

think it makes some very good points about NATO expansion. I particularly want to quote this one provision. These writers said:

The Senate would be wise to link NATO and European Union expansion. If that link is made, it is essential to stipulate that admission to the European Union is not sufficient qualification for entry into NATO. NATO should weigh any future applicant against the contributions and burdens its membership would entail. What is called for is a definite, if not permanent, pause in this process.

Mr. President, we soon will be, I assume, taking up the debate on NATO expansion. I do ask that Members pay attention to the words of our two former colleagues, Senator Baker and Senator Nunn; and also Brent Scowcroft, who was the National Security Advisor to Presidents Ford and Bush; and Alton Frye, who is senior fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Feb. 4, 1998]

NATO: A DEBATE RECAST

(By Howard Baker, Jr., Sam Nunn, Brent Scowcroft and Alton Frye)

The looming Senate debate over NATO enlargement marks a historic encounter between good intentions and sound strategy. Despite momentum toward admitting three more members—Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic—the fundamental interests at stake demand probing examination of the specific candidacies, the approach that has brought the alliance to this fateful juncture and the troubling implications of that approach. Along with many who have worked to build a strong NATO, we harbor grave reservations about the pending expansion and the direction it points.

Far from being a cold war relic, NATO should be the cornerstone of an evolving security order in Europe. It provides the infrastructure and experience indispensable to coping with instabilities—Bosnia today, and other troublespots tomorrow. NATO is vital to insuring arms control and maintaining the kind of industrial base that provides a solid defense. Perhaps most important, NATO provides the institutional home for coalitions to meet crises beyond Europe.

But a cornerstone is not a sponge. The function of a cornerstone is to protect its own integrity to support a wider security structure, not to dissipate its cohesion by absorbing members and responsibilities beyond prudent limits. A powerful NATO undergirds other institutions, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Western European Union. It makes possible the Partnership for Peace to promote cooperation among countries that are not NATO members.

The rush to expand the alliance has put the cart before the horse. Advocates and skeptics of NATO enlargement agree that the transformation of Europe's security structure should be related to the transformation of its economy. As James Baker, the former Secretary of State, has testified, European Union membership "is just as important as membership in NATO for the countries involved," and "we must make clear that NATO membership for the countries of Central Europe is not a substitute for closer economic ties to the E.U."

In our view, it would have been preferable not to invite more countries to join NATO. At the very least, it would be desirable for the European Union to proceed with its planned expansion before NATO completes the acceptance of the new members.

The European Union has now decided to begin negotiations with six aspirants, including the three candidates NATO is considering. Linking NATO expansion to the expansion of the European Union would accomplish several things:

It would underscore the connection between Europe's security and its economy—and offer certification that entrants to NATO could afford to meet its defense obligations.

It would permit the Partnership for Peace to demonstrate that it should be the proper association for countries outside NATO. So long as the option to join NATO remains open, it utterly undercuts the partnership as the preferred mode of cooperation.

It would allow the United States and Russia to focus on the gravest security problem still before us, the formidable hangover of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The cooperative framework provided by the NATO-Russia Founding Act may be useful, but frictions over NATO distract Moscow and Washington from profound common dangers. Even if everything goes right in expanding NATO, we will have misplaced our priorities during a critical window of opportunity to gain Russian cooperation in controlling nuclear arsenals and preventing proliferation. Russian antagonism is sure to grow if the alliance extends ever closer to Russian territory.

The Senate would be wise to link NATO and European Union expansion. If that link is made, it is essential to stipulate that admission to the European Union is not sufficient qualification for entry into NATO. NATO should weigh any future applicant against the contributions and burdens its membership would entail. What is called for is a definite, if not permanent, pause in this process.

By leading the charge for NATO expansion, the Clinton Administration may well elicit hasty proposals and considerable pressure to admit other countries. Other Central and East European countries are hoping that they, too, will soon be welcomed into allied ranks.

But a military alliance is not a club, and the Administration's rhetoric and policy risk converting NATO into an organization in which obligations are diluted and action is enfeebled. Pursuing that path may simultaneously spur Russian animosity and weaken the alliance's capability to contain it, if required. William Perry, the former Defense Secretary, and Warren Christopher, the former Secretary of State, acknowledge the problematic situation in which the country finds itself. In their words, "there is no consensus on the wisdom of the path taken so far by the alliance and spearheaded by the Clinton Administration."

While Mr. Perry and Mr. Christopher state that NATO should remain open "in principle," they contend that no additional members should be designated until the three current candidates "are fully prepared to bear the responsibilities of membership and have been integrated into the alliance." That reads to us like advice to slow this train down. We are in accord with that view, and with their argument that NATO should make the experience of Partnership for Peace membership for non-NATO members "as similar as possible to the experience of NATO membership."

We are dubious, however, that consensus can be found on the Administration's premise that NATO should be receptive to

many additional members. That is a prescription for destroying the alliance. It guarantees future discord with present allies, few of whom are prepared to follow the Clinton policy to its logical end, the inclusion of Russia.

The task is to build a security structure in which Russia assumes a place commensurate with its geostrategic importance and its progress toward democracy and a market economy. With due respect, those campaigning to expand NATO confuse the longer term challenge of shaping a comprehensive security system with our continuing responsibility to sustain a robust NATO as our principal security bulwark.

The question confronting the Senate is not only whether to enlarge NATO, but how, when and on what terms. The imperative now is for the Senate to bring to bear the independent assessment mandated by the Constitution. In that assessment it has several options, including linking alliance expansion with enlargement of the European Union and laying down a marker against an excessively elastic NATO.

The Senate has constructive leverage to shape a wiser outcome than simple acquiescence in the President's plan. The widespread grumble that "NATO expansion is a bad idea whose time has come" is no basis for policy. This is not a dose of medicine one can swallow and be done with. It is a fundamental extension of American security guarantees, an ill-defined invitation for new members unrelated either to military threats or military capabilities.

A final caution to the Administration: It is no service to candor or consensus to invoke the shadow of Versailles, implying that resistance to NATO enlargement would be comparable to Senate rejection of the League of Nations. One doubts that senators will respond well to overdrawn analogies. As John Maynard Keynes noted at the time, the central failure of Versailles lay in the fatal miscalculation of how to deal with a demoralized former adversary. That, above all, is the error we must not repeat.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I believe we are in morning business, is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the key to our children's future, and to commemorate an individual who dedicated his life's work to this great cause. Through a resolution sponsored by my good friend Senator CHUCK ROBB, and co-sponsored by myself and 91 other Senate co-sponsors, today has been proclaimed Read Across America Day. The day to celebrate the 94th birthday of Dr. Seuss and a day when all across the country adults will be reading out loud to children.

In fact, Senator ROBB is unable to join me right now because he spent the

morning reading to kids at a local elementary school, but I know that you will be hearing from him later. First, I would like to say a few words about the crisis we face as a nation if we don't all work toward improving literacy in this Nation.

Reading is the key to our children's future. There is an easy way to think about this: from first to third grades you learn to read—from third grade on you read to learn. Now, we have heard some frightening statistics as of late, about our children's performance in various subjects compared to other nations. I want to remind my colleagues and everyone in every community around the country—we have a 51 percent functional illiteracy rate in kids who are graduating from high school. That means, these kids can't read a newspaper, balance a checkbook or read a bus schedule to get themselves to a job, let alone hold down a good job. This, in America, is a tragedy. And we must stop it. We must all be a part of the solution.

Reading aloud to children, beginning at the youngest age, is a big part of the solution. A national commission on reading found that reading out loud to a child for at least 30 minutes a day is the single most important factor to the child learning to read and loving to read. And so, on what would have been his 94th birthday, I say thank you to Dr. Seuss, whose given name was Mr. Theodor Geisel, for all the fantastic, creative and wonderful books he gave to countless numbers of parents and children to enjoy in this most significant activity for a child's success.

Many pro-literacy groups have sponsored activities so that every child in the country is read aloud to by an adult for at least a half hour today. I endorse this activity whole-heartedly—and I try to lead by example by reading to my reading partner in the Everybody Wins! program that I launched here in Washington three years ago.

The Everybody Wins! program pairs adult reading mentors with young children in elementary schools to foster a love of reading and of learning and to provide that critical reading aloud activity. I am so proud of all the Congressional Members and staff participating in the program—now totaling more than 450 reading every day of the week during lunch hour at two schools here on Capitol Hill. In all we now have 10 schools and 1200 reading partners and students participating in the Everybody Wins! program. But we must reach many, many more children. We need 10 times that if we are going to do what we should be doing in the District of Columbia.

The Everybody Wins! program has benefitted enormously from corporate support to help us reach more children.

As it happens, tomorrow night is the third annual event that makes expansion of Everybody Wins! possible—it is called Links to Literacy and takes place just a stone's throw from here in Union Station. With complete bi-par-

tisan support, and sponsored by the PGA tour we hope to be able to impact many more children in the year to come. I want to thank all of my colleagues who joined with me in lending their names to Links to Literacy and I look forward to seeing all of you tomorrow night.

Also, I want to commend some extraordinary programs at work in my home state of Vermont: Mother Goose Logs On, a collaborative effort between Nynex and IBM that improves literacy through interactive technology; the America Reads program that so many of our college students are tutoring in and the Vermont Center for the Book which has worked to improve access to books for kids in so many ways. When everyone in the community becomes involved and when adults read aloud to children—Everybody Wins!

I thank all my colleagues who helped pass this resolution.

I just want to indicate we have a number of these Links to Literacy '98, Everybody Wins invitations available to those who would like to participate tomorrow night. The Singing Senators will be there to make sure the event is enjoyable for everyone.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I also ask unanimous consent that Debra Ladner, an intern in our office, be allowed to be on the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, it is my understanding that we are in morning business. Is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. MACK and Mr. WELLSTONE pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 187 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business Friday, February 27, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,520,668,318,465.51 (Five trillion, five hundred twenty billion, six hundred sixty-eight million, three hundred eighteen thousand, four hundred sixty-five dollars and fifty-one cents).

One year ago, February 27, 1997, the federal debt stood at \$5,349,403,000,000 (Five trillion, three hundred forty-nine billion, four hundred three million).

Twenty-five years ago, February 27, 1973, the federal debt stood at

\$454,020,000,000 (Four hundred fifty-four billion, twenty million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,066,648,318,465.51 (Five trillion, sixty-six billion, six hundred forty-eight million, three hundred eighteen thousand, four hundred sixty-five dollars and fifty-one cents) during the past 25 years.

IN MEMORY OF SENATOR ABRAHAM RIBICOFF

Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, today I would like to pay tribute to my friend Senator Abraham Ribicoff and his remarkable legacy. His passing has left a void in public service that will be difficult to fill. Over more than 40 years of public service, he set a standard for integrity, dedication, and wisdom that is difficult to match.

Abe Ribicoff's journey to the Senate was an arduous one. He was born not to power, but rather to poverty. His father was a Polish Jewish immigrant who worked in a factory and as a peddler. After graduating from high school, young Abraham Ribicoff worked for a year at a zipper and buckle factory in New Britain, Connecticut, to earn money to attend New York University. After a year, he transferred to Chicago. There, he was such an assiduous and gifted student that he was admitted to the University of Chicago law school—one of the most prestigious in the nation—without an undergraduate degree.

After graduating from law school, Abraham Ribicoff realized his calling was that of the public servant. He entered politics at an early age, but without the benefit of well-placed connections or cronies. He worked his way up from the lower house of the Connecticut legislature by mastering complicated legislation and earning the respect of his peers, and after ten years he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1954, Abraham Ribicoff was elected Governor of Connecticut.

His personal experience of poverty instilled in Sen. Ribicoff a compassion and a desire to serve the public good that never faded. The desire to help the unfortunate and marginalized members of our society was the hallmark of his political career. As Governor of Connecticut, he established a strong, progressive record. As the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in the Kennedy administration, he promoted policies to improve the living conditions, working environment, and health care of all Americans. And as a Senator during the 1960s and '70s, he was one of the strongest supporters of Medicare, education funding, environmental protection and regulation, and auto safety standards.

Most of all, I remember Abe Ribicoff as a man of integrity who never wavered from his convictions or sacrificed his principles for political expediency. He was a statesman who disregarded opinion polls and governed by