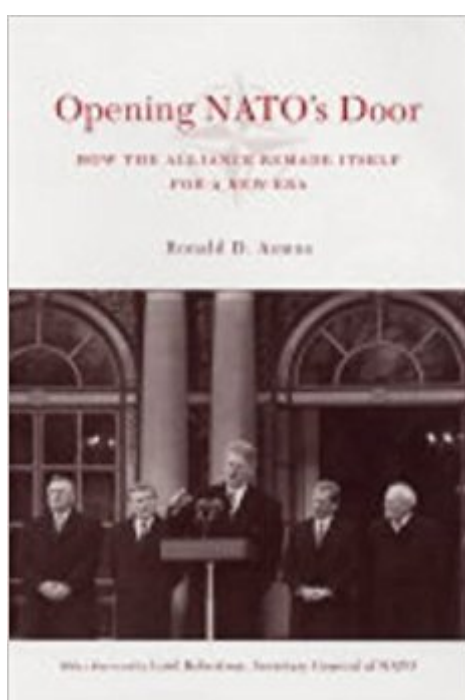


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Opening NATO's Door: How The Alliance Remade Itself For A New Era (A Council On Foreign Relations Book)



Synopsis

How and why did NATO, a Cold War military alliance created in 1949 to counter Stalin's USSR, become the cornerstone of new security order for post-Cold War Europe? Why, instead of retreating from Europe after communism's collapse, did the U.S. launch the greatest expansion of the American commitment to the old continent in decades? Written by a high-level insider, *Opening NATO's Door* provides a definitive account of the ideas, politics, and diplomacy that went into the historic decision to expand NATO to Central and Eastern Europe. Drawing on the still-classified archives of the U.S. Department of State, Ronald D. Asmus recounts how and why American policy makers, against formidable odds at home and abroad, expanded NATO as part of a broader strategy to overcome Europe's Cold War divide and to modernize the Alliance for a new era. Asmus was one of the earliest advocates and intellectual architects of NATO enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe after the collapse of communism in the early 1990s and subsequently served as a top aide to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Deputy Secretary Strobe Talbott, responsible for European security issues. He was involved in the key negotiations that led to NATO's decision to extend invitations to Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, the signing of the NATO-Russia Founding Act, and finally, the U.S. Senate's ratification of enlargement. Asmus documents how the Clinton Administration sought to develop a rationale for a new NATO that would bind the U.S. and Europe together as closely in the post-Cold War era as they had been during the fight against communism. For the Clinton Administration, NATO enlargement became the centerpiece of a broader agenda to modernize the U.S.-European strategic partnership for the future. That strategy reflected an American commitment to the spread of democracy and Western values, the importance attached to modernizing Washington's key alliances for an increasingly globalized world, and the fact that the Clinton Administration looked to Europe as America's natural partner in addressing the challenges of the twenty-first century. As the Alliance weighs its future following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. and prepares for a second round of enlargement, this book is required reading about the first post-Cold War effort to modernize NATO for a new era.

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Customer Reviews

Asmus has written a detailed insider's account of NATO enlargement. (Robert McGeehan Journal of American Studies)Detailed... impressive... Asmus gives a fair picture of the fierce divisions within the administration, and he records the caution of several allies and the changes of mood in Moscow at a time when the alliance was deeply internally divided over the Yugoslav wars. (Foreign Affairs)Asmus shares his ringside seat with his readers, which can be most informative, and great fun. (Robert G. Kaiser Washington Post)As the Alliance debates its future following the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States, this book is required reading about the first post-Cold War effort to modernize NATO for a new era. (Senator Richard G. Lugar (R-Indiana))Asmus's book is a success story. (NATO Review)A unique firsthand account of one of the most important foreign policy developments of our time.... Asmus is at once witness, analyst, and historian. (Timothy Garton Ash)Mr. Asmus's book is the work not just of a historian but of a visionary. (Sarah Means Lohmann Washington Times)The book serves as an engaging history lesson relayed by someone with first-hand experience, as well as an authoritative manual for high-stakes negotiations that weaves together insights on both American diplomacy abroad and the foreign policy-making process at home. (National Journal)As long as one is aware that there is more to the story, one must recognize that Asmus makes a vital contribution to it. Opening NATO's Door offers details on American dealings with Russia and Eastern Europe that are often left out or unknown by others. Asmus gives us a rich discussion of how the Clinton Administration developed its preferences and its strategy for achieving them. (Thomas S. Mowle American Studies International)Asmus' book provides a new and rich contribution to the literature of NATO expansion. His study will be a useful resource for any student of American foreign policy, as well as experts on NATO. (Ryan C. Henderson The Journal of Slavic Military Studies)It does a brilliant job of tracing out push and pull and personality factors in the laborious move toward enlargement. (Beth Greener-Barcham

History: Reviews of New Books)

This book recounts the process by which American diplomats and policymakers, against formidable odds both at home and abroad, implemented some of the most far-reaching changes in U.S. strategy toward Europe in decades and helped create a new security structure for Europe in the twenty-first century. In his conclusion, Asmus addresses NATO's future in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the United States.

Dr. Asmus has indeed written the first person account of NATOS enlargement from its RAND analyst origins (with F. Stephen Larabee and Richard I. Kugler), onwards to a hugely successful integration and completion. This book is obviously by far the best history of NATO enlargement. Asmus is one of the three people entitled to tell the story of NATO enlargement -- as he and the other two senior analysts were the original creators and implementers of this most critical international policy.

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