

Madeleine Albright and NATO: American Ideals and European Heritage

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During his first campaign, Bill Clinton successfully ran against his opponent with the slogan, “It’s the economy, stupid”, thereby labeling himself at the outset as a “domestic president.”¹ Clinton’s first term exemplified his domestic focus through the successful globalization of the American economy.² However, the president was unable to avoid tumultuous changes of the international system in the years following the end of the Cold War. Due to this instability, significant foreign policy failures, like the downing of two Black Hawk helicopters in Somalia in 1993 and the refusal to acknowledge and intervene in the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, punctuated Clinton’s first term and put the possibility of a second term into question.³ Thus, although President Clinton strove to prioritize domestic policies during his time in office, the post-Cold War world made this goal nearly impossible.

One of the largest questions facing the United States and the country’s European allies was what to do with the newly independent Central and Eastern European countries following the fall of the Soviet Union. Towards the end of the first term, the Clinton administration, including National Security Advisor, Anthony Lake and Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Richard Holbrooke, promoted the controversial enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to include the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland.⁴ Although there were still ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and the Balkans, the idea of NATO enlargement and an inclusion of former Soviet satellite states into the Alliance brought the United States’ (US) relations with Europe to the forefront of the administration’s foreign policy agenda.

¹ George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 925.

² Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 926.

³ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 927-928.

⁴ James M. Goldgeier, “The Decision to Enlarge to NATO: How, When, Why, and What Next?,” *The Brookings Review* 17, no. 3 (Summer 1999), 20. [JSTOR]

In this environment, Clinton nominated US Ambassador to the United Nations (UN), Madeleine Albright, as Secretary of State for his second term. As a member of the National Security Council staff during the Carter administration, a professor of international relations, and UN Ambassador, Albright was certainly qualified for the position. However, at this crucial time for the Atlantic alliance with the possibility of new Central European members, Albright's Central European heritage and experience with the direct implications of German appeasement followed by Soviet Communism, seemed a perfect fit to match the growing strength of Euro-Atlantic relations.

Throughout her time in government, Albright's colleagues like President Clinton and Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, supported her efforts for the US to approve an enlargement of NATO in the former Soviet sphere of influence. Determined in both her belief in American exceptionalism and the importance of the Transatlantic partnership, Albright successfully accomplished the work begun during Clinton's first term on NATO enlargement. Overall, Albright also promoted the attention on US relations with the rest of the world and in the process, helped to change the identity of Clinton's time in office to that of a strong "foreign policy" presidency.

Madeleine Albright's early life in Central Europe provides interesting context for her later achievements as Secretary of State. Born as Marie Jana Körbel on May 15, 1937 in Prague, Czechoslovakia, Albright consistently emphasized her Czechoslovakian birthright as well as her fierce devotion to American values throughout her time in government. Because Madeleine Albright's father, Josef Körbel, was part of the strong Democratic government in Czechoslovakia prior to the beginning of World War II (WWII) the Munich Agreement of 1938 directly affected the family. The September

1938 agreement, signed by the United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Germany forced Czechoslovakia to surrender to Adolf Hitler in order to prevent the Nazi leader from waging war on all of Europe. In her memoir, *Madam Secretary*, Albright describes Munich as a “shameful [symbol] of appeasement.”⁵

As Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, Josef Körbel looked for a way to move his family out of the country to avoid the chaos brought by the Nazi invasion. The family fled from Prague on March 15, 1939, and eventually landed in London. Because of Josef’s career in the Foreign Office, he connected with Jan Masaryk, the son of the former democratic president of the country, and became part of the Czechoslovakian government in exile in London throughout the war.⁶

Following the end of WWII and the liberation of Czechoslovakia, the Körbel family returned to their native country. Josef was assigned to the foreign ministry and later as the representative to both Yugoslavia and Albania, which allowed the family to live a life of privilege in Prague and later in Belgrade.⁷ This life for the Josef Körbel and his family did not last. As Albright’s parents sent her to boarding school in Switzerland, Stalin’s communism took over Czechoslovakia and began to replace the coalition government Josef worked for.⁸ The installation of a Communist system in the country meant that again the Körbel family needed to relocate in order to remain safe. Josef attempted to resign as the ambassador to Yugoslavia; however, the Communist government instead assigned him as the Czechoslovakian representative to a UN commission charged with handling both India and Pakistan and their claims to the state of

⁵ Madeleine Albright, *Madam Secretary*, (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 7-8.

⁶ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 8.

⁷ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 11-13.

⁸ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 15-16.

Kashmir.⁹ Albright, her mother, and two siblings instead returned to London and then traveled on to the United States, and arrived in New York on November 11, 1948.¹⁰

Josef rejoined his family in New York in December 1948 and immediately began the process of seeking political asylum for his family. The Körbel's remained in the country after the US government awarded them asylum and eventually relocated again to Denver, Colorado after Josef obtained a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to be a professor at the University of Denver.¹¹

Between 1949 and 1955, Albright recounts in her memoir how the move to Denver allowed her to grow into her teenage years as an American. Although the Körbel's were not yet American citizens, Albright observes that she put her "own twist on becoming a bona fide American" by striving to be the best student in her class while balancing the demands of her "hopelessly strict and uptight European parents."¹² Albright's success in high school led her on to continue her education at Wellesley. As an undergraduate Albright wrote her senior honors thesis on the Czechoslovakian Social Democrat, Zdeněk Fierlinger, who linked his party to the Communists, thereby ensuring the end of the democratic Czechoslovakian government.¹³ This thesis topic not only complemented her experience as a child and her family's history, but also began Albright's focus on Central and Eastern Europe throughout her life in academia and later in public service.

During the summer of 1962, following Madeleine Albright's marriage to Joe Albright in June 1959 and the birth of her twins, Anne and Alice Albright in June 1961,

⁹ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 16-17.

¹⁰ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 17.

¹¹ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 20.

¹² Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 21.

¹³ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 43.

she began her graduate studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington D.C. Along with continuing her studies in international relations, Albright also studied Russian during her time at SAIS.¹⁴ Due to Joe's career as a journalist, the Albright's moved to Long Island, New York where Madeleine continued her graduate work at Columbia University. At this time Madeleine had begun work on her Ph.D. as well as a certificate from Columbia's prestigious Russian Institute. During her time at Columbia, one of Albright's most influential professors was Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was later her supervisor as National Security Advisor when she worked on the National Security Council (NSC) staff during the Carter Administration.¹⁵

Madeleine Albright began her life in public service when her family returned to Washington in 1968. While working on her Ph. D. and raising three daughters, Albright remained active by volunteering and fund-raising for local political campaigns and activist groups.¹⁶ As she excelled at fund-raising, she became connected with Senator Edmund Muskie from Maine, who asked Albright to be his chief legislative assistant. The significance of this job to Albright's future career as UN ambassador and Secretary of State is that she was a part of a significant decision making environment:

As chief legislative assistant to Muskie, I was finally at the inner table, with the men, where decisions were being made, and where my education could continue.¹⁷

This opportunity as a top decision maker in the Senator's office led to her next job as a member of the NSC staff.

¹⁴ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 54.

¹⁵ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 57.

¹⁶ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 64.

¹⁷ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 73.

As a member of the NSC staff under Brzezinski, Albright worked in the West Wing of the White House and began her career as a direct influence on American foreign policy. Albright's position in the Carter administration working as a Congressional Relations Officer gave her the skills of understanding the relationship between the executive and legislative branches she would need later as both a cabinet member when she was ambassador to the UN and as Secretary of State. In an interview with the University of Virginia's Miller Center, Albright recounts that following the end of the Carter administration, she took all of the lessons she learned and, "for ten years, thought about them and taught about them" at Georgetown University.¹⁸

The introduction of Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost*¹⁹, the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the subsequent independence of countries that had been stuck behind the Iron Curtain since the end of WWII complemented Madeleine Albright's success as a professor at Georgetown. Throughout the 1980s, Albright describes how she had to adjust her courses to the rapidly changing international system:

I told my classes we had reached a rare moment, when all the old assumptions had to be revisited and existing institutions either adapted or abolished. The superpower rivalry appeared over, but that was hardly the end of history. New challenges were already rising. The Soviet Empire would be replaced, but it was not clear by what.²⁰

In this turbulent environment, Albright continued to follow the events going on in Central and Eastern Europe. At this time she was also president of the Center for National Policy, a think-tank in Washington D.C. that works on developing policy solutions for,

¹⁸ Madeleine K. Albright, interview by Russell Riley, Stephen F. Knott, and Robert Strong, *The William J. Clinton Oral History Project*, The Miller Center at University of Virginia, August 30, 2006, <http://millercenter.org/president/clinton/oralhistory/madeleine-k-albright>

¹⁹ "Perestroika" refers to the restructuring of the Soviet economy and "glasnost" to the new openness of the Soviet political system.

²⁰ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 122.

“global challenges Americans now face.”²¹ Her expertise as a professor of international relations and experience in working on policy development made Madeleine Albright a prime candidate for a place on Bill Clinton’s foreign policy team after he became president in 1993.

As president-elect, Clinton named Albright the US ambassador to the UN in December 1992. This period marked a change and increase in the role of the UN around the world. As the United States’ permanent representative to the UN, Albright was both a member of the Security Council (UNSC) and the president’s cabinet. This position gave her the opportunity to significantly shape American foreign policy as well as assist in the authorization of many UN peacekeeping missions around the world. During Albright’s tenure as UN ambassador, the Clinton administration experienced a significant number of failures, but nonetheless still made an important impact on many ongoing conflicts in the world. From 1993-1996, the United States played an active role within the UN due to Albright’s hands-on approach to the job and forcefulness as a member of the UNSC.

UN Secretary General while Albright was US ambassador, Boutros Boutros-Ghali recounts in his memoir, *Unvanquished: a U.S. – U.N. Saga*, how forceful Albright could be during sessions at the UN. According to Boutros-Ghali, Albright lacked:

...interest in the difficult diplomatic work of persuading her foreign counterparts to go along with the positions of her Government, preferring to lecture or speak in declarative sentences, or simply read verbatim from her briefing books...She seemed to assume...that her mere assertion of U.S. policy should be sufficient to achieve the support of other nations.²²

²¹ “Our Mission,” Center for National Policy, accessed December 15, 2014 <http://cnponline.org/about/mission-vision/>.

²² Quoted in Paul Lewis, “Boutros-Ghali’s Book Says Albright and Clinton Betrayed Him,” *The New York Times*, May 24, 1999, <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/05/24/world/boutros-ghali-s-book-says-albright-and-clinton-betrayed-him.html>.

Although Boutros-Ghali's negative opinions of Albright likely stem from her campaign against his reelection as Secretary General, his description of her behavior at the UN helps to illustrate Albright's strong belief in American exceptionalism and forcefulness regarding implementation of American foreign policy, both traits that would serve her well as Secretary of State.

On December 5, 1996, President Clinton nominated Madeleine Albright to be Secretary of State for his second term. As the 64th Secretary of State, Albright made history by being the first woman to hold the position, but she also brought both knowledge of and experience in foreign policy decision-making that made her highly qualified for the job. Secretary of State Warren Christopher echoed Clinton's faith in Albright when he introduced her to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the start of her confirmation hearing:

All who know Ambassador Albright admire her keen intellect, her moral strength, and her powerful sense of history born of personal experience...I'm confident that Ambassador Albright will be a great secretary of state, one who will make history as she advances our nation's interest and upholds our ideals around the world.²³

Albright also brought an important amount of Eurocentric focus to the job that was essential for the post-Cold War era. This focus on Europe became apparent in her first official visits when she traveled to Italy, Germany, France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and Russia in February 1997.²⁴ During her time as Secretary, Albright presided over many different international crises and agreements from Kosovo to North Korea. When she handled these different diplomatic situations, Albright continued to

²³ Madeleine Albright's Senate Confirmation Hearings, January 8, 1997, http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/politics-jan-june97-albright_01-08/.

²⁴ Travels of Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, Office of the Historian, <http://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/secretary/albright-madeleine-korbel>.

show her devotion to American ideals while balancing her heritage as a Central European.

Madeleine Albright demonstrated her strong commitment to the Transatlantic partnership through her efforts and support towards the NATO enlargement process. Although the idea of NATO enlargement began prior to Albright's tenure as Secretary of State, she provided the necessary qualifications to pinpoint which countries would be involved, and the ability to negotiate with the Central and Eastern European leaders, as well as the leaders of Russia. The process towards the enlargement of NATO began with the creation of the Partnership for Peace (PfP), which included former Soviet satellite states, republics and the Russian Federation.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Shalikashvili proposed the PfP as an opportunity for the newly forming democracies in Europe, including Russia, to work together on military training, and ultimately build cooperation with each other and the Alliance.²⁵ The purpose of the PfP was to create a common security strategy for both Europe and Eurasia as well as promote a "multilateral dialogue" between NATO and PfP members.²⁶ Although Albright was UN ambassador at the time, President Clinton sent her and General Shalikashvili as leaders of a diplomatic mission to help promote the PfP in Central and Eastern Europe. Because both Shalikashvili and Albright were of Central European decent, they had the ability to connect with leaders in each country they visited. Albright describes her and the General as, "...living proof to Central Europeans that there were people high in the U.S. government who understood their past problems and future

²⁵ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 167-168.

²⁶ Joshua B. Spero, "Paths to peace for NATO's partnerships in Eurasia" in *Limiting Institutions?: The Challenge of Eurasian Security Governance*, James Sperling, Sean Kay, S. Victor Papacosma, ed., (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 168. [Google Books]

hopes.”²⁷ Throughout the visits to Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Slovenia, Bulgaria, and Albania, Albright’s role during the mission was to advertise the PfP as a road map to NATO and Shalikashvili outlined the military cooperation these countries could expect if they joined the partnership.²⁸ Ultimately this diplomatic mission was successful when, during the 1994 NATO summit in Brussels, the Alliance approved the PfP and the creation of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe.²⁹

Following the creation of the PfP, the Clinton administration immediately began the next stage of the eventual NATO enlargement into the former Soviet sphere of influence. This next step consisted of promoting NATO enlargement and gaining support for this task within the US government. As an avid supporter of enlargement, during a 1994 trip to Prague, Clinton exclaimed, “the question is no longer whether NATO will take on new members but when and how.”³⁰ In another visit to Warsaw later that year, Clinton reaffirmed his statement in Prague by saying, “Now what we have to do is get the NATO partners together and to discuss what the next steps should be.”³¹ By the American president so clearly stating his support for the enlargement process to move forward, the other members of the Alliance began to contemplate this next step more seriously.

Two figures that proved essential to the success of support for enlargement within the US government were National Security Advisor, Anthony Lake and Assistant

²⁷ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 169.

²⁸ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 168-169.

²⁹ “The Partnership for Peace Programme,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, last updated March 31, 2014, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50349.htm.

³⁰ Quoted in Goldgeier, “The Decision to Enlarge to NATO: How, When, Why, and What Next?,” 20.

³¹ Quoted in Goldgeier, “The Decision to Enlarge to NATO: How, When, Why, and What Next?,” 20.

Secretary of State for European Affairs, Richard Holbrooke. Both Lake and Holbrooke avidly supported NATO enlargement within the Clinton administration and were instrumental in helping to convince the Washington bureaucracy to join the president in support for what rapidly became a major foreign policy initiative. As early as September 1993 in an address entitled “From Containment to Enlargement” at SAIS in Washington D.C., Lake highlighted his strong support for America’s new place in the world following the end of the Cold War. In these remarks, he labeled “the strategy of enlargement” as a “successor to a doctrine of containment.”³² By denouncing the pillar of American strategy in the Cold War, Lake emphasized the importance of moving forward into the post-Cold War era with a new policy that would promote democracy and free markets around the world. Richard Holbrooke echoed Lake’s support for enlargement by successfully helping to convince the Pentagon in September 1994 to go along with President Clinton’s proposed strategy.³³ These influential members of the Clinton administration helped to reinforce the United States’ promotion of NATO enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe.

The case for NATO enlargement gained momentum as the president prepared for his second term. One of the first tasks for Clinton, after he won reelection and appointed Madeleine Albright as Secretary of State, was to set his foreign policy goals for the next four years. At a foreign policy planning meeting in Washington on January 11, 1997, the Clinton team named six major foreign policy initiatives for the second term, the first

³² Anthony Lake, “From Containment to enlargement,” September 21, 1993, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html>.

³³ Goldgeier, “The Decision to Enlarge to NATO: How, When, Why, and What Next?,” 20.

being NATO enlargement.³⁴ The administration had until the July 1997 NATO summit in Madrid, to convince Russia to support the enlargement, which would be no simple task. For this reason, Albright's first official trip as Secretary of State included a visit to Russia to meet with both the foreign minister and president.

Madeleine Albright's discussions with Russian foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov and president Boris Yeltsin consisted of the Secretary of State trying to reassure the two leaders that the United States had no intention of jeopardizing relations with Russia. Albright also insisted that Russia should welcome the enlargement as a new chapter in the post-Cold War era and an opportunity to create stability in Central and Eastern Europe.³⁵ Ultimately, Albright's mission did not lead to any immediate results, but in May 1997, Clinton and Yeltsin signed the NATO-Russia Founding Act, an agreement that committed the Alliance and Russia to cooperation in ensuring peace, democracy, and security in Europe.³⁶ Following the signing of this agreement, in July 1997, NATO formally invited the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland to join the Alliance, an event that symbolized the spread of democracy in the post-Cold War era, but also was significant to the personal history of Madeleine Albright.

The next hurdle for the Clinton administration in completing the enlargement of NATO was for the Senate to approve the admission of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland into the Alliance. The task of convincing senators to approve the enlargement meant the possibility of conditions being added in order for the approval to go through.

³⁴ Martin Walker, "Present at the Solution: Madeleine Albright's Ambitious Foreign Policy," *World Policy Journal* 14, no. 1 (Spring 1997), 3. [JSTOR]

³⁵ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 255.

³⁶ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation, and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation, 1997*, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_25468.htm.

North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms named conditions that proved possible for the administration to meet, such as naming the cost of the enlargement as well as assurance Russia would have no say and decision-making within the Alliance.³⁷ However, there were also those like Missouri Senator John Ashcroft, who proposed impossible conditions like eliminating the possibility of NATO missions outside the borders of the Alliance.³⁸ Ultimately, Ashcroft was unsuccessful in his attempt to tack on conditions, and the Senate approved the enlargement 80-19.³⁹ The Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland officially became members of NATO on March 12, 1999, thus completing the major foreign policy initiative of Madeleine Albright and the rest of the Clinton administration.

The 1999 enlargement of NATO fits into the larger context of what Charles Krauthammer named America's "unipolar moment" following the end of the Cold War and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union.⁴⁰ Because of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States became the sole superpower in the world. George Herring describes this period in US history as one characterized with both unprecedented power and a degree of "uncertainty" as to how the country should manage that power.⁴¹ Herring goes on to quote political scientist, Stephen Walt, who argued the presence of "The central paradox of unipolarity", the idea that the superpower was unsure how to handle its new status.⁴² However, even with the presence of this paradox evident in how

³⁷ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 264.

³⁸ Albright, *Madam Secretary*, 265.

³⁹ United States Senate, *Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on Accession of Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic, 1998*, <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ntquery/D?trtys:23:./temp/~trtysQOrvO8::>

⁴⁰ Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1990), 23. [JSTOR]

⁴¹ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 921.

⁴² Quoted in Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*, 921.

presidents after 1991 handled foreign policy, one of the few instances when the top decision makers clearly supported the right course of action was NATO enlargement.

Madeleine Albright and other members of the Clinton administration argued that NATO enlargement would stabilize Central and Eastern Europe by bringing democracy to the region. In her confirmation hearings for Secretary of State, Albright presented her opinion by emphasizing how NATO in Eastern Europe would, “integrate new democracies, defeat old hatreds, provide confidence in economic recovery, and deter conflict.”⁴³ Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott reiterated Albright’s assurance in the necessity of Central and Eastern European integration into NATO in an article he wrote for *TIME* in July 1997. Talbott continued Albright’s rhetoric regarding the democratization of Central and Eastern Europe, but also went further to acknowledge the affect on US-Russian relations. The Deputy Secretary of State cited the NATO-Russia Founding Act as evidence of the progress of NATO-Russia relations, and that enlargement would benefit “Russia’s own long-term security”.⁴⁴ Although Albright, Talbott, and other influential members of the Clinton administration were correct in their belief in NATO enlargement bringing stability and democracy to the region, there were still important figures who strongly disagreed with the administration’s viewpoint.

The main concern amongst those who did not support NATO enlargement was the potential affect of this initiative on US-Russian relations. There were many influential figures, like George Kennan and journalist Thomas Friedman, who strongly disagreed with the president’s push to include former Soviet satellite states and republics into the

⁴³ Madeleine Albright, Statement Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, January 8, 1997, <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/albright.htm>.

⁴⁴ Strobe Talbott, “The Case for Expanding NATO,” *TIME*, July 14, 1997, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost, 60. [Jumpstart]

Western security alliance. As the author of the doctrine of containment, George Kennan was an influential policy maker in the early Cold War years, as well as one of the first experts on the Soviet Union. For an article written by Thomas Friedman in the *New York Times* in May 1998 following the Senate's approval of enlargement, the journalist contacted George Kennan to get his opinion on NATO's next step. In the interview, Kennan emphasized his disappointment in the Senate for approving the enlargement:

I think it's the beginning of a new cold war...I think the Russians will gradually react quite adversely and it will affect their policies. I think it is a tragic mistake. There was no reason for this whatsoever.⁴⁵

Friedman continued Kennan's criticism of the enlargement by accusing the Clinton administration of having an "utter poverty of imagination" which was responsible for the colossal mistake of allowing NATO to encroach on Russia's borders.⁴⁶ Ultimately, the possibility of a new Cold War predicted by Kennan and supported by Friedman did not come to fruition. The stabilization and democracy argued by Albright and her colleagues described the environment in the countries that either joined NATO or were in the process of adhering to the Alliances' standards throughout the first part of the twenty-first century.

When Vladimir Putin came to power as Russia's president in 2000, he entered with a rhetoric that assumed Russia lacked support from the Western security, economic, and political framework. With the exception of the Russian invasion of Georgia in 2008, throughout the 2000s, Putin refrained from carrying out aggressive actions that immediately endangered the stability of Eastern and Central Europe. This pattern changed in 2014 with the crisis in Ukraine over to the Eastern province of Crimea. Putin

⁴⁵ Quoted in Thomas Friedman, "Foreign Affairs; Now a Word from X," *The New York Times*, May 2, 1998, <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/02/opinion/foreign-affairs-now-a-word-from-x.html>.

⁴⁶ Friedman, "Now a Word from X".

defends his actions in Crimea by equating them with the Western response to the war in Kosovo in the 1990s. According to an op-ed in the *Washington Post* written in March 2014 by Madeleine Albright and the Clinton administration's presidential envoy to the Balkans, Jim O'Brien, the United States and the country's European allies must attempt to thwart Putin's disregard for international law and work with the government in Ukraine to help re-stabilize the country.⁴⁷

With the crisis in Ukraine continuing to unfold, Kennan's prediction of a new Cold War seems to be accurate. There does seem to be renewed tensions between the West and Russia; however, Kennan's reasoning is incorrect because NATO enlargement did not cause Russia's resurgent and aggressive actions in Ukraine. The accession of a leader who views the dissolution of the Soviet Union as the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe" of the 20th century and the continuation of his grip on power within Russia as either president or prime minister, is responsible for the state of Russia in the international system today.⁴⁸ The NATO enlargements of 1999, 2004, and 2009, stabilized and secured those countries that joined, thereby proving Secretary Albright's and the rest of the Clinton administration's claims of the benefits of enlarging NATO into Central and Eastern Europe.

Overall, Madeleine Albright's contributions as Secretary of State helped to define Clinton's second term as being focused on foreign policy. The legacy of the 1999 NATO enlargement created the possibility of other former Soviet satellite states and republics, like the Baltic States, Bulgaria, and Romania joining the Alliance a reality. Albright's

⁴⁷ Madeleine Albright and Jim O'Brien, "What Next for Ukraine?," *The Washington Post*, March 21, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/what-next-for-ukraine/2014/03/21/dab50db8-b131-11e3-a49e-76adc9210f19_story.html.

⁴⁸ Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2014), 140.

presence as an influential policy maker who was personally familiar with the horrors of Stalin's Communism in Central Europe, as well as a deep background in studying the effects of Communist rule in the region, allowed her to promote the necessity of democracy and stability in the areas formerly controlled by the Soviet Union. In addition to reigniting democracy in the region where she was born, Albright's devotion to the idea of the United States as "the indispensable nation" and her Eurocentric focus in diplomacy helped to renew and reinvigorate the Transatlantic partnership after the tumultuous years leading up to the demise of the Soviet Union.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Walker, "Madeleine Albright's Ambitious Foreign Policy," 2.