister of Defense. His stated goals included attention to the quality of life of soldiers, preservation of a Czech role in international missions, and fulfillment of both NATO and EU obligations. Early on he addressed the question of a future NATO base on Czech territory. In his view, that base would initially be American run but later a NATO facility. Its broad goal would be contributions to European security, and, pointedly, specialists rather than a referendum would decide whether it would be set up (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006d, Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006e). An additional key leadership factor was the need to appoint military representatives to the EU. That delegation included both a major general and a brigadier general (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006f).

Another practical matter of future significance was the strengthened role of the active reserves. It was anticipated that they would play an important role in major calamities such as the 2002 flood. The arguments for their increased role were substantial ones. They would save taxpayers money, given the existing limits on the size of the regular military. The fact that they held civilian jobs most of the year would ensure that the military in general would not be cut off from the Czech population. They would take over regular army functions when the active military received overseas assignments. Finally, their military service would provide them with both useful technical skills and the habit of good citizenship (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006g). All of these arguments reflected discussion in many of the other NATO partners and so linked Czech defense policy perspectives more firmly to those of that military alliance.

Further, the Czechs began to create think tanks and centers on defense matters, and that development also paralleled tendencies in other NATO countries. For instance, Charles University set up a Center for Security Studies. In the summer of 2006, that Center sponsored discussions of both traditional terrorist threats and the dangers posed by chemical and biological weapons (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006e). Just as in the West, the growing prominence of such centers offered the promise of an enriched discussion about future defense policy and commitments.

Pursuit of grants to supplement the military budget was also a matter for some consideration. Some of these grants would benefit those whose military service was in the past and who would not be seen as a top priority in a tight budget situation. For example, the Ministry applied for grants in 2006 to take care of wartime graves and to

supplement the money available to institutions that had the responsibility of caring for veterans who were totally reliant on the social system for care. In addition, there were efforts to acquire extra recreational funds for those who had served abroad after 1990. Given the medical needs of the Czech military, some additional monies would assist in complicated surgeries. For example, there was an effort to acquire funding for robotic surgeries at Prague's Central Military Hospital (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006h). Projects such as these become even more important with the declining defense budget noted in the following sections.

Second, a brief glimpse of some basic demographic data from 2005 for the Ministry of Defense will also provide additional insights into the capabilities of the organization.

**Table 1: Employees of the Ministry of Defense by Age and Sex
(December 31, 2005)**

Age	Men	Women	Total	%
Up to 20 years	158	50	208	0.55
21 - 30 years	9,990	2,111	12,101	31.78
31 - 40 years	8,881	2,414	11,295	29.66
41 - 50 years	5,056	2,444	7,500	19.69
51 - 60 years	4,070	2,222	6,292	16.52
61 years and more	609	76	685	1.80
Total	28,764	9,317	38,081	100.00
%	75.53	24.47	100.00	x

(Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006i)

Examination of Table 1 reveals the age distribution of employees by gender. For males, the highest proportion of employees (34.73%) was in the age cohort 21-30. For females the corresponding highest proportion (26.23%) was in the age cohort 41-50. There was thus a tendency for women to work there at a later point in life than was true for men. It could also be the case that turnover for men is higher, but there is no available data for gender distinctions based on years worked for the Ministry.

**Table 2: Employees of the Ministry of Defense by Education and Sex
(December 31, 2005)**

Educational Achievement	Men	Women	Total	%
Basic and Middle School	212	380	592	1.55
Apprentice Training Center/School	55	139	194	0.51
Apprentice Training Center/School with Vocational Certificate (2 years)	6,775	1,081	7,856	20.63
Apprentice Training Center/School with Vocational Certificate (3+ years)	42	51	93	0.24
Grammar School with Exit Exam	1,249	1,241	2,490	6.54
Specialized High School with Vocational Certificate and Exit Exam	1,891	478	2,369	6.22
Specialized High School with Exit Exam	8,931	4,314	13,245	34.79
Certified Specialist	225	83	308	0.81
Bachelor's Degree	981	315	1,296	3.40
Master's Degree	8,118	1,208	9,326	24.49
Ph.D.	285	27	312	0.82
Total	28,764	9,317	38,081	100.00

(Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006j)

Scrutiny of Table 2 helps in understanding differences in educational preparation by gender. For both genders the highest proportion of individuals included high school graduates. However, the proportion for women (46.30%) was much more substantial than it was for men (31.05%). Real differences appear when the variable of university education receives attention. For both men and women, 3.4% had received the bachelor's degree. There was some distinction at the doctoral level, for 1.0% of men had earned such a degree but only .3% of females. However, the main difference resides at

the master's level. While a full 28.22% of males possessed that level of graduate degree, only 12.96% of females did. In sum, males were younger and more likely to have graduate education than females. Overall, the employees were relatively young and well-educated. Thus, their potential to work at NATO and EU standards was high.

**Table 3: Length of Service of Employees of the Ministry of Defense
(December 31, 2005)**

Length of Service	Number	%
Up to 5 years	16,190	42.51
Up to 10 years	7,936	20.84
Up to 15 years	5,157	13.54
Up to 20 years	4,296	11.28
20+ years	4,502	11.83
Total	38,081	100.00

(Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006k)

In Table 3 there is basic information on length of time in service for Ministry employees. The patterns are relatively even, but over two-fifths of the employees had worked there less than five years. It is interesting to reflect on the proportions that had actually worked for the Ministry during the communist era. Nearly one quarter of the employees had experience with the organization before 1989. They would bring in a longer historical memory and would also have been useful transitional figures in preserving some continuity after 1989.

**Table 4: Language Study of the Employees of the Ministry of Defense
(December 31, 2005)**

Language	1 st Level	2 nd Level	3 rd Level	Total
English	5,383	2,870	746	8,999
German	603	305	66	974
French	127	127	35	289
Spanish	20	8	6	34
Russian	258	131	22	411
Hungarian	3	70	14	87
Albanian	15	16	0	31
Polish	3	18	19	40
Total number	6,412	3,545	908	10,865

(Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006l)

Finally, Table 4 offers interesting information about the foreign language skills of employees. Over four-fifths of the members with foreign language skills spoke English, and the next highest category included German speakers (8.96%). Again, those languages would certainly be helpful in dealing with other colleagues in NATO and even in the EU. However, the vast majority of those persons had only advanced through the first level of language training. Thus their facility would probably not have been very high. In contrast, the smaller number of persons who had studied Spanish, Hungarian, Albanian, and Polish had advanced through higher levels of achievement.

Third, budgetary trends in recent years have been gloomy for the Ministry of Defense. The Ministry's percentage of funds allocated from the general state budget fell from 6.6% in 2003 to 5.8% in 2006. Similarly, the Ministry's proportion of the overall Gross Domestic Product fell from 2.21% to 1.8% in the same time period (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006m). Budgetary proposals for 2007 provoked quite a

political reaction. The Ministry had been counting on a commitment of 62.9 billion crowns, but the government's proposal was only 53.3 billion crowns.

In fact the then Minister of Defense Karel Kůhnl spoke out against his Ministry being singled out for such substantial cuts. He pointed out that the long-range plan adopted in 2003 stated that the Ministry of Defense proportion of GDP should always be at least 2%, and it had not been since 2004. In fact, the proposed proportion of GDP for 2007 would be only 1.3%. He pointed out that there was a need to inform NATO about the prospects. In addition, the military now would have less capability to assist the civilian sector in the case of a major calamity connected with a flood or severe snowfall. Overall, the ability of the military to operate had fallen since 2003 by 15% (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006n).

NATO had reacted in a negative way in earlier years when the Czech percentage of GDP devoted to defense had dropped to 1.9%, for NATO had set a standard of 2% for all member states in 2002. Thus, the Czechs were not really fulfilling their obligations to the military alliance. In fact, Czech promises to assist in the peacekeeping force in Lebanon would be difficult to fulfill. Future such missions would be jeopardized as well. Additional damage would be done to the planned process of reform of the military forces. To leaders in the Ministry, there was double pain in the sense that projected growth of GDP for 2007 was a full 6.9% (iDNES 2006c).

One defense program that was specifically harmed by the recent trend of budgetary cuts was the plan to purchase more Tatra trucks. The ones in use by the military were often about fifty years old. The original plan had included the purchase of 555 trucks by the end of 2006. Budget cuts had led to an indefinite postponement of the

purchasing plans (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006f). Reliance on such ancient vehicles definitely made it more difficult for Czech troops to contribute to NATO or EU operations on an acceptable level.

Fourth, matters of philosophy and even ideology influenced considerations within the defense system. On the one hand, during the election campaign the Green Party proposed some radical platform planks with regard to the Ministry of Defense. They had called for a sharp reduction in the defense budget and for investment of those saved funds elsewhere. In fact, they proposed that the CFSP replace NATO in assuring European security. This would enable the continent to step out of the shadow of American control. Others such as the ODS responded to the Greens by pointing out that the CFSP was only intended to supplement NATO, not to replace it (iDNES 2006d).

Additional voices were more supportive of American goals and perceptions in the world. For example, Kříž (2006, 71-72) that those nations which had done most to arm Iraq in the 1973-90 period were exactly the ones most likely to criticize the American invasion in 2003. French and German firms had assisted the most with Iraq's nuclear program, while the Soviet Union had supplied SCUD's. Those three countries ended up being the global powers that most severely criticized the American decision. In fact, the United Kingdom and United States had provided low levels of defense assistance to Iraq in earlier years. They in turn were the leaders of the Coalition of the Willing in 2003. The implication of the article is that former economic ties to Iraq had much to do with opposition to the preemptive war led by America in 2003.

Czech academics also began to study topics that preoccupied NATO and the EU in systematic and formal ways. Eichler (2006, 19-42) presented a number of hypotheses

about terrorism with an eye on developing suggestions for avoiding the worst. Systematically, he broke down terrorism into the three categories of national, international, and post-9/11 hyper-terrorism. He then examined the attack on America in 2001, the attack on Madrid in 2004, and the hit on London in 2005. After testing five meaningful hypotheses against those examples of terrorist behavior, he then concluded that terrorism was an indirect strategy that contradictory post-communist global developments had spawned. Its aim was to frighten the population and to take innocent lives in a random way. While military action was one inevitable response, so also was attention to preventative action. Studies such as these demonstrate the extent to which both analysts of the Czech national security system and practitioners employed by it are preoccupied with wider concerns that preoccupy NATO and the CFSP at the deepest levels.

Policy Outputs

Within the overall framework of systems theory, the eventual policies themselves are a consequence of a chain reaction of environmental values, external pressures, and the dynamics internal to the system under review. The next step in the analysis is presentation of a systematic method for classifying those policies and decisions. Game theory in its most basic format provides such a method. At the highest and most important level are high-stakes games that can have a tremendous impact on all components of the system. Top political leaders are typically involved in such decisions. The next level down included middle-stakes games that center on technical decisions of a highly concrete nature. Typically, middle level managers are involved in the implementation of such decisions, although top political leaders are likely to have

assented to the request for a policy. Finally, low-stakes games engage governmental bureaucrats within the system under analysis. These games may eventually take on the appearance of a routine and may be less controversial over the long haul than the other two levels. It is also possible for a game to move from one level to another. For example, the atmosphere surrounding a game that was initially high stakes may change, and the game itself will then move to a lower level. On the other hand, a low stakes game may become more complicated, and the resulting public pressure can push it up the ladder (Stillman 1999, 219-223).

When the Czech Republic joined the EU in 2004, the decision was the result of a high stakes game. Top leaders had been working on and discussing the merits of such a move for a full decade. Clearly, many elements of the political system were involved in a decision that had the potential to transform basic economic and political features of life in the country. Of course, the emphasis in this paper is on the defense/security system within the Czech Republic. In that light they were ready to contribute one thousand troops to the EU's defense force. The contribution would include a helicopter/chemical unit, a field hospital, and a rapid reaction battalion (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2005c). Further integration with the European Security and Defense Policy would entail some restructuring of Czech bureaucratic units within the defense system. For instance, there would be a need to re-organize the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and create both a Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Security Policy and a Political Director (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006g). Of course, the decision to join NATO four years earlier also fitted into the category of a high stakes game. In that case, again the top political leaders had guided the decision. Its

consequences for the Czech Republic were immediately apparent, as it led to participation both in the Kosovo bombing campaign and to participation in a limited number of peacemaking operations.

Czech participation in the peacemaking mission in Afghanistan is a middle stakes game in the sense that it centers on contributions of a technical nature. Surely, the top political leaders made the decision to take part in the mission, but implementation was in the hands of skilled special units within the military. Since March 2004, Czech units have taken part in the NATO operation called ISAF. The goals of the Czech units include disarmament, demobilization, re-integration, anti-drug policy, and defense of the Kabul airport. They also work with provincial reconstruction teams outside Kabul and end up engaging with the civilian population (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006o). They have operated in the northeastern part of Afghanistan in some of the most remote territory in the country. Part of their assignment entails the guarding of VIP's and NATO vehicles (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006h). Their numbers include eighty specialists in Fayzabad and another seventeen specialists at the Kabul airport (iDNES 2006e).

In March of 2006, the Czech 601st Group of Special forces also moved into Afghanistan under the coalition operation entitled "Operation Enduring Freedom." The group included one hundred twenty troops under U.S. leadership, and they did end up engaging the enemy in summer 2006 (iDNES 2006f). Their involvement was kept secret at the time, but eventually it became known that they had set up a base called Prostějov in Kandahar Province. This unit is highly specialized and includes parachutists, divers, pyrotechnicians, and new experts (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

2006i). As the situation in Afghanistan became more violent in the second half of 2006, this unit's responsibilities correspondingly grew. Elimination of both al Qaeda and the Taliban was partially their responsibility (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006p).

Czech units also took part in the middle stakes game that was part of the NATO mission in Iraq after 2003. During the war they sent a field hospital to the country and also dispatched to Kuwait their highly regarded biological, chemical, and radiological unit (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2005d). Such specialized technicians are characteristic of middle stakes games. The Czechs sent another one hundred-person contingent to Iraq itself after the initial phase of the war. Soldiers within it rotate every three months. Initially, it was intended that this mission would end in 2005, but Britain and the Iraqis requested an extension through 2006. Their job is to train local police officials and also strengthen policy security for the multinational forces (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006j). In addition, the group serves as military police instructors at a new academy called JTA. There are also exchanges that have been set up between Iraq and the Czech Republic. As part of this program, the Czech Republic has committed ten million crowns to protect further and renew Iraqi cultural artifacts (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006k). Further, Czech industries that would like to assist in the rebuilding of Iraq can register at the portal of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. Additional assistance includes aid to refugees, food, surgical equipment, and water disinfectant (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2006l).

Low stakes games are ones that are less dangerous than the middle stakes ones such as Afghanistan and Iraq. They are also ones that often acquire the flavor of bureaucratic routine. For example, Czech units are part of the EU force that helps preserve the Dayton Accord in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A NATO force had operated there previously, but that alliance turned over the mission to the EU in December 2004. Thus, participation by Czech troops in the SFOR mission goes back to 1995 and they have been part of the EUFOR mission since December 2004. Czech airmen based at Přerov operate helicopters in investigative flights over Bosnia, and they also transport military material. There are also eighty Czech soldiers who work with the Austrians to protect the base at Tuzla (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2005e). Additional goals include furthering European integration, rooting out corruption, and defeating organized crime (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006q).

Czechs have had genuine pride in their role in NATO's Operation Joint Enterprise in Kosovo. The main point of pride involves the granting to the Czechs in July 2005, of command of the multinational brigade "Střed." That brigade supervises Priština's administrative center in which half of the city's population lives. The Czechs upgraded their unit from four hundred to five hundred troops, and they command one thousand six hundred total troops (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic 2005f). Their command responsibilities last until the end of 2006 (Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic 2006r). During the mission they acquired a number of tasks that had not been anticipated. One included warning children about the dangers and probable locations of land mines. They put together school programs that they then presented to a total of five hundred children and to students ranging in age from seven to seventeen years of age

(iDNES 2006g). Further, they ended up assisting in the protection of forests. Many persons had been illegally cutting down trees for firewood, and Czech troops took on the job of putting a stop to that practice (iDNES 2006h). Involvement in ending the drug trade that passed through Kosovo became an additional obligation (iDNES 2006i). While routine, this low stakes game bore the seeds of danger as well.

In sum, the Czech defense system became involved in six major decisions with broad implications after the separation from Slovakia in 1993. The most sweeping were the high stakes games that preceded the entry into NATO in 1999 and into the EU in 2004. Dangerous middle stakes games involved the dispatch of critical technical specialists to several operations each in Afghanistan and Iraq. The commitments of troops to both Bosnia and Kosovo were also significant but longer lasting and much more routine.

Conclusion: Feedback Loop

Systems analysis, anchored in democratic theory, concludes with the concept of a feedback loop. Decisions are never final but only one step in a constantly cycling policy process.

First, the six policy commitments noted in the immediately preceding section are all having an impact on the earlier stages in systems theory. First, participation in these NATO and the EU missions impact both the broad environment and set of values of the Czech defense system. The habit of taking part in those activities will build traditions of loyalty to new missions and requests. After a decade or two of participation, it will be second nature for Czech defense officials to think naturally of a continuing role in NATO

and EU operations. Second, the experience of taking part in projects on such difficult terrain as exists in Afghanistan and Iraq will influence future Czech perceptions. Those perceptions will guide their response both to external pressures and to requests coming in from NATO and the EU for contributions to specific missions. Deeper involvement will enable the Czechs to build on their reputations for military police training, special forces operations in remote areas, and airport protection. Third, the continuing involvement and occasional leadership roles in Bosnia and Kosovo can contribute to those new dynamics that exist internal to the national security and defense system. One major impact would likely be on the budget allocations that the Ministry of Defense receives. In order to finance such routine missions on a year-to-year basis, additional budgeting is needed for equipment and training. Of course, this budgetary need exists for the other four missions analyzed as well, especially since they entail middle and higher stakes games.

It is clear in the end that all components of the Czech national security system are intertwined at multiple points with NATO and the EU. Those organizations will become part of the environment of values within the defense system. They already constitute the main external pressures impinging on that system. NATO and EU missions will additionally change the internal dynamics of the system, especially in the area of budget calculations. NATO, in particular, has very specific expectations about budgetary allocations as a percentage of GDP. Finally, most of the missions to which the defense system contributes already are connected with either NATO or the EU. One interesting question for the future is whether and when the proportion of EU operations will eventually rival or even surpass the number of NATO missions.

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