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Research Paper 4/2008

Two-Level Games and Base Politics:

**Understanding the Formulation of Czech and Polish Foreign Policy
Responses to U. S. Military Base Deployment Proposals**

—

October 2008

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Michal Trník



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Foreword

This study was originally written under the ongoing negotiations of the Czech Republic and Poland with the United States regarding the potential military installation of the latter on Central European soil. The paper tackled the question why the Czech Republic and Poland, both close U.S. allies, developed considerably different foreign policy responses to the American offer to site parts of the U.S. missile defense system on their territories. The negotiations of both Central European countries with the U.S. not only took remarkably different trajectories over time but upon finishing of this work (July 2008) the position of the Czech Republic and Poland towards the U.S. remained divergent and talks officially unconcluded. While the Czech Republic signed a formal agreement with the U.S. concerning the installation of radar, Poland on the other hand was far from striking a deal on missile installations.

Perhaps even the averagely oriented reader or observer of international affairs noticed that Poland, similarly as the Czech Republic, only recently finished the hardball talks and signed an international agreement with the U.S., primarily as a direct consequence of Russian military intervention in Georgia.

Although my original analysis was built around the explanation of growing difference between the Czech and Polish foreign policy trajectories towards the U.S. proposals, I believe their recent formal convergence does not invalidate the results of the previously conducted research. Nevertheless, the final part of the study was updated in order to address the events of the recent Russian-Georgian conflict, which had important implications for another development of Polish-American negotiations and which in the end resulted in the formal agreement between the two sides.



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Introduction

In 2007, the United States commenced official negotiations with the Czech Republic and Poland on the subject of positioning strategic elements of the US missile defense program on their soil. While the Czech Republic was targeted to host a radar system, interceptor missiles equipment was planned to be deployed in Poland. The official purpose of these radar and missile sites in Central Europe is to protect the U.S. territory against threat in form of long-range missile attack from rogue regimes like Iran or North Korea. The two bases are projected to augment the structure and potential of the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System, which was constructed in order to defend the U.S. mainland and nowadays consists of a web of military bases, radars, interceptors and destroyers extending from Alaska to Japan. In case of the U.S. proposal's realization, the Czech Republic and Poland would join the United Kingdom and Denmark as the only other two European countries hosting strategic sites of this system.

This paper compares and analyses how the Czech Republic and Poland have reacted to the offer of the U.S. to build the strategic components of the U.S. missile defense system on their national territories. The paper explores two similar cases of international bargaining and explains why negotiations between the U.S. and the Czech Republic and between the U.S. and Poland despite their almost identical starting position in the end developed quite differently. While initial foreign policy reactions of Czechs and Poles appeared very sympathetic to the U.S. offer, nowadays the former reached a bilateral agreement with the U.S. and surprisingly the latter, usually perceived as a most reliable U.S. ally in Central and Eastern Europe, backtracked from “a foregone conclusion” to the point when the negotiations bogged down and the agreement seemed less and less likely. What accounts for these puzzlingly varied outcomes of negotiations between the U.S. and Czech Republic and U.S. and Poland? This work not only answers the question why the two postcommunist Central European nations followed in some respects similar but over time increasingly divergent foreign policy paths towards the U.S., but also attempts to prognosticate the final outcome of these bilateral negotiations given their past development and the current state.

In investigating the different foreign policy outcomes of the Czech Republic and Poland, I base my analysis on Putnam's two-level game metaphor, arguing that to understand these different foreign policy responses, it is necessary to bring together both the international and domestic levels of the U.S.-Czech and U.S.-Polish bargaining game. Neither level alone is sufficient to explain this puzzle satisfactorily, and both levels need to be approached simultaneously to provide a plausible clarification of such situation. Different domestic political alignments and government strategies promoted cooperation in the U.S.-Czech case and hindered it in the U.S.-Polish case. The Polish and Czech divergent foreign policy responses at the beginning of negotiations had less to do with their international position vis-à-vis the U.S. than did their domestic political environments. Two specific domestic factors played a key role: the structure of domestic preferences and the strategies used by the government to secure internal support. Nevertheless, as both negotiations developed, the influence of certain international elements proved to be critical on shaping Czech and Polish foreign policies.



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Comparison of Czech and Polish reactions regarding the U.S. military bases proposal offers two fascinating and unique case studies of similar actors, within the same time window, negotiating with the same international partner on similar issues yet adopting very different foreign policies. In addition to this thought-provoking puzzle, these cases provide an excellent opportunity to use Putnam's theoretical framework and its outcomes for forecasting next developments of both negotiations.

The first section briefly presents important theoretical concepts of two-level games developed by Putnam, which form the conceptual backbone of this paper. The second section analyses important factors within the international environment (Level I), its logic and conditions that preceded and initiated international negotiations between the U.S., the Czech Republic and Poland. The third section identifies and characterizes significant domestic actors (Level II) in all three countries that had potential to influence the course of international negotiations, thus the restructuring of Czech and Polish foreign policies towards the U.S. The fourth section, after a brief comparison of the progress of the U.S.-Czech and U.S.-Polish negotiations, disentangles international and domestic elements of these nested games and brings them together again in a structured analysis that addresses the puzzle of Czech and Polish divergent foreign policy responses. This part also provides a forecast of both negotiations' future development based on arguments and knowledge gathered throughout the paper. The concluding section wraps up the presented arguments and concludes.

Theoretical Foundations: Two-Level Game

This section provides a condensed two-level game metaphor developed by Putnam. It also offers various useful insights found in theory-testing case studies that mushroomed after Putnam's watershed work and that prove to be useful for this work as well.

The Putnam's celebrated idea of two-level game analysis has been developed as a useful way to show that politics at the international and domestic levels are necessarily co-dependent. Therefore, in order to explain the foreign policy of states, it is necessary to pay attention to international as well as domestic development. The interaction between international and domestic politics is thus responsible for the resultant foreign policy of the state and this linkage requires that both these levels (international and domestic) should be examined simultaneously. The theoretical novelty of this approach lied in its attempt to transcend solely realist or liberal explanations of states' foreign policy actions. While the realist logic of domestic causes and international effects (Waltz's "second image") asserted that international politics is driven by the domestic regimes of states, the liberal interpretation went the other way around looking for international causes and domestic effects (Gourevitch's "second image reversed"). The Putnam's concept of "two-level game" strived for developing a theory that would account for the interactions of international and domestic factors at the same time. This is done by using the framework of international bargaining and negotiations.

To be more specific, Putnam argues that foreign policy actions of states can be understood as international bargaining situations in which national chief of governments are simultaneously involved in two types of negotiations: international (Level I) and domestic



(Level II). While in the international negotiation, the national leader attempts to reach agreement with his international counterparts, in the domestic negotiation, the national representative seeks to convince his domestic constituencies to accept (or ratify) the Level I agreement. The paradoxical outcome of these two-level games is that reasonable move played at Level I may prove as imprudent and unacceptable at Level II, or vice versa. What happens at one level “reverberates” at the other.

The range of all possible agreements that other international (Level I) negotiators are willing to accept is called the Level I “win-set.” However, the national leader in order to achieve a successful agreement must try to locate the intersection between what the other Level I negotiators will accept and what his domestic constituency will be willing to ratify (Level II win-set). Negotiations tend to be complex because all negotiators representing their countries are playing a similar two-level game.

In Putnam’s own terms, the main issue is how to achieve overlapping win-sets between two negotiating sides. Only such favorable set of choices that will be approved by each constituency in both negotiating countries can produce a ratifiable international agreement. The very need for domestic ratification should lead negotiators to search for such an agreement that will be acceptable to its constituents in order to avoid an involuntary defection that would necessarily follow if one of these actors refuses to comply with the agreement.

Two-level games tend to be complex and their analysis therefore often quite ‘messy.’ Highly aware of this and hoping to avoid this problem, this work necessarily simplifies certain arguments and concentrates only at chosen analytical issues defined in Putnam’s seminal work.

Level I: International Dimension of Missile Defense Deployment

The game on the international board is played by sovereign states, which pursue the negotiation of an accord that maximizes their capacity to satisfy domestic pressures, while minimizing the adverse consequences of foreign developments. This logic suggests that individual states are involved in bargaining and sign agreements at the international level that can make it through the constraints of domestic politics.

Nevertheless, as Boukhars rightly points out, decisions made on the international board are influenced also by other additional factors, which lie outside of the realm of domestic politics and often have their own initial logic. In what follows, therefore, I concentrate on other than domestic factors, namely international incentives, which officially spurred bargaining between the negotiators and explain very early steps in the international game made by the U.S., Poland and the Czech Republic. In this section, I not only briefly sketch the logic behind the international bargaining between the three scrutinized countries, but also try to point out why this framework is appropriate only for understanding the launch of negotiations, but much less for understanding their complex development over the course of time or their varied outcomes.



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The very idea of U.S. anti-ballistic shield installations in Central Europe as well as the early stages of bilateral negotiations between the U.S., Poland and the Czech Republic was determined primarily by international factors. The reasons behind the active global U.S. base politics, and that precipitated the enthusiastic response of these two CE countries to the U.S. proposal to install the portions of its missile defense system on their soil, were primarily security-related on the U.S. side and involving issues of strategic partnership on the Czech and Polish part.

The most widespread official explanation for the existence of U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System and for that reason also for the launch of negotiations on the deployment of its components in Central Europe begins with the classical realist assumption derived from the Hobbesian notions of national interest and existence of security threat. The U.S. negotiators since the very beginning framed the installation of military bases not only as an issue of American national interest but also as a crucial enhancement of the U.S. and transatlantic security. According to the official U.S. line, the future existence of both, the interceptor site in Poland and midcourse radar in the Czech Republic is highly desirable because of the real and expanding ballistic missile threat from rogue states like Iran and North Korea. The arguments presented by the U.S. in favor of the anti-ballistic missile shield in Central Europe refer to the enhancement of collective security within the NATO alliance, strengthening transatlantic unity, and reaffirmation of America's commitments to European security. This argumentation, rooted in international security based approach to the issue, was accepted as a reasonable starting point for bilateral negotiations also by the Czech Republic and Poland and dominated also their initial stage.

An alternative interpretation, but only a variation to the previous one, of international cooperation between the U.S., Poland and the Czech Republic in matters of missile defense project proposal lies within the classical realist understanding of the hostile international environment, where every state seeks to increase its survival (national security) by amassing power derived from its military and economic capabilities. The post-Cold War U.S. and its effort to build military bases in Central Europe within this context represent only a logical expansion of U.S. global military power in order to create a functioning unipolar system based on ever-greater American military dominance.

Another important internationally embedded factor that can account more specifically for the start of both bilateral negotiations among the U.S., the Czech Republic and Poland but also for following formulation of concrete foreign policy steps of the latter two has a lot to do with their general international orientation, commitments or what might be called strategic culture. One has to ask the question why would either Poland or the Czech Republic have any interest in helping the U.S. to achieve its security or hegemony-related goals? Both the Czech Republic and even more Poland since the early 1990s belong to the closest American allies and supporters not only in the CEE region but also in Europe as such. Both countries often call for deepening of Euro-Atlantic link in security and prefer it rather than solely EU-centered solutions such as EU defense policy. After the Cold War, the U.S. became the security guarantor of the whole region, but was also defined in both countries' general foreign policy documents as a strategic partner and thus their affinity of outlook on a range of international issues demonstrated e.g. by providing vigorous support of Washington's steps in Iraq, Kosovo or Afghanistan. Zaborowski and Longhurst talk about Poland's



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“instinctive atlanticism” underpinned by cultural and historical experiences with communism, which is to a lesser but still significant degree true also for the Czech Republic. Since the fall of communism, the logic of strategic partnership between the U.S. and these two CE countries made the latter strongly fixated on the former, which makes their initial support for the U.S. missile defense initiative hardly surprising. Moreover, the permanent American military presence on Czech and Polish soil is hoped to further solidify the close ties between these nations.

What is more surprising is that despite similar international push factors faced by Poland and the Czech Republic that led both countries to initially welcoming response to the U.S. negotiation offer, their following foreign policy paths diverged. This leads logically to the question why the two negotiations had such different outcomes. Why did the Czech Republic and Poland, after the fall of communism both close partners of the U.S., in the context of similar negotiations and in the same time period respond differently to the American deployment offer? Difference in the ability to cooperate and thus in foreign policies are often attributed to differences in the prevailing international conditions. But as I tried to illustrate above the international environment and the logic of the U.S.-Polish and U.S.-Czech negotiations was very similar. They occurred simultaneously, involved two CE countries with similar strategic culture and foreign policy outlooks and were affected by the same global balance of power. In both cases the U.S. as the world's hegemonic leader and initiator of negotiations held the ascendant position vis-à-vis its loyal allies. In both cases, the principal issues at stake were very similar, centering on allowance or denial of the U.S. components of anti-ballistic missile defense system and surrounding conditions related to this issue. Currently it seems, however, that the overlap between the U.S. and the Czech Republic on this question is greater than the overlap between the U.S. and Poland.

While both the U.S. security concerns and the Czech and Polish endeavor to be consistent with their foreign policy orientation serve as useful explanations of initial cooperation of these CE countries with the U.S. in the project of military bases in Central Europe, the sole international dimension can neither fully explain the unfolding dynamics of both negotiations, nor their substantially divergent outcomes. Therefore in the next section I present crucial domestic players that could potentially stand behind differences in Czech and Polish foreign policies.

Level II: Domestic Actors, Institutions and Coalitions

The domestic level consists of a number of important actors, influences and processes that had a powerful impact on the course of negotiations and final shape of the international (non)agreement. In this rather complex section, I first introduce the U.S.'s important domestic actors and institutions. Second and more importantly I put into comparative perspective actors, institutions and coalitions within the Czech Republic and Poland, whose incentives, preferences and character need to be closely explored in order to identify the reasons behind both countries' different policy responses to the U.S. proposal.



The United States

I distinguish four types of actors in the U.S. that shaped how the domestic game was played: the administration and its institutional representatives, Congress, defense industry, and last but not least the mass public. As Moravcsik rightly points out, to understand the dynamics of domestic politics, it we need to specify the preferences and incentives of each group.

▪ The Administration

Naturally, the incumbent Bush administration and its institutional representatives were leading actors in the domestic game, as it is usual in security related issues, because of executive's great deal of control over the initiation of negotiations and the setting of agenda. High officials from two departments, namely those of State and Defense, played a crucial role in planning and executing the negotiations, giving it certain leverage over the bargaining process itself. Another important institutional actor on the scene worth noting is the U.S. Missile Defense Agency. All three actors within the administration were relatively united and coherent in their basic perspective and preference to establish a series of military installations in Central Europe worth \$3.5 - 4.5 billion by 2011-2014 to enhance national security and finalize agreements with the Czechs and Poles before the president Bush leaves the White House.

▪ U.S. Congress

Despite the administration's cohesiveness on the proposed U.S. installations, the same cannot be said about U.S. Congress, which has shown a certain measure of hesitation and skepticism towards this project. In 2007 as well as in 2008, both chambers with Democratic majority embodied their concerns and reservations towards the project as a part of voting on the defense authorization bill. In 2007, the Senate Armed Services Committee cut \$85 million intended for site activation and construction works in Poland and the Czech Republic following a House vote that cut administration's request by \$160 million. The Bush administration tried to restore the construction funding to the 2008 budget again as a part of defense policy bill, but the Democratic-controlled House once more turned down more than 50 percent of the funds assigned to building sites in Central Europe, despite the fact that Senate Armed Committee two weeks before agreed to fully fund President Bush's request for more than \$710 million.

The resistance in Congress against the planned deployment was not framed as outright political opposition to the anti-missile bases, however. The cuts were justified more on the basis of technical arguments and on concerns that Czech and Polish political and public opposition could prevent the actual deployment. Moreover, Congress whether in 2007 or 2008 vote shows that it remains constructively bipartisan and rather consensual on the wider issue of U.S. ballistic missile defense program despite minor cuts that occurred in both years. In sum, despite this congressional foot-dragging it would be inaccurate to depict Congress as a domestic actor with significantly different preferences than those hold by the administration.

▪ Defense Industry

The third main actor important for the understanding of the whole story is the specific segment of the U.S. defense industry, which includes the group of main domestic arms



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producers that contract with the government within the missile defense program. This group consists of specialized defense companies such as Boeing, Raytheon, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman Corporation. According to early estimates if only the agreement with Poland is signed, Boeing as a prime contractor for the program is expected to receive \$400-600 million for the base construction and around \$30 million a year to upkeep it.

As Moravcisk rightly suggests, arms producers in general seek no social goals as enhancement of national security. As any other firms they rather engage in behavior that leads to profit maximization. Therefore, it can be expected that the potential failure or success of negotiations between the U.S., the Czech Republic and Poland would directly influence profits of these firms and thus create incentives for their indirect involvement in the process e.g. through lobbying whether in Congress or Czech and Polish national assemblies. Moreover, these companies look to missile defense projects as a good medium-to-long-term source of revenues and profits, which in the past helped them to recover from technical and management problems. An actual massive PR campaign in favor of the project mounted in 2007 by Boeing, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman on Capitol Hill dissolved any doubts about defense industry's preference concerning the deployment of bases in Central Europe.

▪ Public Opinion

According to the 2007 opinion poll, an overwhelming majority of Americans (84%) supported the construction of an anti-ballistic missile system to defend their homeland. The survey also showed that 81 % of U.S. citizens consider the subject of missile shield highly important, and 71% believe that Congress has an obligation to finance such a system. What is more, according to this survey 70% of Americans favor deployment of its components in the Czech Republic and Poland.

The Czech Republic And Poland

Having described the main domestic players in the U.S. and their clear and relatively unified preference for sites deployment in Central Europe, I now turn to key domestic actors within the Czech Republic and Poland and put them into comparative perspective. Similarly as in the case of the U.S., I examine both states' government coalitions, political opposition in national assemblies, defense industries and public opinion.

▪ Government Coalition

In the Czech Republic and Poland, unlike in the U.S., the government consists of politicians from more than one party as a result of proportional parliamentary political system adopted in both countries after the fall of the Iron Curtain. This political setting leads often to heterogeneous governmental constellations comprised of multiple political parties that inevitably lead to opinion cleavages on various issues. Planting elements of the missile defense system in Central Europe, as it is shown below, became such a divisive issue and indirectly complicated both international negotiations in varying degree.

The Czech Republic's shaky government coalition with wafer-thin majority in parliament is composed of the leading center-right Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and two junior parties, Christian and Democratic Union (KDU-ČSL) and Green Party (SZ). While both Civic and Christian Democrats openly supported the project of the U.S. radar on Czech soil, the Greens



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until today remain disunited over the issue. To have the agreement approved, the center-right cabinet of Prime Minister (PM) Topolánek needs support of at least 101 deputies in the 200-seat parliament, where it currently commands 100 votes. Gathering such support is the last significant hurdle for Topolánek's government in order to successfully conclude the negotiations with the U.S.

The most significant institutional actors within the Czech executive branch involved in the negotiations with the U.S. were the Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry with the coordinating role of the Czech State Security Council headed by the prime minister. Karel Schwarzenberg, the Czech Foreign Minister was one of the strongest advocates of the U.S. radar in the Czech government and linked his political future to the success of negotiations, declaring his resignation in the case of agreement's ratification failure in parliament.

Distribution of political forces and preferences in Polish governing coalition over the planned missile base seemed to be much less problematic. The cabinet of PM Jaroslaw Kaczyński composed of his conservative party Law and Justice (PiS) and two junior coalition partners, Samoobrana and the League of Polish Families (LPR) acted in line with most Polish cabinets before and considered Polish-American relations a priority for Polish foreign policy and hoped that the project would bring Warsaw even closer to Washington. Despite some signs of dissonance within the coalition caused by Samoobrana leader Andrzej Lepper, who flirted with a referendum on the construction of the missile shield, all governing parties committed themselves "to an agreed stance" on the missile base installation.

The premature parliamentary elections in the country, however, changed the political landscape and gave birth to a new government coalition comprising the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish Peasants' Party (PSL). Even though new PM Donald Tusk harshly criticized the previous government's general foreign policy while in opposition, his stance towards the U.S. anti-missile shield installation remained largely positive. Although the new cabinet has taken a more hard-line stance in negotiations, Tusk never challenged the project as such and did not forget to stress that: "The U.S. is a key partner for Poland and I am certain that the negotiations on the anti-missile shield will end in success."

The Polish negotiating team included high officials from the Foreign Ministry, Defense Ministry, Interior Ministry, presidential National Security Office and chosen local authorities. Probably the most visible person in the team was Defense and later Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski, who articulated Polish demands within both Kaczyński and Tusk cabinets. The open conflict over the direction of Poland's foreign policy between PM Tusk and President Kaczynski, a twin brother of toppled Polish PM and Tusk's predecessor, is a fine example of bureaucratic infighting within executive branch and according to some analysts also had certain impact on the course of negotiations.

▪ Political Opposition

Leading opponents of the radar base in the Czech Parliament were concentrated around the main opposition Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), which strongly supported a referendum on the issue. It is rather paradoxical that it was ČSSD's Minister of Defense who in 2002 as first confirmed the Czech Republic's interest in the project and suggested an official dialogue on specific proposals for Czech participation. The party's official position changed markedly after voted out of power in national elections, which left the country in a political



deadlock caused by the creation of a new ODS-led government with a fragile one-vote majority. In this indeterminate situation, ČSSD sought to garner additional popular support by opening up new political cleavages and the issue of possible U.S. site deployment on Czech territory has proven to be an irresistible opportunity in this regard. Another important parliamentary opposition against the project is represented by the hard line Communist Party (KSČM), which remains ideologically hostile towards any “American presence on Czech territory.” These circumstances even amplified the role the Czech Parliament plays in accordance with its powers over security and defense policy, especially with regard to the approval of any stationing of foreign troops (or bases) on Czech soil.

The state of affairs in Poland regarding the political opposition within the national assembly towards the U.S. deployment was principally dissimilar. Since the very beginning the opposition was shallow as even the biggest opposition party (at the time Tusk’s PO) was in favor of the project. All Polish parliamentary parties, even after the change of cabinets, saw a good case for stronger defense ties with the U.S. and politicians across the political spectrum have given a tentative “yes” to placement of interceptors on Polish territory. In other words, a political consensus was achieved early on and all major political parties agreed that an anti-missile shield is another interesting opportunity for Poland to deepen its security relations with the U.S.

■ **Defense Industry**

The Czech arms industry, similarly as the American defense producers, supported the deployment of radar tracking facility in the country. Czech armament companies, represented by the Association of the Defense Industry, were interested in the possible collaboration on the project with their American counterparts since the very beginning. This lively interest resulted not only from the prospect of their concrete participation in the radar construction and post-construction works, but also from opportunity to provide the base with monitoring systems and communication infrastructure. Additionally, the Czech defense industry together with Czech Academy of Sciences hoped to start successful scientific and technological cooperation and tap into the U.S. arms expertise. Most importantly, stationing the radar in the country would open the door for Czech arms producers to U.S. Department of Defense orders, practically meaning Czech companies’ possibility to enter the highly protective and lucrative American defense technology market. The Czech Republic and her arms produces would thus join the prominent club of few certified countries, which have official access to the U.S. defense market and its technologies. Simply put, the installation of American radar could represent a great impetus for the whole industry, which within a few years after the end of the Cold War turned from a world leader into a sector that is fragmented, insignificant, uncompetitive, undertechnologized and “dying out.”

The influence of the Czech arms industry on the government should not be overstated, however. Given its largely privatized structure lacking necessary channels to the government, its weakness, and taking into consideration the fact that the construction of radar is not such a “big business” as its installation means only transferring an already existent facility in the Marshall Islands to the Czech Republic, it was rather cabinet’s voluntary effort to help the Czech arms producers than any substantial capacity of the latter to influence the negotiations.



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The Polish defense industry after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact faced similar problems as arms producers in the Czech Republic. Its' painful restructuring and privatization process led to important decreases in production, increased unemployment, loss of former markets and crippling financial losses. However weak in its business results, the industry nowadays enjoys much larger leverage over the government than its Czech counterpart. As a result of still unfinished reorganization and privatization initiated in the early nineties, the industry's ownership remains largely in state hands thus intimately connected to the government. The combination of largely state-owned but declining and only slowly recovering national defense sector with its relatively lively links to the government shaped also the industry's preferences towards the missile base in the country.

While the domestic defense sector certainly welcomed the subcontracting possibilities concerning the missile base construction and its operation, Poland and the U.S. were already involved in some military and industrial cooperation prior to the beginning of the negotiations. Given the dissatisfaction with the previous cooperation, the Polish arms industry, in contrast to its relatively accommodating Czech counterpart, became much more demanding. The incumbent Polish government highly aware of industry's problems therefore had incentives to demand additional value added out of the possible deployment. As Defense Minister Sikorski averred: "For us, the fate of the Polish arms industry is of utmost importance." Simply put, the planned U.S. missile deployment in Poland became an interesting opportunity to ask the U.S. side, inter alia, for additional American investment to the struggling defense industry or upgrading country's military capability through substantial financial or material injection. Defense Minister Sikorski expected that such steps would have positive effect in terms of increased industrial cooperation opportunities for both U.S. and Polish defense companies, including sub-supply agreements, acquisition of technological know-how, job creation and training assistance. Additionally, incoming streams of new technology and licenses would help to boost the Polish defense industry's competitiveness.

▪ Public Opinion

Internal public opposition to the U.S. radar facility in the Czech Republic has emerged relatively unexpectedly shortly after the announcement of its possible stationing in the country. The No Bases Initiative has organized grassroots opposition to the radar installations. Additionally, an association of Czech Mayors against the Deployment of the Radar was created to oppose the U.S. installations after many potentially radar neighboring towns successfully passed local referenda against its deployment. While the public debate was dominated mostly by the opponents of the U.S. missile system including Greenpeace and other activists, there were also prominent public figures openly supporting the deployment such as former Czech president Václav Havel. Nevertheless, popular opposition to the radar remained high, despite the intensive PR efforts of both the Czech and U.S. governments. On average, 70% of the public was opposed to the radar construction, with only 20% in favor, and the rest undecided.

Poland's popular opposition to the deployment of American interceptor missiles was less well organized. Nevertheless, numerous polls show that most Poles are wary of the missile system in their country too. According to most public opinion surveys the opposition ranged from 53% to 60%, with some 20-30 % in favor, and the rest undecided. The relatively more favorable climate within the Polish public can be, according to some Polish press reports, an outcome of active campaigning of U.S. based pro-armament lobbying groups.



As it can be seen, the domestic actors within the U.S. were to a large extent consistent with regard to their affirmative preferences linked to the deployment of missile defense components in Central Europe, leaving the country with a relatively large domestic win-set in international negotiations (Level I). The structure of domestic actors' preferences in Poland and the Czech Republic, on the other hand, demonstrate quite interesting domestic constraints (although differently distributed) potentially reducing the size of win-sets of both countries and affecting the negotiations on the international level. How is it possible then, that both Poland and the Czech Republic arrived to different foreign policy responses? The previous glimpse on domestic actors' preferences reveals some of the reasons accounting for both countries' divergent paths in bilateral negotiations with the U.S. and which determined both countries bargaining strategies. Nevertheless, to fully understand negotiations' development and outcomes it is essential to look at the interaction of domestic and international factors simultaneously. I do so by scrutinizing the dynamics of negotiations, which not only disentangles the complexities lying behind foreign policy choices, but also provide a useful time dimension, which was lacking in the static description of domestic actors and their preferences.

Negotiations: Interlocking International and Domestic Factors

Having introduced the main players in the game, it is now necessary to focus at their concrete moves on international and domestic game boards. In first part of this section I separately describe the development of bilateral negotiations of the Czech Republic and Poland with the U.S. Secondly, I identify and assess the significance and interaction of two domestic and one international factor that distinctively influenced and shaped foreign policy choices of both countries. Although both international and domestic factors played a role in the U.S.-Czech and U.S.-Polish bilateral negotiations, their relative weight was different in each case.

The U.S. - Czech Radar Base Negotiations

It was already in 2002, when Czech Defense Minister, a member of the Social Democratic Party (ČSSD), publicized that he offered the U.S. an opportunity to deploy a missile defense facility in the country. The inconclusive election of 2006 toppled the ČSSD-led government and replaced it with a coalition led by the center-right Civic Democratic Party, which similarly as its predecessor voiced support for the radar base. The official U.S.-Czech negotiations started in March 2007 and were followed by number of high-rank visits from the U.S, including the visit of U.S. Secretary of Defense Gates, Secretary of State Rice and President Bush. Since the very beginning PM Topolánek supported the radar deployment, saying it would turn the Czech Republic into an "oasis of security." The Czech public and political scene did not share this view and became divided over the issue since the debate's beginning.

Many of these domestic concerns were addressed by the government early on. These concerns involved political parties' demands for multilateralization of the project within the



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broader NATO framework or alleged health and environmental risks feared by mayors and locals whose villages lied close to the projected radar site. The Czech public was not the only loud protester, however. President Putin and other top Russian officials several times prior and during the negotiations denounced construction of bases in both the Czech Republic and Poland as an imminent threat to Russia's national security and emphasized that any such move could provoke Russian retaliation. Most Czech top officials responded strongly to such rhetoric and dismissed Putin's criticism.

Shortly afterwards the Czech Republic asked the U.S. to provide stronger security guarantees for the country and military cooperation through sharing information concerning new threats to Czech security such as international terrorism. The Czech Foreign and Defense Ministries during the whole course of negotiations presented the U.S. side with updated counter-services the other side was asked to provide in exchange for the radar deployment. The main items on the Czech wish-list included the incorporation of the radar base into NATO, permanent presence of Czech military personnel at the planned base and at the headquarters of the U.S. global anti-missile defense in Colorado Springs, participation of the Czech defense industry in construction of the site, Czech-American scientific collaboration in missile defense sphere and preferential protection of the country against any missile attack. The main agreement was preliminary finalized during the Topolánek's spring visit of President Bush at the White House in 2008 and signed later that year in Prague. Some additional talks on status of U.S. soldier at radar base and concerning the mutual removal of trade barriers in defense technologies procurement continued even afterwards.

Despite the internal opposition against the radar, the progress of negotiations was relatively smooth and lacking any major turbulence. There was little haggling over costs, job opportunities provided by the base or its protection. The shaky contours of Level II win-set embodied in significant public and political opposition did not prevent the Czech negotiators to strike a tentative agreement with the U.S. The Czech Republic's northern neighbor was believed, by many analysts, to progress in similarly unproblematic manner.

The U.S. - Polish Missile Base Negotiations

In Poland, the possibility of stationing American missile defense facilities was more or less accepted early on in the discussion and the main questions revolved around what the U.S. might provide Warsaw in return. This question existed in both Kaczynski and Tusk cabinets, but its intensity differed significantly.

Unofficial talks between Warsaw and Washington were underway since 2002 and as Poland expressed continuing interest on the subject it was the first location picked by the U.S. for possible missile base deployment. In early 2007, Poland under the Kaczynski-led government formally started negotiations on placing part of American missile defense system on her territory. As talks began, Tusk's Civic Alliance, then the leading opposition party urged the government to ensure that system would be integrated into NATO. The government adopted this request and added several of its own including reservations about surrendering sovereignty to the U.S. at the site. The course of the talks headed in similar direction as that in the Czech Republic and government officials faced increasing public concerns about site's environmental and economic impact on its future location. Despite persistently growing Russian objections to the plan, Polish President Lech Kaczynski after



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meeting with President Bush called the U.S. missile shield a “foregone conclusion.” Poland’s conditions in the first phase of negotiations remained rather modest too.

The new cabinet of PM Tusk, which came to power in late 2007, gave much more credibility to Russian threats and new Foreign Minister Sikorski started to reemphasize that Poland should get some reward for allowing the U.S. missiles to be based in the country. Many analysts agreed that PM Tusk exercised a new approach in foreign policy that featured a firmer stance on U.S. plans to install parts of missile defense system in Poland. Tusk’s new cabinet requested assistance in upgrading Polish armed forces, American investment in the Polish defense industry and a bilateral security accord similar to those the U.S. has with other allies. More specifically, Tusk’s bold new foreign policy pressed for a broad aid package to modernize the Polish air forces including multi-billion dollars defense technologies as Patriot 3 or THAAD air defense systems in order to eliminate alleged negative security consequences resulting from the deployment of the U.S. missile shield in the country.

Even though in February 2008 it seemed that Warsaw managed to bring “allied pressure” to bear on Washington by hinting at a possible critical reassessment of the missile defense issue, the preliminary agreement collapsed shortly afterwards. Despite receptive American response to tough Polish demands and several offers followed by tactical U.S. announcements of considering Lithuania as an alternative for the shield, the negotiations repeatedly stalled over issues connected to inadequate U.S. compensation for potential Polish security costs resulting from alleged Russian military threat. In late June 2008, the negotiations reached their final stretch, but after a whirlwind of top-level consultations and contradictory press releases, Poland refused to budge from its demands and the tentative agreement announced by American negotiators mutated into Poland’s rejection of the U.S. offer as insufficient resulting according to some voices in definitive collapse of the 18 months talks while according to others only in completion of negotiations’ another tough round.

Unlike the Czech negotiators, Poles after the political leadership change in the country started to drive an unexpectedly hard bargain, for many surprising and incompatible with President Bush’s oft-repeated adage that: “America has no better friend in Europe today than Poland.”

Analysis: Explaining the Czech and Polish Responses

The previous paragraphs have explored a case of successful international cooperation and one of failed cooperation, both reflected in different foreign policy outcomes. In this part, I bring together all threads presented in previous sections and address the puzzle of why the U.S. – Polish intergovernmental cooperation concerning the missile installation failed to result, while it did in the case of U.S.-Czech cooperation regarding the deployment of radar base. As Milner notes, the emergence of cooperation is often explained by international conditions. Since external conditions were the same during the two negotiations, it is hardly possible to use them for explaining the two cases’ contradictory outcomes. Similarly, the mentioned domestic actors and their contradictory preferences are revealing, nevertheless, on their own cannot account for puzzlingly divergent outcomes of both negotiations. Why did



the Czech radar negotiations succeed and the Polish missile shield negotiations fail? There are two domestic factors and one international whose interplay in the dynamics of negotiations help to explain this puzzle.

Before explaining the divergent Czech and Polish foreign policy reactions to the American proposal, it is necessary to underscore that in many instances I deliberately ignore the role of the U.S. in both negotiations. I do so, because of relatively large size of the U.S. domestic win-set reflecting unified and stable pro-missile shield preferences of all important actors on the domestic political scene. This indirectly implies that main explanatory variables behind varying outcome of both negotiations can be found on the Czech and Polish side of the two-level game equation.

■ Structure of Domestic Preferences

The preference structure in the U.S., Poland and the Czech Republic was crucially important for understanding foreign policies of the latter two towards the former. It significantly determined the nature of all countries' win-sets and thus had direct impact on other explanatory variables. The preferences and political influence of domestic actors differed in the two negotiations.

The U.S.-Czech negotiations on radar base were successful, because the ODS-led governing coalition dominated the issue area since the very beginning. Majority of MPs in the coalition preferred the deployment of the radar tracking system. Despite unfavorable stances of political opposition within and outside the government and negative attitude of the public, Topolánek's cabinet successfully and rather paradoxically concluded the talks. Significant domestic constraints faced by the Topolánek government were according to Putnam's theory expected to complicate the international game. These complications, however, were until today successfully, although not conclusively, averted. One possible explanation resides in understanding the relative importance of all major actors in the process. Topolánek's governing coalition largely utilised the possibility to ignore a large part of the popular discontent realizing the mass public's unimportance in the ratification process and referring to general European and Czech constitutional practice that does not explicitly allow a referendum on security related issues. Moreover, the nature of political opposition in parliament represented mainly by the Social Democrats (ČSSD) demonstrated certain signs of ambiguity towards the issue given the fact that it were the previous two ČSSD-led coalitions that initiated and actively participated in negotiations with the U.S. In addition, Topolánek's coalition believed that ČSSD's attitude towards the radar is fueled mainly by popular anti-radar hysteria and their effort to increase the party's preferences after the lost election. Finally, the support of Czech defense industry for the radar deployment put the government into a negotiating position that did not necessarily impinge on its ability to strike an international agreement according to its own preferences.

It is interesting to note that the strategy of "tying hands", based on deliberate shrinking of domestic win-set in pursuit of an agreement close to the main negotiator's preferred outcome, was not used by the Czech government vis-à-vis the American negotiators despite opportune distribution of unfavorable domestic preferences. Topolánek's during the whole course of negotiations did not attempt to persuade the U.S. side to make any significant concessions within the proposed agreement and the Czech wish list remained quite modest.



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In the Polish anti-missile shield case, the structure of domestic preferences differed. All domestic groups, except mass public, favored an international agreement with the U.S. The size of Polish domestic win-set was, however, significantly altered after the Poland's leadership change. Tusk's new cabinet rather than changing or manipulating the preferences of domestic actors tried to utilize them in a way they could serve as a bargaining chip in the negotiations. This newborn configuration of political forces in Poland accentuated the importance of defense industry as the most significant domestic actor in the Level II game that in coalition with the government shaped the course of Polish foreign policy. Such change rather than being a result of industry's increased pressure on the new cabinet resulted from reappearance of Radek Sikorski on the Polish political scene. Sikorski even as a Defense Minister under the Kaczynski government was always receptive to the industry's needs and advices. In his new position as a Foreign Minister and chief negotiator under the Tusk cabinet, he recognized in the American deployment offer a perfect opportunity that could contribute to the development of slowly restructuring Polish arms industry.

Items on the wish list of new executive demanded from the U.S. side in exchange for agreeing to host missile silo changed in the course of negotiations. In addition to bolstering Poland's air defenses via Patriot or THAAD missiles or direct American investment in the Polish defense industry, Minister Sikorski early on in the negotiations proposed that Poland would like to host a major military NATO base on her soil as a part of a wider security relationship with the U.S. The common denominator of these demands was their direct or indirect potential to significantly boost upgrading and modernizing of the Polish defense industry by ensuring an inflow of innovative technologies and the development of capital links between domestic and foreign enterprises as envisioned in Poland's national security strategy.

The insistence of Tusk's cabinet on the transfer of additional U.S. defense technology that would have assisted Sikorski's plans to modernize the Polish defense industry, developed already in the Kaczynski government, caught the U.S. unawares. Although the U.S. firstly announced the possibility of taking part in the modernization of Poland's air forces, this stance quickly changed and talks collapsed over the issue of high costs of such a move. While an internal consensus in the U.S. on international cooperation with Poland existed, an impending division over this particular issue within U.S. Congress halted any such plans. This inconsistency of the U.S. position might be speculatively explained by strong business interest of two U.S. prime contractors for the Patriot missile defense system, Raytheon and Lockheed Martin, which clashed with increased reluctance of Congress to foot the multibillion dollar bill for this additional demand of Poland.

Unlike in the Czech Republic, the Polish government tried to utilize the unfavorable attitude of the general public as a part of "my hands are tied strategy" in order to reach bigger concessions from the U.S. side.

In both Czech and Polish cases the preference structure and importance of domestic actors significantly determined nations' bargaining strategies which in turn shaped their foreign policies that partially explain the Czech success and Polish failure to reach international agreement with the U.S.



▪ **Strategies to Gather Domestic Support**

The strategies used by the executive branch to construct domestic support for an international agreement are the second important factor that influenced the size of domestic win-sets and that had important implications for formulation of Czech and Polish foreign policy responses towards the U.S.

In the U.S. – Czech negotiations, the executive's adoption of two strategies can help explain why the Czech Republic succeeded in inking the agreement with the U.S. First, the Czech executive deliberately overlooked parliamentary opposition in the Czech national assembly that remained divided over the issue along ideological lines despite coalition's shaky majority in parliament.

Second, the Czech government used side-payments to increase internal support for the radar accord. Topolánek's cabinet tried to alter the domestic balance e.g. through earmarking 1.25 billion crowns in development aid to municipalities bordering on the potential site of the U.S. radar. In an effort to overcome mayors' opposition to the plan, the only segment of public opinion with certain leverage over the government, the coalition promised to boost the region's infrastructure. Even more importantly, the Greens, the only coalition party that hesitated with the support of the radar deployment, received a political side-payment from its two partners in form of a promise to raise the issue on the topic of radar's incorporation into a future NATO missile defense program during the negotiations with the U.S. The multilateralization or NATO-izing of the whole process was the main request of the Greens in order to guarantee their support for the project. This request became one of the main demands of Czech negotiators vis-à-vis their American counterparts. American and NATO's agreement with such solution indeed temporarily silenced the opposition voices within the Green Party and increased the size of the Czech win-set.

In the U.S.-Polish missile base negotiations the executive did not evolve any significant effort to construct a strategy to increase the domestic support for the deployment of missile silo given that mass public was the only major opponent of this plan. As noted earlier the Tusk-led coalition instead tried to utilize popular discontent with the issue in order to achieve greater concessions from the U.S. Adoption of hardball negotiation tactics was the only tactics Poland used for mollifying unfavorable public opinion towards the missile base plan and at the same time it was hoped to bring certain bargaining leverage within the bilateral negotiations.

▪ **Evolving Perception of Security Threat and Its Domestic Reverberations**

In seeking explanations as to why the U.S. reached an agreement with the Czech Republic but not yet with Poland, one cannot rely solely on domestic politics that explain foreign policy in varying degrees, but has to look at the interaction between the domestic and international game. Combining these two levels leads to an emphasis on the nested character of the relations between national and international politics. In other words, linkage politics stresses the need to explore the extent to which domestic politics itself is derived from external phenomena. What happens at one level of the negotiations (Level I) can "reverberate" at the other (Level II). Using Putnam's words: "In some instances international pressures can "reverberate" within domestic politics, tipping the domestic balance and thus influencing the international negotiations." The following paragraphs show that such development in varying degrees occurred in both the Czech Republic and Poland.



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The single most important international factor and inherent element of bilateral negotiations (Level I) that served as a further input that reverberated within domestic game and thus co-defined foreign policies of both Central European states was the differing perception of security threat. As noted at the beginning of this paper the deployment of U.S. missile shield elements in Central Europe was assumed to intercept long-range missiles from the Middle East and thus strengthen the security of the U.S. mainland and Europe. While both Czech and Polish governments initially agreed on this U.S. presented definition of security threat, in the course of time their perception of security diverged which in turn contributed to crystallization of their foreign policies.

The Czech executive's decision to accept the installation of the radar on Czech soil stemmed from the fact that its negotiators agreed with their U.S. counterparts on the nature of security threats since the beginning and their position remained unchanged until the very end of the negotiations. The main test for consistency of the Czech understanding of the security threat was an unexpectedly loud and hostile reaction of Russia to American deployment plan. The Russian statements about measures to "neutralize" the installations received harsh criticism from Czech top-officials who defended the country's right to decide freely about hosting the radar on its territory. Nevertheless, neither the further escalating rhetoric from Russia nor did the Czech public's rising concerns convince the Czech executive to openly reconsider the conditions of American proposal. The Czech Foreign Minister Schwarzenberg, consistent with American view, repeatedly declared that the system is not aimed against Russia and labeled Russian threats as mostly bluster. Agreeing with the argument of Czech President Klaus, it is reasonable to think that the intense Russian opposition to the plan might actually strengthen the Czech determination to go on with the project as Czechs after the decades of Soviet domination remained "extremely sensitive to any patronizing from that part of the world." In other words, the Russian objections did not significantly alter the Czech perception of security threats related to the presence of the radar on Czech territory and their impact on progress of the U.S.-Czech negotiations thus on the continuity of Czech foreign policy was rather of reconfirming character.

The U.S. – Polish bilateral negotiations early after their launch took a similar path as the U.S. – Czech talks and agreed on the possible missile attack from the Middle East as the main security threat. The announcement of Russian objections to the plan, however, triggered the Polish interest in re-opening the issue of security threats at the international table. This phase of negotiations began already during the tenure of Kaczynski cabinet, but after the resignation of Defense Minister Sikorski this point gained lower importance. Everything changed with new PM Tusk coming to power. His government has taken dramatically different stance regarding the security of Poland and signified a new powerful impulse for the negotiations. Sikorski, now acting as Tusk's Foreign Minister, decided to build Poland's new foreign policy strategy towards the U.S. deployment proposal precisely around the different perception of security threat based on recognition of Russia, not the Middle East, as the main military threat for Poland. The Cold War-tinged rhetoric coming from the East concerning the planned missile shield in Poland supported the government's new position that such system could make Poland more vulnerable against closer threats such as Russia and that is why it insisted on modernizing country's air defenses, for example by providing additional Patriot or THAAD missiles.



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As it can be seen, the Russian infuriation, a direct product of Level I negotiations between the U.S. and Poland strongly reverberated in Polish domestic politics through providing an additional powerful impulse for requesting U.S. concessions in form of expensive and advanced military technology that would also help to fulfill Sikorski's initial plan to modernize and upgrade the Polish arms industry. Simply put, Polish negotiators used the alleged Russian security threat for shifting the character of the game at Level I in order to better address the demands of domestic defense industry and by the same token to make Poland's demands on the international scene look more credible. In other words, Poland utilized the Russian objections for wrapping its demands into security language, which tried to rationalize Polish foreign policy's insistence on the strategic need of supplying the country with expensive air defense systems in exchange for siting the anti-balistic missile shield.

Two-level game approaches assume that state interests should not be entirely reduced to domestic constituents' demands. The Tusk government used elements of the game at Level I, not to increase its autonomy vis-à-vis their domestic constituencies as Putnam originally suggested, but interestingly to advance them through deliberate shrinking of the domestic win-set, which was believed to result also in the strengthening of the Polish negotiating position. Level I is important to understand how the two-level game worked in the bilateral U.S.-Polish negotiations. Without consideration about Level I, it would not be possible to identify how and why the game in Level II was played in the way it occurred. In this case, strategies in one arena have to be conceived with the other arena in mind. International pressure that occurred as a result of U.S.-Polish talks in the form of Russian adversary response paradoxically helped Polish foreign policy makers to boost their arguments concerning the need of additional American military aid that would supposedly increase Polish security, but certainly help in speeding up the modernization and upgrading of domestic defense industry.

▪ The Aftermath: Future Prospects for (Non)Agreement

Both the U.S.-Czech and U.S. Polish two-level games concerned with proposed installation of U.S. missile shield facilities were still in progress during the writing of this paper. This makes them tempting objects for forecasting their future development. This part thus tries to briefly address most likely scenarios that might occur and predict both games' final outcome. As indicated in the paragraphs above, the Czech executive seemed to achieve the radar deal with the U.S. not as a result of affirmatively oriented domestic preferences, but rather despite them. Striking an international deal without accepting a constituency-driven logic, however, might in the end represent a significant obstacle for the final ratification of the treaty. Current political preferences shortly before the forthcoming ratification process of the Level I agreement in the national assembly (Level II) according to some indicate that the radar deal is a stillborn child. The governing coalition despite side-payments, costly information campaign and intensive domestic political bargaining was not able to definitely secure necessary majority for the pending treaty in parliament until today. Given the small overlap between the Czech and U.S. domestic win-sets it is very likely that the Czech foreign policy towards the U.S. will encounter deadly blow on home ground and thus result in involuntary defection.

There are only thin chances that the abovementioned scenario will not occur. These chances dwell in the fact that despite some missing votes in Topolánek's three-way coalition, there are some lawmakers from the main opposition party, which recently faced several problems with party discipline, that have said they may back the treaty. Yet another possibility to



increase the chances of treaty's ratification is connected to the European Union. The Czech PM signaled that his party may trade the EU's Lisbon treaty for U.S. base accord and thus achieve party discipline in the coalition Green Party as well as wring concession from ČSSD, the main opposition party with largely pro-European orientation.

The situation in Poland is very dissimilar. The main reasons why the Polish negotiations ended up in the current deadlock is linked to Polish insistence on perception of Russia as the main security threat. Such foreign policy stance, however, is not completely compatible with the U.S. negotiators' position as they try to persuade the Russians from the very beginning that the planned system is not directed against them and will not affect their security by any means. An accommodating American attitude towards the current Polish cabinet would completely ruin even the last remnants of trust between the U.S. and Russia damaged by the planned U.S. missile shield stationing in Central Europe. It is thus reasonable to assume that Americans will not accept Polish demands unless these are significantly reduced and they stop referring to Russia as the main security threat.

The possibility of achieving an agreement seems to be far away at this moment. This option remains remote also because the current Polish executive's stance is reinforced by a perception that it is payback time for Poland's loyalty in Iraq and Afghanistan, where it has sent thousands of troops to support the U.S.- led military coalition. Moreover, the current Polish government still vividly remembers unfavorable aircraft offset deal with the U.S. in the late 1990s, when Americans sold their F-16 fighter jets, which promised lot of additional sweeteners, but at the end never came to reality. However remote the agreement between Poland and the U.S. seems today, it needs to be stressed that this option is not necessarily ruled out. All depends on Polish willingness to moderate her unrealistic demands, which do not find support in U.S. Congress. Once this issue is settled, there is nothing in the way of signing an agreement as there are no significant political or constituency pressures, except that of public, that would prevent the deal.

Another important factor that could restructure both two-level games is the U.S. presidential election. America's leadership change could alter the U.S. domestic win-set to certain degree. While republican presidential candidate J. McCain would almost certainly finalize the missile shield project in Central Europe, views of democratic candidate B. Obama remain unclear and confusing. This uncertainty not only endangers future and expected timing of the whole project, but also serves as an important impulse for Polish and Czech games at the Level II, where many domestic critics call for postponement of negotiations after U.S. presidential election.

The last significant aspect possessing the potential to completely upset the two-level game board that could result in hardly foreseeable outcomes on both sides of the negotiation table is a major domestic political crisis within any of the three countries concerned or an international incident that could possibly reshape or imperil the very structure of currently existing international order. The Georgia-Russia clash over South Ossetia considerably upsetting the geopolitical balance in the Caucasus and loudly announcing the comeback of Russia on the international scene turned out to be precisely such a case. It needs to be stressed, however, that both these scenarios lie outside the scope of the two-level game analysis and have rather exogenous character that is only hardly seizable by Putnam's original metaphor.



Conclusion

I conclude by pulling together the main threads of my argument. This paper has explored divergent foreign policy paths of the Czech Republic and Poland, which reacted to the U.S. proposal to station military components of its national missile defense program on Czech and Polish territory. Adopting Putnam's two-level game metaphor I attempted to explain why intergovernmental cooperation in the U.S.-Czech case succeeded while it failed in the U.S.-Polish instance. In order to understand this puzzle, it is necessary to adopt Putnam's assertion that politics at the domestic and international levels are fundamentally interdependent. In searching to explain and understand foreign policy moves of both Central European states towards the U.S. one must pay attention to domestic and international forces at the same time. By examining tactics and strategies of negotiators at both domestic and international level, it becomes easier to explain seemingly perplexing developments of both negotiations.

The emergence of international cooperation is usually explained by international factors. Since both negotiations originated under the same international conditions and were conducted within the same time frame and with the same partner at the other side of the table (U.S.), I tried to explain both cases' divergent outcomes by looking at the U.S., Polish and Czech domestic actors, their importance, preferences and strategies (Level II). While these domestic factors to certain extent indicated the direction of both countries' foreign policies, their understanding would be superficial and incomplete without taking into consideration also international pressures that resulted from bilateral negotiations with the U.S (Level I).

The Czech Republic's foreign policy response to the U.S. radar base proposal is best explained by the government's conscious neglect of domestic actors and their preferences, and artificially large domestic win-set, which resulted in relatively smooth progress of negotiations that were concluded by inking a bilateral agreement with the U.S. This outcome, however, will almost certainly face heavy complications during its ratification phase.

The Polish foreign policy reaction to American interceptor missiles base offer can be justified on grounds of domestic actors' preferences. Although most domestic players within Poland were essentially ready to accept the U.S. offer, political leadership change in the country altered the domestic win-set through utilizing adverse preferences of the general public and defense industry's modernization needs for driving a harder bargain with the U.S. The game at Level II, however, was not the only determinant of Polish foreign policy. The U.S.-Polish negotiations spurred loud Russian objections, which reverberated also at the Level II game through providing additional rationale for previous Polish demands towards the U.S. connected to the country's security and thus solidified its initial foreign policy stance.



Afterword: When One (Level) is More Than Two

The start of fights between Georgia and Russia over the breakaway region of South Ossetia quite surprisingly achieved what the hardball and lengthy negotiations between Washington and Warsaw were not able to deliver. A swiftly concluded international agreement between the two sides was one of the byproducts of Russia's muscle flexing and growing confidence on the global stage. The Russian military experiment in Georgia not only brought American and Polish bargaining positions closer together but also served as a strong outside impulse for significant restructuring of the whole two-level game and its prospects.

The U.S.- Polish agreement came amid heightened tensions between the U.S. and Russia over Moscow's invasion of Georgia. The Polish side in this situation managed to achieve virtually all of its major and previously only hardly acceptable demands towards the U.S. appearing on their wish list. Such an alteration of the two-level game conditions and its very structure stemming from an unexpected but substantial external development was caused by rare and hardly predictable systemic changes or its indications within the international system. In other words, the August events in South Ossetia represented a substantial exogenous shock for the U.S.-Polish negotiation framework and upset the existing international playing field.

The U.S. face to face to the Russian unprecedented Cold War-like military adventure in the Caucasus has become suddenly much more perceptive to Polish concerns about the threat coming once again from the Kremlin rather than from Tehran or Pyongyang. While the Putnam's two-level framework is useful for explaining the divergent trajectories of Polish and Czech foreign policies towards the U.S. missile shield proposal prior to the Russian attack on Georgia, its explanatory power is rather limited for the ensuing development. Maybe somewhat paradoxically, the hastily born Polish-American international agreement could be more accurately accounted for through the use of traditional realist approach to international politics where the starting point are states and their security, economic or other interests clashing with each other. The U.S.-Polish missile defense deal thus became nothing more and nothing less than an inherent part of the Cold War déjà vu brought about by the resurgent rivalry over the Caucasus between the world's current hegemonic leader and its revived contestant reinvigorated by oil price boom producing a gusher of cash skillfully transformed into political power.

It was not really the change in Poland's negotiation strategy or alteration in that of the U.S., but rather the Russian reemergence on the global scene, which significantly contributed to the final success of American-Polish talks and that brought foreign policies of the Czech Republic and Poland closer together. It seems that Putnam's sophisticated two-level metaphor fails to account for the reasons behind such an outcome. On the other hand, the traditional macro nation-state centered analysis (Level I) within the framework of classical realist understanding of anarchic and hostile international environment, where states seek to enhance their national security by accumulating their economic and military power, seems to be much more suitable for understanding the final agreement between Poland and the U.S. Simply put, the U.S. once again standing in front of Russian political and military revival did



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not wait a moment to demonstrate that it cannot accept such development. Although, the direct U.S. intervention in the conflict was hardly an option, the acceptance of insistently promoted Polish request for additional Patriot missiles throughout the negotiations suddenly became a great opportunity to notify Russia about the unacceptability of recent steps in its former sphere of influence that directly or indirectly threaten the national security of U.S. allies thus unacceptably contest the functioning of the current U.S. dominated international system as such.

It has to be borne in mind, however, that every foreign policy decision-making is a complex and multifactorial process and that explanatory variables from all levels and their relative influence on decision-making process can vary over time. The one who tries to understand such foreign policy restructuring has to be prepared to change the analytical lenses accordingly and combine available theories in order to unfold the most critical determinants from all levels of analysis that might stand behind and affect the countries' foreign policy choices.

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Association for International Affairs

The Association for International Affairs (AMO) is a non-governmental organization which was founded in order to pursue research and offer education in the field of international relations. AMO's main mission is to contribute to a deeper understanding of international course of events. Thanks to its activities and more than ten years of existence, AMO is perceived as one of the leading independent Czech think-tanks specialized in foreign policy.

In order to reach its goals the Association:

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- organizes international conferences, expert workshops, round tables, public discussions;
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