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POTUS NATO Rally Remarks 3/20/98

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REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON THE NATIONAL INTEREST FOR ENLARGING NATO

The East Room

12:46 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much, Secretary Albright, General Shelton, General Sandler, Mr. Berger, Senator Roth, to the members and representatives of the Joint Chiefs, members of the diplomatic corps, and other interested citizens, many of whom have held high positions in the national security apparatus of this country and the military of our country. We're grateful for everyone's presence here today.

I especially want to thank the members of the Senate who are here. I thank Senator Roth, the chairman of the NATO observer group, Senator Moynihan, Senator Smith, Senator Levin, Senator Lugar, Senator Robb, and Senator Thurmond. Your leadership and that of Senators Lott, Daschle, Helms and Biden and others in this chamber has truly, as the Secretary of State said, made this debate a model of bipartisan dialogue and action.

The Senate has held more than a dozen hearings on this matter. We have worked very closely with the Senate NATO observer group. And I must say, I was essentially gratified when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 16 to 2 in support of enlargement.

Now, in the coming days the full Senate will act on this matter of critical importance to our national security. The admission of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO will be a very important milestone in building the kind of world we want in the 21st century.
As has been said, I first proposed NATO enlargement four years ago, when General Joulwan was our commander in Brussels. Many times since, I've had the opportunity to speak on this issue. Now a final decision is at hand, and now it is important that all the American people focus on this matter closely. For this is one of those rare moments when we have within our grasp the opportunity to actually shape the future, to make the new century safer and more secure and less unstable than the one we are leaving.

We can truly be present at a new creation. When President Truman signed the North Atlantic Treaty 49 years ago next month, he expressed the goal of its founders in typically simple and straightforward language: to preserve their present peaceful situation and to protect it in the future. The dream of the generation that founded NATO was of a Europe whole and free. But the Europe of their time was lamentably divided by the Iron Curtain. Our generation can realize their dream. It is our opportunity and responsibility to do so, to create a new Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the very first time in all history.

Forging a new NATO in the 21st century will help to fulfill the commitment and the struggle that many of you in this room engaged in over the last 50 years. NATO can do for Europe's east what it did for Europe's west -- protect new democracies against aggression, prevent a return to local rivalries, create the conditions in which prosperity can flourish.

In January of 1994, on my first trip to Europe for the NATO summit, we did take the lead in proposing a new NATO for a new era. First, by strengthening our Alliance to preserve its core mission of self-defense, while preparing it to take on the new challenges to our security and to Europe's stability. Second, by reaching out to new partners and taking in new members from among Europe's emerging democracies. And third, by forging a strong and cooperative relationship between NATO and Russia.

Over the past four years, persistently and pragmatically, we have put this strategy into place. NATO has shifted to smaller, more flexible forces better prepared to provide for our defense in this new era, but also trained and equipped for other contingencies. Its military power remains so unquestioned that it was the only force capable of stopping the fighting in Bosnia. NATO signed the Founding Act with Moscow, joining Russia and history's most successful alliance in common cause for a peaceful, democratic, undivided Europe. We signed a
charter to build cooperation between NATO and Ukraine. We created the Partnership for Peace as a path to full NATO membership for some, and a strong and lasting link to the Alliance for others.

Today, the Partnership for Peace has exceeded its mission beyond the wildest dreams of those of us who started it. It has more than three dozen members.

Now we're on the threshold of bringing new members into NATO. The Alliance's enlargement will make America safer by making NATO stronger, adding new forces and new allies that can share our security burdens. Let me be very clear: NATO's core mission will remain the same -- the defense of the territory of its members. The addition of new members will strengthen and enhance that mission. In pursuing enlargement, we have made sure not to alter NATO's core function or its ability to defend America and Europe's security.

Now I urge this Senate to do the same, and in particular to impose new constraints on NATO's freedom of action, its military decision-making, or its ability to respond quickly and effectively to whatever challenges may arise. NATO's existing treaty and the way it makes defense and security decisions have served our nation's security well for half a century.

In the same way, the addition of these new members will help NATO meet new challenges to our security. In Bosnia, for example, Polish, Czech, and Hungarian soldiers serve alongside our own with skill and professionalism. Remember, this was one of the largest, single operational deployments of American troops in Europe since World War II. It was staged from a base is Taszar, Hungary. It simply would not have happened as swiftly, smoothly, or safely without the active help and support of Hungary.

As we look toward the 21st century, we're looking at other new security challenges as well -- the spread of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile technology, terrorism and the potential for hi-tech attacks on our information systems. NATO must be prepared to meet and defeat this new generation of threats, to act flexibly and decisively under American leadership. With three new members in our ranks, NATO will be better able to meet those goals as well.

Enlargement also will help to make Europe more stable. Already, the very prospect of membership has encouraged nations
throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation.

Now, let me emphasize what I've said many times before and what all NATO allies have committed to: NATO's first new members should not be its last. Keeping the doors open to all of Europe's new democracies will help to ensure that enlargement benefits the security of the entire region, not just the first three new members.

At last summer's summit in Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of enlargement at our next summit in 1999. Neither NATO nor my administration has made any decisions or any commitments about when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I have consulted broadly with Congress on decisions about the admissions of the first three members. I pledge to do the same before any future decisions are made. And of course any new members would also require the advice and the consent of the United States Senate.

For these reasons, I urge in the strongest terms the Senate to reject any effort to impose an artificial pause on the process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and, I believe, unwise. If NATO is to remain strong, America's freedom to lead must be unfettered and our freedom to cooperate with our other partners in NATO must remain unfettered. A unilateral freeze on enlargement would reduce our own country's flexibility and, perhaps even more important, our leverage, our ability to influence our partners. It would fracture NATO's open-door consensus, it would undermine further reforms in Europe's democracies, it would draw a new and potentially destabilizing line, at least temporarily, in Europe.

There are other steps we must take to prevent that division from re-emerging. We must continue to strengthen the partnership for peace with our many friends in Europe. We need to give even more practical expression to the agreements between NATO and Russia, and NATO and Ukraine, turning words into deeds. With Russia and other countries, we must continue to reduce our nuclear stockpiles -- and we thank you, Senator Lugar, for your leadership on that -- to combat the dangers of proliferation, to lower conventional arms ceilings all across Europe. And all of us together must help the Bosnian people to finish the job of bringing a lasting peace to their country. If you think about where we were just a year ago in Bosnia, not to mention two years ago, not to mention 1995, no one could have believed we would be here today.
It would not have happened had it not been for NATO, the Partnership for Peace allies, the Russians, all of those who have come together and joined hands to end the bloodiest conflict in Europe since the second world war.

Now we have to finish what America started four years ago, welcoming Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic into our Alliance. If you look around at who is in the room today, you can see that they are more than willing to be a good partner. They will make NATO stronger; they will make Europe safer; and in so doing, they will make America and our young people more secure. They will make it less likely that the men and women in uniform who serve under General Shelton and the other generals here, and their successors in the 21st century, will have to fight and die because of problems in Europe.

A new NATO can extend the blessings of freedom and security in a new century. With the help of our allies, the support of the Senate, the strength of our continued commitment, we can bring Europe together -- not by force of arms, but by possibilities of peace. That is the promise of this moment. And we must seize it.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

12:58 P.M. EST
Major General Roger W. Sandler, AUS (Ret.)

Biographical Summary

Major General Roger W. Sandler entered active duty on 1 August 1991 after having been selected as the Chief, Army Reserve and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Reserve Command. This was his second period of extended active duty, having served initially from August 1956 to August 1958.

During his first two years on active duty, MG Sandler served as an enlisted man and was stationed for 16 months in Germany. He served an additional four years enlisted service before being commissioned a Second Lieutenant in 1962. He graduated in 1956 from Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa. After his active military service, he began a 35 1/2 year career in the Army Reserve, culminating in his latest assignment. He has held a variety of Command and Staff assignments, including Commander, 13th PSYOP Battalion; Adjutant General of the 205th Infantry Brigade; Adjutant General and Inspector General of the 88th ARCOM; and Assistant Chief of Staff Services, Assistant Chief of Staff Security Operations, Training and Intelligence of the 103d Corps Support Command (COSCOM). He was appointed as Chief of Staff, 103d COSCOM in 1980 where he served until being selected as the Deputy Commanding General of the 103d COSCOM in 1983.

MG Sandler then was selected for the first of three successive Major General Command positions, as the CG, 88th ARCOM, Ft. Snelling, Minnesota. He was later selected to command the 103d COSCOM, Des Moines, Iowa, from 1987 - 1991 and the 86th ARCOM, Chicago, Illinois, from March 1991, until becoming the Chief, Army Reserve on 1 August 1991. On 31 January 1994 MG Sandler retired from the Army, and on 1 February assumed his present duties as the National Executive Director of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States (ROA).

He previously served the ROA for many years and was elected as National President 1987-1988. He was also the National President of the Senior Army Reserve Commanders Association in 1984-1985.

Prior to entering active duty MG Sandler owned Sandler Properties, a real estate investment company in Mound, Minnesota. He has four grown children, Christie, Kathey, Steve and Scott.

MG Sandler is married to the former Jane C. Carson, and they reside in Manassas, Virginia.
territory of its own members. The addition of new members will not change that mission — on the contrary, it will add strategic depth and new capabilities and new allies who can help carry out NATO’s missions. As we have pursued the enlargement of NATO, we have made sure that it did not alter NATO’s fundamental mission of collective defense or its ability to defend transatlantic security. Now the Senate must do the same. The Senate must be careful to do nothing during the coming days that would constrain NATO’s freedom of action, its military decisionmaking, or its ability to respond quickly and effectively to whatever challenges may arise. NATO’s existing Treaty, and the existing way it makes defense and security decisions, has served America’s national interests for a half century. We should not tinker with success.
American troops in Europe since World War II was staged from a base in Taszar, Hungary. It simply would not have happened as swiftly, smoothly or safely without the help of Hungary.

In today's world, we are facing a new breed of security threats that blur the old concepts of "in area" and "out of area" -- the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the spread of ballistic missile technology, terrorism and the potential for an attack on NATO information systems, even the possibility of uncontrolled flows of refugees. We must adapt ourselves and the NATO alliance to address this new generation of risks and challenges, so that the American people and our friends and allies in Europe can live in peace and prosperity. We must preserve NATO's ability to respond flexibly and decisively under American leadership.

The accession of these three countries also will help us achieve these goals -- it will make Europe more stable -- and help prevent future Bosnias. Already, the prospect of membership has encouraged countries throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation. And adding these states to NATO -- combined with other efforts to reach out to all of the region's new democracies -- will help to erase the artificial Cold War line that divided Europe for fifty years.

Let me also repeat what I have said before -- and what all our NATO allies have committed to: NATO's first new members should not be its last. Keeping NATO's door open to all of Europe's emerging democracies will help ensure that enlargement benefits the security of the entire region, not just these first three new members.

Let's discuss these two paras tomorrow morning. It is possible Senate will vote on Warner
Record Type: Record

To: Paul E. Begala/WHO/EOP, Eleanor S. Parker/WHO/EOP
cc: Antony J. Blinken/NSC/EOP
Subject: Remarks at NATO Ratification Rally

Hello! The attached, draft POTUS remarks are from Tony Blinken with the following comment: "Rahm thinks this needs dressing up. Since I've written this speech about 75 times over the last 4 years, it's hard for me to separate the peddling from the poetic. Rahm wants memorable line. Any ideas?" Thanks.

3/19/98 1:30 p.m.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
REMARKS AT NATO RATIFICATION RALLY
THE WHITE HOUSE
MARCH 20, 1998

[Acknowledgments:]

In the days ahead, the Senate will act on a matter of supreme importance to our nation's security: the accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I have spoken to this issue many times over the past four years. Now that a final decision is at hand, I want the American people to focus on the opportunity before us. For this is one of those rare moments when we have it within our power literally to shape the future -- to make it safer and more secure than the past.
When President Truman signed the North Atlantic Treaty 49 years ago next month, he expressed the goal of its founders in simple but powerful words: “to preserve their present peaceful situation and to protect it in the future.” Over the past half century, NATO has lived up to that aspiration -- and then some. Through NATO, Western Europe became a source of stability instead of hostility. Democracy took permanent root in countries where fascism once ruled.

I came to office convinced that NATO must remain the bedrock of Trans-Atlantic security. And I believed that NATO could do for Europe’s East what it did for Europe’s West -- protect new democracies against aggression … prevent a return to local rivalries… and create the conditions in which prosperity can flourish. On my very first trip to Europe for the NATO Summit in January 1994, the United States took the lead in building a new NATO for a new era. First, by strengthening our alliance to preserve its core mission of self-defense while also preparing to take on the new challenges to our security and Europe’s stability. Second, by reaching out to new partners in the east and taking in new members from among Europe’s emerging democracies. Third, by forging a strong and cooperative relationship between NATO and Russia.

Over the past four years -- patiently, persistently, pragmatically -- we have put that strategy into practice. NATO has shifted to smaller, more flexible forces prepared to provide for our defense, but also trained and equipped for other contingencies such as peacekeeping. We have seen those new capabilities on brilliant display in Bosnia. NATO signed the Founding Act with Russia -- joining a great nation and history’s most successful alliance in common cause for a peaceful, democratic and undivided Europe. We created the Partnership for Peace as a path to full NATO
Before NATO, Europe was the tinderbox that exploded into World War twice in the first half of the 20th century. Because of NATO's strength, Europe has been
membership for some and a strong and lasting link to the alliance for other more than three dozen members. And now, we are on the threshold of bringing new members into NATO.

The Alliance's enlargement will make America safer by making NATO stronger, adding new forces and new allies that can share our security burdens. Let me be very clear: NATO's core mission will remain the collective defense of the territory of its members. The addition of new members will not change that mission, it will enhance it. But these new members also will help NATO meet new challenges to our security that may not immediately threaten our territory -- as they have already done in Bosnia. There, Polish, Czech and Hungarian soldiers serve alongside our own with skill and professionalism. Consider -- one of the largest operational deployment of American troops in Europe since World War II was staged from a base in Taszar, Hungary. [TK] It simply would not have happened as swiftly, smoothly or safely without the help of Hungary.

The accession of these three countries also will help make Europe more stable -- and help prevent future Bosnias. Already, the prospect of membership has encouraged countries throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation. And adding these states to NATO -- combined with other efforts to reach out to all of the region's new democracies -- will help to erase the artificial Cold War line that divided Europe for fifty years.

Let me also repeat what I have said before -- and what all our NATO allies have committed to: NATO's first new members should not be its last. Keeping NATO's door open to all of Europe's
emerging democracies will help ensure that enlargement benefits the secu

[Handwritten note: please disregard the status of Warner amendment] At last summer's summit in Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of the Alliance's enlargement at our next summit in 1999. Neither NATO nor my Administration has made any decisions or commitments about when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I consulted broadly with Congress on decisions about the admission of these first three countries. I pledge to do the same before any decisions are made in the future. And of course, any new members will require the advice and consent of the Senate.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Senate to reject any effort to mandate a pause on the process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and unwise. It would reduce our own country's flexibility and leverage, fracture NATO's open door consensus, undermine further reforms, and draw a new and potentially destabilizing dividing line in Europe.

There are other steps we must take to prevent that dividing line from reemerging. We must continue to strengthen the Partnership for Peace with our many friends in Europe. We need to give practical expression to the agreements NATO signed with Russia and Ukraine -- turning their words into concrete cooperation. With Russia and other countries, we must continue to reduce our nuclear stockpiles, combat the dangers of proliferation, and lower conventional arms ceilings across Europe. And all of us together must help the Bosnian people finish the job of bringing a
lasting peace to their country.

THE 20th CENTURY DAWNED TO THE SOUND OF CANNON-FIRE FROM A EUROPEAN WAR THAT BECAME HISTORY'S FIRST WORLD WAR. IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS CENTURY ANOTHER EUROPEAN WAR THREATENED TO CONSUME THE WORLD. BUT SINCE ITS FOUNDING, IN THE WAKES OF FREEDOM'S VICTORY, NATO HAS WORKED TO KEEP THE PEACE.


[DEMOCRATIC & UNDIVIDED?]
OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ADVISOR TO
THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR NATO ENLARGEMENT RATIFICATION

S/NERO, Room 6317
Washington, DC 20520

FAX TRANSMITTAL

DATE: 3/19

TO: Nato Enlargement People

FAX: ______________ TELEPHONE: ______________

FROM: Jeremy Rosner

RE: ____________________

CC: ____________________

Number of pages including cover sheet: 5

MESSAGE: Allright letter to Helms. For public consumption.
Dear Mr. Chairman:

I was very pleased by the strong endorsement that your Committee provided to the enlargement of NATO on March 3. I want to thank you again for the leadership you have provided in ensuring a thorough examination by the Senate of this important issue, and in helping to build a consensus in support of its ratification.

I am concerned, however, by some of the discussion at the March 3 Committee meeting regarding our view of NATO's future missions and planned revisions of NATO's Strategic Concept. Given the very serious issues involved, I want to take this opportunity to try to clarify the Administration's policy and plans. I hope you also will permit me to share this letter with your Senate colleagues so that they can better understand our position as well.

First, there is no plan by the Administration or by NATO, as was suggested at one point in last week's Committee meeting, to abandon NATO's core mission of collective defense of NATO's territory, nor would the Administration permit such a change to occur. As both the Administration and NATO have repeatedly stated, the primary mission of NATO is, and must remain, the collective defense of the territory of NATO's members. Although the territorial threats to NATO's members have diminished since the end of the Cold War, they have not disappeared, and the best way to ensure they do not reappear over the long term is to keep NATO's collective defense capability strong, credible, and primary.

Second, during last week's meeting, the specter was raised of a plan by the Administration and NATO to "deploy troops around the world," such as to the Pacific Rim and Africa. In part, I would respectfully suggest that there

The Honorable
Jesse Helms, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations,
United States Senate.
was simply some mischaracterization of my remarks; for example, I have never stated, nor do I believe, that I see "NATO forces as being a major player in Africa in terms of the stabilization of that continent." However, it may be that my answers on these matters at the Committee's hearings on October 7 and February 24 were not sufficiently clear. Therefore, let me plainly set out our policy.

NATO's purpose is to protect the security of its members. I believe it would be imprudent and even dangerous to draw some arbitrary defense perimeter beyond which NATO would never take action, in part because NATO's core mission might well require sending forces out of area in order to defend NATO's own members. But it is safe to say that neither the U.S. nor its allies is developing any plan to turn NATO into a collective security organization that sends troops on peacekeeping missions to the distant reaches of Africa and Asia, as was suggested at the Committee meeting.

U.S. and NATO policy do permit actions by the Alliance beyond the collective defense of its own members' territory, and this has been the case for many years. At its Rome summit in November 1991, NATO adopted a new Strategic Concept to respond to the transformation of the European security environment brought about by the end of the Cold War. That document reaffirmed collective defense as the Alliance's primary objective and military mission. It also noted that Allied security is linked to that of all other states of Europe, and that future NATO missions could include contributing toward the maintenance of stability in Europe, including areas beyond the borders of its own members. Thus, NATO's declared willingness to consider so-called out-of-area missions is neither new nor a product of the Alliance's decision to accept new members.

NATO's first out-of-area operation, indeed its first-ever military operation, has been in Bosnia, beginning in 1992 with efforts to enforce no-fly zones and economic sanctions, and continuing with NATO's IFOR and SFOR missions. While there may be a range of opinion about these efforts, I think most people would agree that they are neither global nor unrelated to the security of NATO's own members: the republics of the former Yugoslavia lie squarely within Europe and border on two NATO allies.

NATO's decision to focus on missions beyond its own borders does not represent a radical departure from its original purposes and provisions.
Rather, the scope of the North Atlantic Treaty always extended beyond collective defense and beyond NATO's own territory. Article 4 of the Treaty, in particular, specifically says that the Allies will consult together whenever in the opinion of any of them there is a threat to territorial integrity, political independence, or security. In March 1949, Secretary of State Dean Acheson made clear that this Article was “broader than what fell within the scope of the following article, Article 5.”

Third, I also want to address an implied concern at the March 3 meeting that the Administration may use NATO’s upcoming re-examination of its Strategic Concept to effect some fundamental change in the Alliance’s orientation, such as abandoning territorial defense and replacing it with a mission of peacekeeping. It is true that NATO has begun the process of revising the 1991 Strategic Concept. This is a normal practice in NATO, which has had four different Strategic Concepts during its history. The need for another update is clear. The last Strategic Concept was written before the collapse of the former USSR and the Warsaw Pact, before the creation of the Partnership for Peace program, and before NATO’s decision to enlarge; its outdated language still refers to “the Soviet Union.”

An updated Strategic Concept can ensure that the Alliance’s plan for defending the security and interests of its members does everything possible to reflect new realities and to ensure an equitable sharing of burdens and responsibilities with our allies. All NATO allies already have agreed that the updated Strategic Concept will preserve collective defense under Article 5 as NATO’s primary function.

Finally, there was a concern expressed last week that there be adequate opportunity for congressional input as we and our allies update the Strategic Concept, decide how best to protect our common security and interests, and make other policy decisions concerning NATO’s future. I take some pride in the extent of consultation this Administration has undertaken about our decisions involving NATO and its enlargement. In addition to the many hearings before the Foreign Relations Committee and other committees on this issue, we have provided well over a dozen briefings for the Senate NATO Observer Group, included members of Congress in the President’s delegation at the NATO summit in Madrid, and canvassed congressional opinion prior to key decisions, such
as the one last summer regarding the number of states to be invited into the Alliance.

We have every intention to continue that pattern of intensive consultation with regard to upcoming decisions on NATO policy. We also are amenable to the requirements in the resolution of ratification, as adopted by the Committee, concerning reporting and briefing on the Strategic Concept and other issues. Moreover, Congress has many direct ways to ensure that the NATO policies of this Administration and its successors do not run counter to its wishes. Article 11 of the North Atlantic Treaty makes all of NATO's decisions subject to the "constitutional processes" of its members, and Congress has a wide array of means to limit or bar any missions of which it disapproves. Ultimately, it would be rash and counterproductive for any Administration to endorse a Strategic Concept that committed us to missions that would not have the support of our Congress or public, and you can be assured that we have no intention of doing so.

Once again, let me thank you for your leadership on the issue of NATO's future. I believe the work we are undertaking together on NATO's enlargement, and the broader discussion that you have helped to lead on NATO's purpose, will help lay a stronger foundation for America's security well into the coming century.

Sincerely,

Madeleine K. Albright
For SRB/JS -- attached, draft of POTUS NATO remarks for Friday's rally. Cleared by EUR/CEE/Defense. Note that graf's on "freeze" might be moot if Warner amendment voted on today. Comments to me, please. Thanks.

1. JS

2. SRB
3/19/98 1:30 p.m.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
REMARKS AT NATO RATIFICATION RALLY
THE WHITE HOUSE
MARCH 20, 1998

[Acknowledgments:]

In the days ahead, the Senate will act on a matter of supreme importance to our nation's security: the accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I have spoken to this issue many times over the past four years. Now that a final decision is at hand, I want the American people to focus on the opportunity before us. For this is one of those rare moments when we have it within our power literally to shape the future -- to make it safer and more secure than the past.

When President Truman signed the North Atlantic Treaty 49 years ago next month, he expressed the goal of its founders in simple but powerful words: "to preserve their present peaceful situation and to protect it in the future." Over the past half century, NATO has lived up to that aspiration -- and then some. Through NATO, Western Europe became a source of stability instead of hostility. Democracy took permanent root in countries where fascism once ruled.

I came to office convinced that NATO must remain the bedrock of Trans-Atlantic security. And I believed that NATO could do for Europe's East what it did for Europe's West -- protect new democracies against aggression ... prevent a return to local rivalries ... and create the conditions in which prosperity can flourish. On my very first trip to Europe for the NATO Summit in
January 1994, the United States took the lead in building a new NATO for a new era. First, by strengthening our alliance to preserve its core mission of self-defense while also preparing to take on the new challenges to our security and Europe’s stability. Second, by reaching out to new partners in the east and taking in new members from among Europe’s emerging democracies. Third, by forging a strong and cooperative relationship between NATO and Russia.

Over the past four years—patiently, persistently, pragmatically—we have put that strategy into practice. NATO has shifted to smaller, more flexible forces prepared to provide for our defense, but also trained and equipped for other contingencies such as peacekeeping. We have seen those new capabilities on brilliant display in Bosnia. NATO signed the Founding Act with Russia—joining a great nation and history’s most successful alliance in common cause for a peaceful, democratic and undivided Europe. We created the Partnership for Peace as a path to full NATO membership for some and a strong and lasting link to the alliance for others—and today it has more than three dozen members. And now, we are on the threshold of bringing new members into NATO.

The Alliance’s enlargement will make America safer by making NATO stronger, adding new forces and new allies that can share our security burdens. Let me be very clear: NATO’s core mission will remain the collective defense of the territory of its members. The addition of new members will not change that mission—it will enhance it. But these new members also will help NATO meet new challenges to our security that may not immediately threaten our territory—as they have already done in Bosnia. There, Polish, Czech and Hungarian soldiers serve
alongside our own with skill and professionalism. Consider the single largest operational
deployment of American troops in Europe since World War II was staged from a base in Taszar,
Hungary. It simply would not have happened as swiftly, smoothly or safely without the
help of Hungary.

The accession of these three countries also will help make Europe more stable and help
prevent future Boonias. Already, the prospect of membership has encouraged countries
throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation. And
adding these states to NATO — combined with other efforts to reach out to all of the region’s new
democracies — will help to erase the artificial Cold War line that divided Europe for fifty years.

Let me also repeat what I have said before — and what all our NATO allies have committed to:
NATO’s first new members should not be its last. Keeping NATO’s door open to all of
Europe’s emerging democracies will help ensure that enlargement benefits the security of the
entire region, not just these first three new members.

[TK: Two grafs to follow depend on status of Warner amendment] It is possible Senate will
decide vote on Warner proposal tomorrow, so this may not be necessary. At last summer’s summit in
Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of the Alliance’s enlargement at our next summit
in 1999. Neither NATO nor my Administration has made any decisions or commitments about
when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I consulted broadly
with Congress on decisions about the admission of these first three countries. I pledge to do the
same before any decisions are made in the future. And of course, any new members will require
the advice and consent of the Senate.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Senate to reject any effort to mandate a pause on the process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and unwise. It would reduce our own country's flexibility and leverage, fracture NATO's open door consensus, undermine further reforms, and draw a new and potentially destabilizing dividing line in Europe.

There are other steps we must take to prevent that dividing line from reemerging. We must continue to strengthen the Partnership for Peace with our many friends in Europe. We need to give practical expression to the agreements NATO signed with Russia and Ukraine -- turning their words into concrete cooperation. With Russia and other countries, we must continue to reduce our nuclear stockpiles, combat the dangers of proliferation, and stabilize conventional arms levels across Europe. And all of us together must help the Bosnian people finish the job of bringing a lasting peace to their country.

But the biggest step we can take is to finish what America started by welcoming Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic into our alliance -- making NATO stronger, Europe safer and America more secure. For the first time in history, we can bring Europe together not by the force of arms, but by the possibilities of peace. That is the promise of this moment. Let us seize it.
In the days ahead, the Senate will act on a matter of supreme importance to our nation’s security: the accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I have spoken to this issue many times over the past four years. Now that a final decision is at hand, I want the American people to focus on the opportunity before us. For this is one of those rare moments when we have it within our power literally to shape the future -- to make it safer and more secure than the past.

When President Truman signed the North Atlantic Treaty 49 years ago next month, he expressed the goal of its founders in simple but powerful words: “to preserve their present peaceful situation and to protect it in the future.” Over the past half century, NATO has lived up to that aspiration -- and then some. Through NATO, Western Europe became a source of stability instead of hostility. Democracy took permanent root in countries where fascism once ruled.

I came to office convinced that NATO must remain the bedrock of Trans-Atlantic security. And I believed that NATO could do for Europe’s East what it did for Europe’s West -- protect new democracies against aggression … prevent a return to local rivalries … and create the conditions in which prosperity can flourish. On my very first trip to Europe for the NATO Summit in
January 1994, the United States took the lead in building a new NATO for a new era. First, by strengthening our alliance to preserve its core mission of self-defense while also preparing to take on the new challenges to our security and Europe's stability. Second, by reaching out to new partners in the east and taking in new members from among Europe's emerging democracies. Third, by forging a strong and cooperative relationship between NATO and Russia.

Over the past four years -- patiently, persistently, pragmatically -- we have put that strategy into practice. NATO has shifted to smaller, more flexible forces prepared to provide for our defense, but also trained and equipped for other contingencies, such as peacekeeping. We have seen those new capabilities on brilliant display in Bosnia. NATO signed the Founding Act with Russia -- joining a great nation and history's most successful alliance in common cause for a peaceful, democratic and undivided Europe. We created the Partnership for Peace as a path to full NATO membership for some and a strong and lasting link to the alliance for others -- and today it has more than three dozen members. And now, we are on the threshold of bringing new members into NATO.

The Alliance's enlargement will make America safer by making NATO stronger, adding new forces and new allies that can share our security burdens. Let me be very clear: NATO's core mission will remain the collective defense of the territory of its members. The addition of new members will not change that mission -- it will enhance it. But these new members also will help NATO meet new challenges to our security that may not immediately threaten our territory -- as they have already done in Bosnia. There, Polish, Czech and Hungarian soldiers serve.
alongside our own with skill and professionalism. Consider -- one of the largest operational deployment of American troops in Europe since World War II was staged from a base in Taszar, Hungary. [TK] It simply would not have happened as swiftly, smoothly or safely without the help of Hungary.

The accession of these three countries also will help make Europe more stable -- and help prevent future Bosnias. Already, the prospect of membership has encouraged countries throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation. And adding these states to NATO -- combined with other efforts to reach out to all of the region's new democracies -- will help to erase the artificial Cold War line that divided Europe for fifty years.

Let me also repeat what I have said before -- and what all our NATO allies have committed to: NATO's first new members should not be its last. Keeping NATO's door open to all of Europe's emerging democracies will help ensure that enlargement benefits the security of the entire region, not just these first three new members.

[TK: Two grafts to follow depend on status of Warner amendment] At last summer's summit in Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of the Alliance's enlargement at our next summit in 1999. Neither NATO nor my Administration has made any decisions or commitments about when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I consulted broadly with Congress on decisions about the admission of these first three countries. I pledge to do the same before any decisions are made in the future. And of course, any new members will require the advice and consent of the Senate.
For these reasons, I strongly urge the Senate to reject any effort to mandate a pause on the process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and unwise. It would reduce our own country's flexibility and leverage, fracture NATO's open door consensus, undermine further reforms, and draw a new and potentially destabilizing dividing line in Europe.

There are other steps we must take to prevent that dividing line from reemerging. We must continue to strengthen the Partnership for Peace with our many friends in Europe. We need to give practical expression to the agreements NATO signed with Russia and Ukraine -- turning their words into concrete cooperation. With Russia and other countries, we must continue to reduce our nuclear stockpiles, combat the dangers of proliferation, and lower conventional arms ceilings across Europe. And all of us together must help the Bosnian people finish the job of bringing a lasting peace to their country.

But the biggest step we can take is to finish what America started by welcoming Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic into our alliance -- making NATO stronger, Europe safer and America more secure. For the first time in history, we can bring Europe together not by the force of arms, but by the possibilities of peace. That is the promise of this moment. Let us seize it.