

# NATO Enlargement Editorials

May 1, 1997 through October 31, 1997

Pro Enlargement				
Paper	Market	Rank	Date	Title
<i>Atlanta Constitution</i> (8/26 Rosner)	12	30	7/14/97 7/13/97 6/1/97 5/16/97	What NATO Means for the Future Clinton Correct to go slow A new role for NATO An upside down world
<i>Christian Science Monitor</i>	10	<100	7/9/97	Growing a New NATO
<i>Cleveland Plain Dealer</i>	22	19	7/11/97	Growing NATO; The Alliance's Expansion Has Its Drawbacks, But the Potential Rewards Outweigh Them
<i>Dallas Morning News</i> (9/17 Joulwan)	7	12	7/8/97 5/27/97	NATO Summit: Anxieties Accompany President as meeting begins NATO Expansion: What are the responsibilities and costs? (Conditional)
<i>Detroit Free Press</i>	6	10	7/10/97	Despite Future Risks, NATO Expansion is Correct Move
<i>Fort Worth Star-Telegram</i>	7	49	7/16/97	Growing NATO
<i>Fresno Bee</i>	64	74	7/10/97	NATO expands; Former enemies join the alliance that guarded the West
<i>Houston Chronicle</i>	9	9	7/6/97 5/16/97	NATO Growth; Time to Enlarge, but Proceed with caution Good Deal; NATO benefits everyone, even the Russians
<i>Miami Herald</i>	11	22	7/12/97	Time will be true measure of the value of an expanded NATO
<i>Minneapolis Star-Tribune</i>	16	20	7/10/97	NATO: A Visionary Step Taken in Madrid
<i>New Orleans Times-Picayune</i>	39	41	7/10/97	A NATO Evolution
<i>New York Daily News</i>	1	6	7/10/97	Building blocs of freedom
<i>Providence Journal Bulletin</i>	31	67	7/11/97	Is a bigger NATO happier?

<i>Richmond Times Dispatch</i>	56	53	8/4/97 7/13/97	The Right Questions Pax Americana
<i>The Riverside Press-Enterprise</i>	26	68	7/13/97	Thinking and new NATO anew
<i>Sacramento Bee</i>	28	36	10/24/97 7/10/97	<b>NATO Numbers Game</b> (also published on their internet site) NATO Expands
<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	4	13	7/10/97 5/16/97	A Larger NATO Club Worth Russian Risk NATO Reaches Eastward
<i>St. Louis Post Dispatch</i>	17	29	7/10/97	A New NATO, A New Europe?
<i>Tulsa World</i>	61	69	7/11/97	NATO and Russia
<i>USA Today</i>	8	2	9/11/97 7/9/97	To keep economy on fast track, let Clinton trade Growth of NATO sells security, brings prosperity
<i>Wall Street Journal</i>	1	1	7/9/97	After Madrid
<i>Washington Post</i>	8	5	10/20/97 10/17/97 7/20/97 7/10/97 7/07/97 6/10/97 6/01/97 5/18/97 5/15/97 5/6/97	Slow and Steady Shapes History Paying for the Alliance Making One Europe Europe's Open Door NATO's Day An Open Door at NATO All 16 Parliaments In the Gray Zone A NATO-Russia Agreement A NATO-Russia Charter
<i>The Washington Times</i>	8	<100	7/28/97 7/7/97	NATO's either/or The Madrid summit
<b>Anti Enlargement</b>				
<i>Arizona Republic</i>	18	18	7/11/97 6/1/97	NATO Expands; The Bids Go Out Times Call for Leaders with Vision
<i>Baltimore Sun</i>	19	27	7/9/97 6/1/97	NATO takes the plunge eastward; Clinton victory: New members raise difficulties in Moscow and on Capital Hill The Marshall Plan: 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary: Its great achievement offers no parallel for NATO expansion

			5/28/97	The West's favorite Russian; Boris Yeltsin: He approves a joint NATO-Russian council but resents move eastward.
<b>Bangor Daily News</b>	<100	<100	7/1/97	Questioning NATO
<b>Boston Globe</b> (10/6 Greg Craig)	10	14	10/19/97 7/8/97 5/16/97	<b>A needless rush on NATO</b> Miscasting NATO Risky Expansion
<b>Chicago Tribune</b> (Shalikashvili Nov?)	3	7	6/1/97 5/16/97	How To Make Europe Secure Russia Swallows Hard on NATO
<b>Columbus Dispatch</b>	32	40	7/11/97	Bigger NATO
<b>Detroit News</b>	6	25	10/22/97	<b>NATO Expansion: Who Pays?</b>
<b>Hartford Courant</b>	42	55	7/13/97	NATO Expansion is Unnecessary
<b>Florida Times-Union</b> (Jacksonville)	53	62	7/11/97	NATO Keep it Simple
<b>Newsday</b>	1	8	7/6/97	Is This Trip Necessary? Expanding NATO Eastward is a Risky Move
<b>Los Angeles Daily News</b>	2	58	7/10/97	Mistake in Madrid; Expanding NATO is Likely to do more harm than good
<b>Los Angeles Times</b>	2	2	10/8/97  7/9/97 6/9/97 5/16/97	NATO Welcomes Expansion Until it Comes Time to Pay; Members Didn't Settle Costs, and the Deal May Founder (NOTE: though still very critical, admits "A strong NATO is also a key U.S. interest.") NATO Plan: Hard Questions Can No Longer Be Avoided; Americans Need Full and Quick Answers from Washington Silence in the Congress; Key Questions about the Expansion of NATO are Yet to Be Asked Still Waiting for the NATO Debate; Clinton Needs to Immediately Put His Argument Before the Nation
<b>Milwaukee Journal Sentinel</b>	29	34	7/10/97	NATO makes another misstep

<i>New York Times</i> (9/22 Cohen) (9/26 Albright)	1	3	10/16/97 10/5/97 7/9/97 7/6/97 5/28/97 5/15/97	The NATO Debate Begins, Badly Bosnia, the Skunk at the NATO Party NATO Plus Three Momentous Days in Madrid European Disunion NATO Expansion, Ready or Not
<i>Omaha World-Herald</i>	72	47	7/16/97	U.S. Needs Time to Add up Cost of Expanding Atlantic Alliance
<i>Orange County Register</i> (Joulwan)	2	24	10/16/97 7/10/97 5/29/97	<b>Whither NATO</b> The NATO dilemma NATO's lost purpose
<i>Orlando Sentinel</i>	38	37	10/30/97 10/28/97  10/14/97 7/7/97	<b>Don't Buy into Expansion</b> <b>NATO is an Entangling Political</b> <b>Alliance We Can Do Without</b> Get to Know NATO Stakes Whoa NATO!; Expansion of NATO hasn't been adequately explored. The costs could be huge.
<i>Philadelphia Inquirer</i> (Rosner)	5	15	7/7/97	Hold your horses
<i>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</i>	20	44	7/11/97	Debate isn't over; the President must explain why a bigger NATO is better
<i>Rocky Mountain News</i> (11/10 Joulwan)	23	28	5/27/97 5/17/97	Not quite the Marshall Plan A Hard-to-see 'victory'
<i>Salt Lake Tribune</i>	35	87	7/8/97	Bigger NATO: Bad Idea
<i>San Diego Union Tribune</i>	14	21	7/9/97	Now it's the Senate's turn
<i>St. Petersburg Times</i> (Slocombe)	21	23	5/19/97	NATO's Haste
<i>Wilmington Star-News</i>	74	<100	7/9/97	Expand NATO? Tell us why

**No Editorials** (Since May 1, 1997)

*Austin-American Statesman* (51)

*Charleston Gazette* (91) (Rosner)

*Chicago Sun Times* (3) (Shalikashvili Nov?)

*Daily Oklahoman* (52) (Rosner 9/24)

*Denver Post* (23) (Joulwan pending)

*Des Moines Register* (88) (Rosner)

*Newsday* (1) (Talbott)

*Oregonian* (24) (Rosner)

*San Antonio Express* (34) (9/? Joulwan)

*Seattle Post Intelligencer* (13) (Rosner)

*Seattle Times* (13) (Rosner)

18 STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

October 30, 1997 Thursday, METRO

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. A18

LENGTH: 396 words

HEADLINE: DON'T BUY INTO EXPANSION ;  
THERE'S TOO MUCH AT STAKE TO SUPPORT EXPANDING NATO WITHOUT AMPLE REASONS. BUT  
THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN UNABLE TO GIVE ANY.;

BYLINE: Brown

BODY:

In hearings before the U.S. Senate, the Clinton administration is squandering an opportunity to explain the need to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The White House is rolling along on the assumption that adding new members to NATO is a good idea. If that's the case, there should be ample reasons to support it.

Instead, lawmakers are hearing general justifications that have so little heft that a breeze could whisk them away.

For example, when asked what threat faces three prospective new members - Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic - the answer was none.

Instead, the Clinton administration suggested that those countries should join NATO because of Europe's geography.

That argument could be used to bring most of the world under NATO's umbrella.

Sure, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic sit between Germany and Russia. And, historically, Germany has posed a threat at times. Ditto for Russia.

But that's not happening now. Germany is part of NATO. And Russia participates in NATO's partnership program that provides for sharing information and promoting peaceful relations.

In other words, there's no problem - except one that NATO expansion could provoke in Russia. Russians are uncomfortable with the idea of an advancing military alliance at their door.

NATO expansion could have negative effects, particularly the strengthening of ultranationalists and communists in Russia. Such a shift of political power could throw Russia's young democracy off course.

The Clinton administration cavalierly says Russia has nothing to fear.

Then there's the issue of cost. Estimates to enlarge NATO have ranged to more than \$100 billion, with the United States picking up a big part.

Orlando Sentinel Tribune, October 30, 1997

Now administration officials are saying that early estimates were too high, but they're not being specific about what the correct estimate should be.

Meanwhile, they continue to insist, the cost of expanding is affordable and lower than that of not expanding. Huh? The cost of not expanding is zero.

The entire discussion so far has pig-in-a-poke thinking written all over it.

Reasonable estimates should be available well in advance of a vote. So should all supporting arguments.

At issue are the prudent defense of the nation, American lives and sound spending.

As of now, there's no reason for Americans to buy into adding new members to NATO.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

COLUMN: OUR VIEWS

LOAD-DATE: October 30, 1997



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THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

October 28, 1997 Tuesday, METRO

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. A12

LENGTH: 602 words

HEADLINE: NATO IS AN ENTANGLING POLITICAL ALLIANCE WE CAN DO WITHOUT

BYLINE: By Charley Reese of The Sentinel Staff

BODY:

The Senate is holding hearings on expanding the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Symptomatically, it seems to be focusing on the costs, rather than on the real question: Is expanding NATO a good or bad idea?

I said symptomatically because the dollars-and-cents approach is typical of people who lack any philosophical, moral or intellectual basis for making decisions. I have even heard one senator say that, although he doesn't think that expanding NATO is a good idea, he probably will vote for it just because the president is already committed to it.

Well, is it or isn't it a good idea?

It's a bad idea. NATO is a military alliance, and to include Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary means pledging the lives of American citizens to defend those borders. Why should we do that? This is precisely one of the kinds of "entangling political alliances" George Washington warned should be avoided and for sound reasons. They limit a nation's ability to maneuver.

World War I, for example, was started because of entangling political alliances in Europe. A crisis between the Austro-Hungarian empire and Serbia sucked in all the nations of Europe because of their alliances. The triggering event that began World War II was a German invasion of Poland that Great Britain and France had pledged themselves to defend.

Please note that in both examples the defensive alliances did not prevent aggression. It cannot be asserted even that NATO prevented a Soviet invasion of the West without some evidence that the Soviet Union contemplated such an invasion. I have never seen any evidence that it did. It had contingent war plans, of course, just as we did, but that is not the same thing.

A more important reason that NATO is a bad idea is the negative effect it will have on Russia. Historically, Russia has been twice invaded from the West through Poland. To extend a war alliance all the way to the borders of the former Soviet Union can be seen by Russians only as a hostile move.

If not Russia, who is the enemy NATO is supposed to fight? Expanding NATO will harm the interests of the Russian democrats and strengthen the old Communists. Russians will feel the same way we would feel if, instead of disbanding the Warsaw Pact, as it did, Russia had extended the alliance to include Mexico and Cuba.



"We should stop fooling ourselves that the expansion of NATO is not directed against Russia," wrote Priscilla McMillan and Suzanne Massie of the Davis Center for Russian Studies at Harvard. "Virtually all Russians see it that way, and they are right."

They wrote that in an article in the Boston Globe, in which they pointed out the complete absence of any kind of intelligent policy toward Russia in the Clinton administration.

I, too, have pointed out this lack of policy, and it is most dangerous. Russia, by far, is the most important country to us in regard to how the future will turn out. Yet it seems to receive only inconsequential attention in the Clinton administration. That's a big, bad mistake.

There are two main causes of human misery as recorded in history. One, of course, is evil people. The other, however, is just mistakes made by fundamentally good people. Sometimes mistakes can have catastrophic consequences.

I believe that South African President Nelson Mandela is right in that the U.S. government's leaders have grown arrogant. Whatever notion pops into their heads seems to take on, in their minds, the certainty of an eternal truth that the rest of the world must be bullied into agreeing with.

This truly is the kind of pride that goes before a fall.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

COLUMN: OUR VIEWS

LOAD-DATE: October 28, 1997

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Sacramento Bee

October 24, 1997, METRO FINAL

SECTION: EDITORIALS; Pg. B8

LENGTH: 489 words

HEADLINE: NATO NUMBERS GAME

BODY:

Congress dwells on costs, ignores basic issues

Almost without breaking a sweat, the Clinton administration has persuaded a majority in Congress to agree to enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization -- so much so that, during three days of hearings on Capitol Hill this week, senior officials and senators focused mainly on the cost to the U.S. taxpayer of taking Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into the 16-member alliance and bringing their military forces up to NATO standards.

But fundamental questions remain: Why enlarge NATO? What missions will the enlarged alliance be expected to carry out, and where? If the case for expansion is strong, why fuss about the cost, which seems reasonable even at the highest current estimate -- providing the strategic need is great enough? Yet if U.S. officials no longer see Russia as an adversary, where is the strategic need, and why isn't Moscow being asked to join?

Such questions must be fully debated. But so far Congress, and its European counterparts, seem less concerned about the rationale for expansion than in ensuring that it's done on the cheap. That's backward logic. President Clinton must tell Americans why NATO should extend its eastern border closer to that of Russia, which has grudgingly accepted the move only because it is powerless to stop it. Many thoughtful critics fear that NATO enlargement may divide Europe anew and rekindle Cold War animosities. The White House rejects that argument, but offers no persuasive rebuttal.

Above all, Clinton must say what NATO's expanded mission will be. If it includes peacekeeping missions or the task of responding with force to threats to any alliance member, there's a contradiction: How can a Congress that can't wait to get U.S. troops home from Bosnia simultaneously endorse giving a U.S.-led NATO an enlarged security role?

Until NATO's new mission is clearly defined, estimating the cost of enlargement can only be a guessing game with political overtones. After Europeans protested the Pentagon's high aggregate cost estimate for NATO enlargement (\$ 35 billion over 10 years) and the modest proposed U.S. share (about \$ 2 billion), Secretary of Defense William Cohen told the Senate Appropriations Committee that it won't cost that much. But the Rand Corp., a respected research institution, thinks the U.S. share could be \$ 6 billion, and the Congressional Budget Office's estimate is about \$ 13 billion.

If expanding NATO is necessary, then even \$ 13 billion over 10 years is a modest price compared with the trillions of dollars spent over 40 years to deter Soviet aggression. If expansion is not necessary, why do it at all? The ..

Sacramento Bee, October 24, 1977

answer, sadly, is that U.S. and European leaders have presented their peoples a fait accompli that, if rejected by the Senate, would plunge the Atlantic alliance into its worst internal crisis ever. That's a lousy way to make strategic policy.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: October 25, 1997

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## NATO numbers game: Congress dwells on costs, ignores basic issues

*(Published Oct. 24, 1997)*

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The Detroit News

October 22, 1997, Wednesday

SECTION: Editorial; Pg. Pg. A12

LENGTH: 533 words

HEADLINE: NATO Expansion: Who Pays?

BODY:

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has begun hearings to consider whether to endorse the admission of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Sen. Jesse Helms, Republican chairman of the committee, declared at the outset that including former Soviet Bloc nations in NATO presented a "historic opportunity" to right the wrong of the 1945 Yalta pact when World War II victors divided Europe into Soviet- and Western-dominated enclaves.

Yalta may have been a mistake. But the real issues the senator ought to focus on now are as follows: What vital national interest would the expansion of NATO serve and at what cost to U.S. taxpayers? Unfortunately the Clinton administration has failed to provide clear answers to both questions.

NATO formally invited the three countries to join the alliance as part of its first wave of expansion in July. The parliaments of all NATO members, however, must endorse the invitations before they can become binding. More rounds of expansion are expected to follow if this one goes through.

Sen. Helms -- to his credit -- has warned the administration that its bid to expand NATO would flounder should European countries fail to offer assurances that they would pick up their fair share of the costs. But the administration has yet to provide an honest estimate of what these costs are.

A Department of Defense (DOD) study -- prepared at the administration's behest -- estimated that the total cost of expansion would be between \$ 27 billion to \$ 35 billion. A RAND Corp. study put the true cost of expansion at \$ 42 billion to \$ 110 billion. A Congressional Budget Office study -- recently approximated by Ivan Eland, director of defense studies at the Cato Institute, a libertarian Washington, D.C.-based think tank -- estimates the real cost to be \$ 60 billion to \$ 125 billion.

The administration claims that the United States would pay a paltry \$ 1.5 billion to \$ 2 billion. It expects the new members to pick up 50 percent of the cost of expansion and other European members the balance. But European countries have already dismissed this suggestion as unreasonable. France and Germany -- under pressure to balance their budgets in order to join the single European currency -- have been steadily cutting their defense spending and haven't even met their existing commitments to NATO.

But these developments have not stopped the administration from touting a dangerously grandiose mission for NATO. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has repeatedly noted that NATO must be viewed as a vehicle to spread democracy and markets in former Soviet Bloc countries. This could embroil the United ..

States in a number of dubious Balkan-type missions.

President Bill Clinton has described NATO expansion as one of the leading foreign policy initiatives of his second term. He obviously has his eyes on the history books. But the Senate must stay firmly focused on protecting the wallet of U.S. taxpayers and the lives of U.S. troops: It should withhold approval of expansion unless the administration provides clear answers to all the difficult questions it has so far successfully avoided.

LOAD-DATE: October 22, 1997



Copyright 1997 Globe Newspaper Company  
The Boston Globe

October 19, 1997, Sunday, City Edition

SECTION: EDITORIAL PAGE; Pg. C6

LENGTH: 254 words

HEADLINE: A needless rush on NATO

BODY:

Once a crucial policy decision such as the expansion of NATO has been taken, it is considered bad form to reconsider yesterday's flawed arguments. But the Clinton administration's conduct of the NATO expansion debate is worth a little scrutiny. It demonstrates how a crucial policy question was reduced to an unnecessary either/or proposition - between immediate expansion of NATO or no expansion ever.

A third possibility - a delay that would have given the parties more time to gauge developments in Russia and Central Europe - was given short shrift.

Russia, the administration contended, would have taken a delay as a polite refusal of more NATO members and concluded that it was able to determine Western policies. But a delay could have been presented so it would not have been mistaken in Moscow as a polite refusal.

The second argument against delay was that it would have had a destabilizing effect, creating a security vacuum in Eastern Europe and leading to a renewal of regional and ethnic conflicts. Experience suggests the contrary, however.

The time those nations have spent in the NATO waiting room has stimulated their governments to resolve border disputes and protect minority rights. More time in NATO's antechamber would mean greater striving to create the conditions for enduring stability in Eastern Europe. A delay also could have increased pressure on the European Union to admit as members its new democratic neighbors - the form of acceptance that those countries need above all.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: October 21, 1997

Copyright 1997 Orange County Register  
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

October 16, 1997 Thursday MORNING EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. B10

LENGTH: 712 words

HEADLINE: Whither NATO

BYLINE: The Orange County Register

BODY:

Dr. Javier Solana, secretary general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, will be speaking at the World Affairs Council of Orange County tonight at the Irvine Marriott on the timely topic, "Is NATO Enlargement in the U.S. National Interest. " (For information, you can call the council at 363-0735.) Dr. Solana has a lot of questions to answer.

NATO was started as a security buffer against the old Soviet Union, but seems to have taken on a bureaucratic life of its own.

An argument could be made that in the new, post-Soviet world, NATO should have been dissolved.

If new conditions argued for new international organizations to meet new post-Cold War challenges, they could be built from the ground up, tailored to the new conditions and perceptions, rather than be encumbered by the attitudes and bureaucratic baggage that any governmental organization almost 50 years old inevitably carries with it. But most political leaders in Europe and the United States have opted to go with the familiar organization, expanding and changing it to meet new conditions. Is that a wise course of action?

The issue of NATO expansion raises such a question. Whatever might be said about NATO as a symbol and repository of the wisdom and values of western civilization, NATO is in essence a military alliance. It is an agreement that an attack on or disturbance affecting one NATO member will be viewed as an attack on all members, triggering a unified military response. Thus the current mission in Bosnia, while operating to some extent under the United Nations, is largely a NATO undertaking. Although Bosnia is not a NATO member, ethnic strife there is perceived as having a powerful negative impact on other European countries, requiring a unified military/nation-building response. American troops are there under NATO auspices.

As foreign policy analysts Ted Galen Carpenter and Andrew Stone argue in a recent paper for the libertarian Cato Institute, however, the decision to invite Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into NATO creates the possibility of virtually unlimited security obligations for the United States.

"Part of NATO's expanded perimeter will lie along the border between Poland and Belarus," say Carpenter and Stone, "and Belarus is a political and economic volcano waiting to erupt. The repressive, erratic regime of Alexander Lukashenko and the country's moribund economy provide ideal conditions for the same type of armed chaos that has engulfed such countries as Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Somalia and Zaire. " Furthermore, if Poland requests NATO help in the event of a Belarussian explosion, " because Belarus is Russia's last remaining security ally in Eastern Europe, a NATO presence along the Polish-Belarussian border also risks a collision with a nuclear-armed Russia. "

Then there's the question of cost. Various authorities have estimated the costs of NATO expansion at anywhere from \$ 10 billion to \$ 40 billion. The most certain truth is that all these estimates are more political than fiscal in character; U.S. officials acknowledge that estimates have been reworked with an eye to not alarming American taxpayers. How much of these costs will the United States be expected to pay? Is it worth it, in light of the fact that the Western European countries are stable democracies with adequate military capabilities and a larger cumulative gross domestic product than the United States?

All these questions arise in the context, as shown by a recent survey from the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, of an American public notably more skeptical than it was four years ago about the "global leadership role" of the United States, while elite "opinion leaders" are unremittingly enthusiastic about increased global commitments.

Dr. Solana will have to make some powerful arguments, backed by concrete, detailed evidence that benefits are likely to exceed costs as distinguished from high-flown rhetoric about the global responsibilities of the world's only remaining superpower and poetic flights about the demands of the moment on civilized peoples to convince many Americans that NATO should be expanded.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: October 18, 1997

**DONALD M. BLINKEN**  
**466 LEXINGTON AVENUE - 10<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR**  
**NEW YORK, NY 10017**

Phone -212/878-0835

Fax - 212/878-9357

March 2, 1998

VIA MESSENGER

New York Times  
Letters to the Editor  
229 W. 43rd Street  
New York, NY 10036

Dear Sir:

The Times - not the Clinton Administration - is "tinkering perilously with Europe" - the Europe that since 1989 has dissolved the Iron Curtain, seen Germany reunited, and has together with the U.S., unanimously invited Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to apply for NATO membership. Delaying NATO enlargement, as you would prefer, would send a signal to 50 million Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians, that their successful efforts to rid themselves of 45 years of Soviet oppression count for less than our concerns over the future of the very power that oppressed them.

The three candidates have proven their fidelity to NATO's precepts. They each enjoy parliamentary democracy, almost totally privatized economies, and an overwhelming desire to join the essential Euro-Atlantic security organization. Whether by the quality of their Partnership For Peace, military exercises, the invaluable Hungarian hosted NATO base in Tasar, or their offers to help the UN curb Sadaam Hussein, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic have already demonstrated their capacity to contribute to, not simply consume security.

As to Russia, it is true, as you observe, that "the political economic and military stability of the continent depends heavily on whether Russia completes its transition to a democratic market economy". But which Russia are you describing? "An increasingly democratic Russia (which) poses no threats to its neighbors" or a Russia where "NATO expansion could easily be exploited by nationalist forces intent on diminishing democracy and chilling relations with the West". Is it the Russia whose forces serve commendably under U.S. command in Bosnia or the Russia which many believe has been unduly supportive of Iraq? The Times cannot have it both ways.

Letters to the Editor  
Page Two  
March 2, 1998

NATO enlargement, contrary to your editorial, has been thoroughly debated in the media; most US Senators informed themselves well before the current formal debate. They know that the U.S. has learned to its sorrow in 1914, 1940, and more recently in Bosnia, that its leadership is essential to prevent conflict and ensure security. Only NATO, led by the U.S., can provide security. Every European nation should have the opportunity to ensure its future within a cooperative structure that includes not just a revitalized NATO, but also an enlarged European Union, a strengthened OSCE and a constructive relationship between NATO and Russia. It is troubling that the Times, so concerned with human rights and the rule of law, is prepared to place unpredictable U.S./Russian relations before the articulated desires of free people who have made up their minds. We cannot base our foreign policy solely upon moral grounds, but to ignore moral issues is to undermine U.S. interests and values in a still dangerous world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blinken", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Donald Blinken  
U.S. Ambassador to Hungary  
1994 - 1997

cc: Philip Taubman

3/1/98

# Tinkering Perilously With Europe

With Washington preoccupied by other events, the Senate is rapidly moving toward a momentous decision on NATO expansion. Though the issue has stirred little passion outside the foreign policy fraternity, the eastward extension of NATO ought to concern every American because it may damage the country's paramount security interests for decades to come. There is still time for the Senate to weigh these risks and to reject a plan that is likely to undermine the very goals the White House insists it will achieve, including the advancement of democracy and unity in Europe.

Redrawing the map of Europe does not happen every day. When it has been tried over the centuries, by treaty or force of arms, it has often led to devastating conflict. In promoting NATO membership now for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, and creating an expectation of future invitations for other Eastern European nations, the Clinton Administration is betting that several potentially harmful consequences will not result. That is a bet the country should not make, especially when the potential gains of expansion are so slight.

The clearest danger zone is Russia's relationship with Europe. The political, economic and military stability of the continent depends heavily on whether Russia completes its transition to democracy and a market economy. Any move that impedes or reverses that transformation is clearly not in European or American interests.

Yet that is precisely what NATO expansion may do. For the moment, Boris Yeltsin has grudgingly accepted NATO growth as the price Moscow must pay for harmony with the West and the financial assistance that comes with it. But Bill Clinton and his aides mistake Mr. Yeltsin's acquiescence for permanent Russian acceptance. His successors may well prove less cooperative. In Russia's volatile political environment, NATO expansion could easily be exploited by nationalist forces intent on diminishing democracy and chilling relations with the West.

Even under Mr. Yeltsin the prospect of expansion

has taken a heavy toll. A vital treaty to reduce nuclear arms is stalled in parliament. With NATO forces likely to move hundreds of miles closer to its border, Russia has already placed greater reliance on its nuclear weapons as a first line of defense. Relations with Washington are deteriorating across a range of issues, from the handling of Iraq to the management of Russia's nuclear materials.

In exchange for these serious consequences, NATO expansion would bring no discernible gain. East-West divisions are evaporating and free markets are spreading. An increasingly democratic Russia poses no threat to its neighbors. This is not a picture that cries out for enlarging a military alliance whose core purpose, defense against the Soviet bloc, is obsolete. Even a majority of citizens in the Czech Republic see no need to join NATO.

It remains a mystery why absorption in the European Union is not the preferred way to promote unity and prosperity in Europe. It would do so in a way that embraces rather than excludes Russia. There will be ample time in the future to plant the NATO flag farther east if Russia should turn threatening again.

Then there is the financial expense of expansion. The Pentagon recently came up with a new estimate of the cost, \$1.5 billion over 10 years. The number is laughable, clearly cooked to reassure the Senate as it approaches a vote. Only a few months ago the Pentagon calculated the cost could run as high as \$35 billion over 13 years. Two years ago the Congressional Budget Office estimated the price tag might be as high as \$125 billion over 15 years.

In giving the Senate the power to ratify and amend treaties, the Constitution expects more of the Senate than it is delivering on NATO. There must be a serious, sustained debate about enlargement, not the rush to approval that the White House would prefer. The 50th anniversary of NATO's birth in 1999, Washington's deadline for installing new members, is hardly a compelling reason to force a decision that the country is likely to regret well into the next century.