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Folder Title:
Madrid-Congressional Delegation Statement 7/7/97

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Original OA/ID Number:
3389

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**COLLECTION:**
Clinton Presidential Records  
National Security Council  
Anthony Blinken (Speechwriting)  
OA/Box Number: 3389

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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Madrid, Spain)

For Immediate Release July 7, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN PHOTO OPPORTUNITY AT MEETING
WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND NATIONAL SECURITY TEAM

Miguel Angel Hotel
Madrid, Spain

6:43 P.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Let me begin by saying that I and the leaders of my administration team here have just finished a very important meeting with the congressional delegation. We are here in Madrid on an historic mission, to fashion a new NATO for a new Europe that is undivided for the first time in history for a new century. And that new NATO will include new members, new missions, and new ties to countries, including the very important one we concluded last month with Russia and the one we will solidify here with Ukraine.

For the United States to do its part, the Congress is obviously key for several reasons: First, any attempt to expand NATO to admit new members must be ratified by the Congress; secondly, while we expect the costs to be modest, it is not a free decision because of the costs of integrating new countries into the military planning and operations of NATO; and third, because we believe that the policy itself requires that we keep an open door to the prospect of other democracies coming in, and that is something that clearly would have to be supported by the Congress.

The members have made it clear to me that while we have representatives here from both chambers and both parties, indicating that the United States understands it's important that we be united on the question of Europe, we have a ways to go to convince the American people of the momentous importance of decisions we're making here and the need for them to support it. And that is a job that I intend to take on when I go home, and I look forward to having the support of as many members possible for fulfilling it.
But the fact that this delegation, from both parties and both chambers of Congress is here is very important. And the leader of the delegation, Senator Roth, who has been very active in these matters for years, will also address the summit, and I am very grateful for that.

Senator, would you like to say anything?

SENATOR ROTH: Well, thank you, Mr. President. This is indeed an historic moment, and the reason I say it's an historic moment is that here we are, sitting together, Republicans and Democrats, urging the expansion of NATO.

And why expand NATO now? The reason for doing that is peace and security. We want to fill a vacuum in Eastern Europe. We want to give Eastern and Central Europe the same opportunity we helped give Western Europe, to democratize and reform for freedom. And I think that the fact that we're here together in a bipartisan spirit shows the importance of the matter. And the fact is that a undivided Europe, democratic, is the best chance for peace in our time.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Q Mr. President, are you convinced that you will take in only three members instead of five, despite the opposition?

THE PRESIDENT: I believe that the decision, the consensus decision will be for three, but I hope and believe that there will be a clear message that the door to NATO remains open. I know that there is support for Romania and for Slovenia, and I believe that they could well be strong candidates for future admission. And I think there are other nations that might be as well. I think it's important that we not look at Europe as a three or a five nation operation, that this is the beginning of a process that I think will go on.

Let me also emphasize that there are a lot of other nations that have been part of our Partnership for Peace. We are explicitly creating a political arm of that partnership, if you will, in the Euro Atlantic Partnership Council. That has succeeded beyond anybody's estimation. When the United States first proposed that, frankly, to be candid, even we thought -- we never dreamed there would be that much interest in it, that so many countries would participate, and that is would work as well as it has. I think that one of the reasons you have so many people in Bosnia today, so many countries, is because of the way the Partnership for Peace has worked.
So we are moving Europe's democracies closer and closer together, and we'll continue to do it. And I don't think that the difference of opinion we've had over how many to let in now should obscure the overwhelming unanimity of the fact that NATO should expand, should take on new missions, and should maintain new alliances with Russia, with Ukraine and with the members of the Partnership for Peace.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you've heard from this congressional delegation that causes you any concern about the U.S. Congress going along with this? Or is there anything that troubles you as far as them giving their approval?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what they've done is they've just reminded that we've got to sell Congress on two things, and the two things are bound together. One is, Congress would have to agree to ratify an amendment to the NATO treaty putting in new members. And the second is that we would have to agree to pay our portion of the cost of integrating those new members. And they pointed out to me in no uncertain terms that we've got a sales job to do, but we think we can do it.

Q Mr. President, the Russians have said that if former Soviet republics are going to be admitted to NATO, they will have to reexamine their relationship with the Alliance -- a clear message that they would oppose the Baltic states being new members. Will this summit, do you believe, send a clear message that when we say, the door is open, it also includes Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia?

THE PRESIDENT: My position is that no European democracy should be excluded from ultimate consideration. And I have said that -- I believe -- my personal position is that should apply to Russia as well; that any democratic country in Europe prepared to make NATO's commitments, which includes recognizing the territorial integrity of every other democracy in Europe and every member of NATO, and recognizing our mutual responsibility for one another's security, that anyone should be considered. That's always been the United States position. And that is mine. And I think it's the -- I believe that's the position of every Republican and Democrat in this room. I believe it is.

Q Is there no chance that you will change your mind on three versus five?

THE PRESIDENT: My view on three versus five is based on the simple fact that NATO is a military as well as a political organization, and we have to be quite disciplined in making judgments about who should come in to membership in terms of the obligations that they have to assume and their capacity to do it.
I am very enthusiastic about the developments that have taken place in Romania and Slovenia recently. I think the fact that they've resolved territorial difficulties, that the Romanians have taken two Hungarians into the government and the cabinet, these things are extremely laudatory. I'm glad they want to be in NATO. And I think that they should get consideration. I just don't think at this time that they should be admitted. That's what I believe. And I think there are a lot of other countries who feel that. But we have to reach a consensus decision and that's where I think -- I hope and believe that's where we'll come out.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

6:50 P.M. (L)
PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
REMARKS AT CONGRESSIONAL MEETING
MADRID, SPAIN
JULY 7, 1997
We have come to Madrid at a defining moment for the century about to begin. Over the last four years, the Allies have worked together to build a new NATO for a new Europe, undivided, democratic, peaceful for the first time in its history.
Our work here will focus on three key fronts: beginning the process of bringing new members into NATO; continuing to adapt NATO itself to take on new missions; and expanding and strengthening our ties to new partners, including Russia and Ukraine.
Congress is crucial to the success of the new NATO— as it was to the creation of NATO itself. The addition of these states requires ratification by every member of the Alliance. Enlargement will clearly strengthen NATO, but, as I have frequently said, it is not without risk and it is not without cost.
That is why we have launched a full national discussion as we embark on this historic process together. I’m gratified that both chambers have already voiced overwhelming support for enlargement.
And I’m especially pleased that a bipartisan Congressional delegation has joined me for this Summit. Senator Roth will address the Summit, and all of the members will have a chance to take part in the meetings.
The presence of members of both chambers and both parties will send an important message to our Allies and partners alike that when it comes to America’s commitment to Europe, our nation is united.
I look forward to your continued advice and support as America works with our Allies and partners to bring Europe together in freedom, peace and security.
We have come to Madrid at a defining moment for the century about to begin. Over the last four years, the Allies have worked together to build a new NATO for a new Europe. Over the next two days at our NATO Summit, we will invite the first of Europe's new democracies to add their strength to our alliance — and take a decisive step toward an undivided, democratic Europe at peace for the first time in its history.

Congress is crucial to the success of the new NATO — as it was to the creation of NATO itself. The addition of these states requires ratification by every member of the Alliance. This process should and will produce vigorous deliberations. Enlargement will clearly strengthen NATO, but as I have frequently said, it is not without risk and it is not without cost. It's appropriate and necessary to have a full discussion as we embark on this historic process together.

I'm gratified that both chambers have already voiced overwhelming support for enlargement. And I'm especially pleased that a bipartisan Congressional delegation has joined me for this Summit. Senator Roth will address the Summit, and all of the members will have a chance to take part in the meetings. The presence of members of both chambers and both parties will send an important message to our Allies and partners alike: When it comes to America's commitment to Europe, our nation is united.
Our work here will focus on three key fronts: beginning the process of bringing new members into NATO; continuing to adapt NATO to take on new missions; and expanding and strengthening our ties to new partners, including Russia and Ukraine. For too much of this century, Europe's trenches and walls kept its peoples apart. Now, we are forging strong new links that will help to bring them together — and that will anchor stability for all who share our interests and ideals.

That is our goal. That is the challenge to which we will tomorrow in Madrid We have a chance to make history, because we have a chance to change history. I look forward to your continued advice and support as America works with our Allies and partners to realize that long-sought dream.
ARRIVAL STATEMENT

The leaders of a new NATO gathered in Madrid over the next two days for the rare opportunity to set the course of Europe's future together -- to build a new security structure for Europe and mold the transatlantic partnership into our vision of what it ought to be in the next century.

This is an opportunity to create for the first time in history an undivided Europe.

The decisions the Alliance makes at this summit -- inviting former adversaries to join -- will help erase the remaining boundaries of the cold war, bringing us toward the undivided Europe for which we have been working so hard.

We have re-defined NATO's direction in the last few weeks with the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the development of a NATO-Ukraine Charter.

We have strengthened the PfP and designed the EAPC to ensure non-NATO countries have a role in European security and stability.

We are strengthening the role of our European allies within NATO.
Over the last few months and years, NATO has responded to new challenges, and is responding admirably in Bosnia.

But we have never lost sight of NATO's primary mission: to guarantee the security of its members, ensure Europe's stability, and enable us all to prosper.

This is America's dream for our transatlantic partnership. My friends in Congress on both sides of the aisle, have worked as hard as anyone to help bring us to this meeting. I am particularly proud that Senators Roth and Biden, from the Senate NATO Observers Group, could be here with me today.
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