Acknowledgements

It is important to acknowledge the political courage of those leaders and societies who accomplished the 1989 changes that led to the adoption of liberal-democratic systems in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. Those transformations enabled the preparation of national defense policies that served to protect their states as well as contributing to the important regional and global missions of NATO and the EU.

The editorial staff at Manchester University Press have provided unwavering support for the project and the authors are thankful for that. Jim Peterson also acknowledges the mutual respect that he and his co-author Jacek Lubecki have for each other, a reality without which this book would not have been a possibility. Finally, Jim would like to thank his wife Bonnie for her strong support for this and all of his projects.

Jacek Lubecki would like to extend his thanks first and foremost to Jim Peterson, without whom the book would not have happened, and to his Hungarian consultant, Professor András Rácz of Péter Pázmány Catholic University in Budapest, without whom the Hungarian chapter could not have been written. He is also grateful to the publishers of *The Polish Review*, who allowed him to use selections from his article “Poland in Iraq” (2005) in chapter 6 of the book. His thanks go to his fiancée Christine Barsky, who inspired him during the writing, his daughter Francesca Lubecki-Wilde, who helped him with editing, and to his mother Kazimiera Lubecka, for her assistance with the research.