

July 1995

**Memorandum for the President [William J. Clinton]
from Anthony Lake, 'European Attitudes toward
NATO Enlargement'**

Citation:

"Memorandum for the President [William J. Clinton] from Anthony Lake, 'European Attitudes toward NATO Enlargement'", July 1995, Wilson Center Digital Archive, "Declassified Documents Related to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)," Mandatory Declassification Review Case Number 2015-0772-M, William J. Clinton Presidential Library & Museum, originally accessed at <https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/101137>.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/209781>

Summary:

Anthony Lake reviews the various policy positions of European countries toward NATO and EU enlargement. Although careful to note the different views held by states such as Germany and the UK, Lake concludes that "our European allies support NATO enlargement."

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

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5436 Add-on

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTONINFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY LAKE

SUBJECT: European Attitudes Toward NATO Enlargement

In response to a recent memorandum on European security and NATO enlargement, you asked about current West European attitudes toward the process.

At the level of general principle, our European allies support NATO enlargement and largely for the same reasons we have advanced. They view enlargement as part of the process of ending the artificial division of the continent caused by the Cold War and integrating the nations of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and other democracies of the former Soviet bloc firmly into Europe. A number of allies, however, including Germany and the UK, differ with us in wanting to exclude Russia a priori from membership. The British also believe that enlarging NATO to include the Baltic states will always be too sensitive due to Russian objections; we believe Baltic membership should not be excluded, lest we consign them to a Russian sphere of influence.

Through a series of "Europe Agreements," our major allies have designated most of the CEEs as future EU members; they see NATO and EU enlargement as part of the same general process of integration (indeed, the two institutions are linked, as EU members can join the West European Union, whose strong declaratory security guarantees would in practice be backed up by NATO). Germany has suggested, as did Senator Nunn in a recent speech, that EU and NATO enlargement should occur in lock-step, thus effectively delaying NATO's taking in new members for 5-10 years or more. Other West Europeans, such as the UK and France, concerned about the budgetary and economic burden of moving to incorporate CEE countries rapidly into the EU, are coming to see a somewhat faster-paced NATO enlargement as a way of satisfying CEE ambitions over the short term. In Warsaw recently, Kohl denied wanting to hold up NATO expansion until the EU had taken in new members.

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E.O. 13526, Sec. 3.5 (b)

White House Guidelines, September 11, 2006

By VL NARA, Date 9/10/2019

2015-0772-14 (1.35)

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cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

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2

Our European allies also share our concerns over Russian attitudes toward enlargement and, if anything, have been inclined to favor a somewhat slower pace in moving forward. In fact, only a handful of allies, including Germany and Canada, are serious about seeing the first new NATO members admitted during this decade. This spring, a number of allies suggested delaying the presentation of the NATO enlargement study to interested partners until early next year despite an existing--and very public--Alliance commitment to make the presentations this year prior to the fall NAC ministerial. These allies were primarily motivated by a desire to ensure that NATO does not address the "who" and "when" questions before the June 1996 Russian presidential election. We argued successfully that NATO had to keep to its commitment while agreeing that NATO needed to get through the Russian election before moving forward on "who" and "when." Nonetheless, the incident demonstrated how sensitive the West Europeans are to the Russian angle; we expect West European apprehension may grow as Russian pressure increases.

Our European allies completely share our views on the need to craft a genuinely substantive NATO-Russia relationship and will be very supportive in this effort. If Moscow decides to resort to the Soviet-style divisive tactics of yesteryear, however, and begins to add a threatening element to its anticipated campaign in Western Europe against enlargement, then we will no doubt have to work firmly but carefully with allies to keep them on board, much as we did during the Soviet campaigns against INF deployments in the early 1980s and West German NATO membership 25 years earlier.

Rather than approach the problem as purely negative, we should strive to enlist our allies in our own proposed efforts to turn Russian thinking around, by urging them to join with us in intensifying our dialogue with the Russian elite and challenging outdated Russian views of NATO. If we were to succeed in enlisting our allies in such an effort, we would give them an additional stake in the process and help ensure that we maintain allied solidarity as we move the enlargement process forward.

To address arguments from Nunn and others about burdensharing and NATO enlargement giving the EU an easy excuse for delay, we also should press our Allies to keep up the pace on EU enlargement. Without accepting a rigid linkage between EU and NATO enlargement, we should accept Nunn's point about the complementary aspects of both institutions' expansion but reverse his conclusion that the slowest pace must govern the entire process.

Attachment

Tab A July 17 Memorandum on NATO Enlargement

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