

# Strategic Thinkers Who Warned for NATO Expansion

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*One of the most fascinating aspects of the Ukraine war is the large number of top strategic thinkers who have been warning for years that this war was imminent if we continued down this path. We list the most important of these warnings.*

[George Kennan](#), architect of the Cold War in 1998:

“I think it is 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. No one was threatening anybody else.

Of course there is going to be a bad reaction from Russia, and then [the NATO expanders] will say that we always told you that is how the Russians are — but this is just wrong.”

[Henry Kissinger](#), former US Secretary of State in 2014:

“If Ukraine is to survive and thrive, it must not be either side’s outpost against the other — it should function as a bridge between them. The West must understand that, to Russia, Ukraine can never be just a foreign country.

Even such famed dissidents as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Joseph Brodsky insisted that Ukraine was an integral part of Russian history and, indeed, of Russia.

Ukraine should not join NATO.”

[John Mearsheimer](#), John Mearsheimer, one of the foremost geopolitical experts in the US, in 2015:

“Russia is a great power and it has absolute no interest in allowing the United States and its allies to take a big piece of real estate of great strategic importance on its western border and incorporate it into the West.

This should be hardly surprising to the United States of America as all of you know we have a Monroe doctrine. The Monroe doctrine says that the Western hemisphere is our backyard and nobody from a distant region is allowed to move military forces into the western hemisphere.

You remember how we went stark raving crazy at the idea of the soviets putting military forces in Cuba. This is unacceptable. Nobody puts military forces in the western hemisphere. That's what the Monroe doctrine is all about.

Can you imagine 20 years from now a powerful China forming a military alliance with Canada and Mexico and moving Chinese military forces onto Canadian and Mexican soil and us just standing there and saying, this is no problem?

So nobody should be surprised that the Russians were apoplectic about the idea of US putting Ukraine on the Western side of the ledger. ... But we did not stop our efforts to make Ukraine part of the West.

The West is leading Ukraine down the primrose path and the end result is that Ukraine is going to get wrecked [...] What we're doing is in fact encouraging that outcome.

If you think these people in Washington and most Americans are having trouble dealing with the Russians, you can't believe how much trouble we are going to have with the Chinese."

[Jack F. Matlock](#), the last US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, in 1997:

Als de NAVO het belangrijkste instrument moet zijn om het continent te verenigen, dan is de enige manier waarop ze dat kan doen, logischerwijs door uit te breiden tot *alle* Europese landen. Maar dat lijkt niet het doel van de regering te zijn, en zelfs als dat zo is, is de manier om het te bereiken niet door geleidelijk nieuwe leden toe te laten."

"NATO expansion was the most profound strategic blunder made since the end of the Cold War.

Far from improving the security of the United States, its Allies, and the nations that wish to enter the Alliance, it could well encourage a chain of events that could produce the most serious security threat to this nation [Russia] since the Soviet Union collapsed.

If NATO is to be the principal instrument for unifying the continent, then logically the only way it can do so is by expanding to include *all* European countries. But that does not appear to be the aim of the administration, and even if it is, the way to reach it is not by admitting new members piecemeal."

William Perry, Secretary of Defense under Bill Clinton in 1996:

"I feared that NATO enlargement at this time would shove us into reverse. I believed that a regression here could squander the positive relations we had so painstakingly and patiently developed in the opportunistic post-Cold War period.

I believed that we needed more time to bring Russia, the other major nuclear power, into the Western security circle. The over-riding priority was obvious to me.

When I considered that Russia still had a huge nuclear arsenal, I put a very high priority on maintaining that positive relationship, especially as it pertained to any future reduction in the nuclear weapons threat.”[i]

[Noam Chomsky](#), one of the most important living intellectuals in 2015:

“The idea that Ukraine might join a Western military alliance would be quite unacceptable to any Russian leader. This goes back to 1990 when the Soviet Union collapsed. There was a question of what was to happen with NATO. Gorbachev agreed to allow Germany to be unified and to join NATO. That was a very remarkable concession, with a quid pro quo that NATO would not extend one inch to the east.

What happened. NATO instantly incorporated East Germany. Then Clinton expanded NATO right to the borders of Russia. The new Ukrainian government voted to move to join the NATO. President Poroshenko was not protecting Ukraine, but threatening it with major war.”

[Jeffrey Sachs](#), top advisor to the US government and to the UN, three days before the invasion:

“The US would not be very happy were Mexico to join a China-led military alliance, nor was it content when Fidel Castro’s Cuba aligned with the USSR 60 years ago. Neither the US nor Russia wants the other’s military on their doorstep.

It was especially reckless in 2008 for President George W Bush to open the door to Ukraine’s (and Georgia’s) NATO membership.

Russia has long feared invasions from the west, whether by Napoleon, Hitler or latterly NATO.

Ukraine should aspire to resemble the non-NATO members of the EU: Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Malta and Sweden.”

This compilation is an adaptation of a twitter thread by [Arnaud Bertrand](#).

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*Marc Vandepitte is a regular contributor to Global Research.*

Notes

[i] Perry W., *My Journey at the Nuclear Brink*, Stanford 2015, p. 128-9.

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