

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, with the amount included in the emergency supplemental, the United States will have expended over \$7.5 billion for operations in and around Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia by the end of this fiscal year 1998. It is estimated that the United States is paying over 50 percent of the cost of maintaining the peace in Bosnia, nearly \$200 million a month in 1997 alone, and no end is in sight to the United States presence there, with the current wish of the President to extend our mission there.

Defense overseas funding to NATO countries continues. The cost of maintaining our U.S. forces there averages \$10 billion a year. Let me state that again. Defense overseas funding in NATO countries is such that the cost of maintaining our forces there averages nearly \$10 billion a year. Security assistance alone to NATO allies since 1950, and that includes military assistance and military education and training, now totals over \$19 billion.

No other member of NATO has the global defense role that the United States has, nor the forward-deployed presence in potential flash-point areas such as the Middle East and the Korean peninsula. It is for this reason, Mr. President, that I wish to discuss the two amendments that I proposed. I presented them last month.

The amendments both deal with the challenges of defining and controlling NATO expansion costs. My original intent in proposing these amendments was to bring some greatly needed accountability to the critical issue of recognizing and clarifying all the costs to the United States to enlarge the NATO alliance.

My first amendment is No. 2065, which requires all costs related to either the admission of new NATO members, or their participation in NATO be specifically authorized by law. It is my understanding that the managers of the bill have not accepted this amendment for inclusion in the resolution, and for that reason I will, in a moment, ask for the yeas and nays on that amendment. I will explain it further if anyone wishes me to do so, but I think it is very plain. It just says any further costs must be authorized by law.

The second amendment has evolved since I originally offered it for the Senate's consideration. My original amendment would have restricted the use of funds for payment of NATO costs after September 30 of this year unless the Secretaries of Defense and State certified to the Congress that the total percentage of NATO common costs paid by the United States would not exceed 20 percent during the NATO fiscal year.

After the administration expressed their concern that this would be too difficult to achieve in such a time period, I redrafted this amendment to reduce the total U.S. contribution by only 1 percent each year over a 5-year

period. That would have been no more severe a reduction than the Department of Defense has experienced as a whole in real terms since 1995.

However, during the extensive consultation that I have had with the Secretary of Defense, our former colleague, Secretary Cohen, and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joe Ralston, they have requested further changes to this amendment.

Subsequently, I have sent to the desk now a modification of the latest version which is what I will ask the Senate to vote on, and that is a sense of the Senate, that beginning in fiscal year 1999 and over the next 5 years, the President should require the U.S. representative to NATO to propose to NATO a 1-percent reduction in U.S. contributions to the common-funded budgets of NATO. Sixty days after the proposal has been made, the President is requested to submit to Congress a report outlining the action taken by NATO, if any, on this U.S. proposal.

Additionally, this amendment directs the limitation on the total expenditures by the United States for payment to the common-funded budgets of NATO to the fiscal year 1998 levels unless an increase over that is specifically authorized by law.

Mr. President, a soon-to-be-released report of the General Accounting Office that has been conducted confirms—and I have seen the draft—confirms that NATO does not systematically review or renegotiate member cost shares for the common budgets. And it is well past time for this practice to be instituted. As I have stated before, this reassessment is long overdue in light of the United States' global defense responsibilities.

No formal renegotiations have occurred in the military and civil budgets in NATO since 1955. Let me repeat that. There have been no formal renegotiations in the military and civil budgets of NATO since 1955.

When Spain joined NATO in 1982, there was a pro rata adjustment in the civil and military budget shares based upon Spain's contribution. The NSIP, or the NATO infrastructure budget, has been adjusted five times since 1960 because of changes in the way projects were approved or funded, but there was no attempt to reallocate the percentages.

Mr. President, I think that is long overdue. I understand there will be no objection to my amendment, No. 2066. If that is the case, I would urge that it be adopted as soon as the managers have made their statements.

EXECUTIVE AMENDMENT NO. 2065

(Purpose: To require a prior specific authorization of funds before any United States funds may be used to pay NATO enlargement costs)

Mr. STEVENS. In any event, Mr. President, if it is in order for me to do so at this time, I would like to place before the Senate amendment No. 2065 so I may ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Mr. STEVENS], for himself, Mr. BYRD, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. WARNER and Mr. ROBERTS, proposes executive amendment numbered 2065.

Mr. STEVENS. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The amendment is as follows:

At the end of section 3(2) of the resolution, add the following:

(C) REQUIREMENT OF PAYMENT OUT OF FUNDS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED.—No cost incurred by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in connection with the admission to membership, or participation, in NATO of any country that was not a member of NATO as of March 1, 1998, may be paid out of funds available to any department, agency, or other entity of the United States unless the funds are specifically authorized by law for that purpose.

Mr. STEVENS. This is the amendment that I believe the Senator from Delaware will discuss.

I ask for the yeas and nays on this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. STEVENS. To me, this is a matter of simple justice. As the surviving superpower of the world, we must take action to limit our international commitments at least to the extent that we have limited our own budgets within the United States for the Department of Defense. Both of my amendments do that. They merely say there is a restriction on the future obligation of funds of the United States to these NATO processes unless they are previously authorized by law.

There is no barrier to going above the 1998 limit, and there is no compulsion to reduce down to 20 percent as far as the total overall commitment to the common budgets. But my amendment will bring about a process by which further expenditures will have to be authorized by law and will give Congress a specific control every year over the additional cost, if any, that may be incurred because of this NATO expansion.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Would the Senator yield for a unanimous consent request?

Mr. STEVENS. I would be happy to yield, Mr. President.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. I ask unanimous consent that Daniel G. Groeschen of Senator INHOFE's office be extended floor privileges for the remainder of the NATO debate.

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

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. BIDEN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. I thank the chairman of the committee for yielding to me.

And I say to my friend, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I doubt whether, with the exception of two or three other people in this body, there are as many people who know about the defense budget as my friend does. And I want to say at the outset, what I am about to say is—I say this with all sincerity—I am a little bit confused about the two amendments.

Let me be very specific. The first amendment—I should get the numbers correct of the amendments. Amendment No.—I think it is 2066—that is the amendment that speaks to two things, one, a sense of the Senate regarding the common-funded budget or put another way—and I agree with the chairman of the Appropriations Committee that it is—we are instructing the President to negotiate down the percent that we, the United States, contribute to the common budgets of NATO. I think that is appropriate. I think that is necessary.

In 1950, the percent of the common budget that the United States paid was roughly 50 percent. And in the only renegotiation that took place, that was cut in half and went down to approximately 25 percent. The Senator knows better than I do, there are three common budgets. They are slightly different in terms of percentages, but essentially it is 25 percent. And it should be lower, in my view. I thank him for making it a sense of the Senate rather than a condition to passage of the treaty.

The second part of that amendment states—and I have a little difficulty with it, but I am prepared to accept it on our side—it says—and I quote on page 2, line 19:

Annual Limitation On United States Expenditures For NATO. Unless specifically authorized by law, the total amount of expenditures by the United States in any fiscal year beginning on or after October 1, 1998, for payments to the common-funded budgets of NATO shall not exceed the total of all such payments made by the United States in fiscal year 1998.

Now, that means, as I understand it, because a lot of our colleagues who do not spend as much time on these issues because of their committee assignments as the Senator from Alaska, the Senator from North Carolina, the Senator from Delaware—we are on committees that have these responsibilities—are somewhat confused, as I am, when we start talking about HCFA and a whole range of issues relating to the Department of Health and Human Services.

The common budget of NATO are all those expenditures which all 16 NATO members have to pitch in to pay for. Now, above the common budget, we have in the past, and we will continue in the future, I expect, expend dollars on—military dollars, State Department dollars, Defense Department dollars—on NATO member countries that are not part of a common budget.

For example, as the Senator knows better than I do, we have come up with

subsidized sales of weapons systems to Greece or to Turkey. We have done the same in terms of cascading down weapons we are no longer using to other NATO countries. They do not fall within the common budget; they are expenditures of American taxpayer dollars on European countries that are members of NATO.

The way this amendment I am referring to would work, as I understand it, if in the year 1998 the United States of America spent \$10—I am going to make this easy for me—\$10 contributing to the common budget of NATO, that is, it represents 25 percent of all the expenditures, and all of NATO spent \$40 on the common budget, we spent \$10, in the year 1999 or 2000, we would be limited to spending \$10 toward the common budget even if the total common budget went up to \$110 because we would only be able to spend \$10, which would represent a lower percentage than our 25 percent unless the authorizing committees in question specifically authorized the additional expenditures.

Is that correct?

Mr. STEVENS. That is correct.

Mr. BIDEN. I think it is unnecessary, but I have no objection to that amendment.

Now, the second amendment, the number of which I am not going to even try to guess, because I will mess it up, but the second amendment is more direct—not more direct—is shorter and straightforward. It says—do I have a copy of it here? It says:

Requirement of payment out of funds specifically authorized. No cost incurred by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in connection with the admission to membership, or participation, in NATO of any country that was not a member of NATO as of March 1, 1998, may be paid out of funds available to any department, agency, or other entity of the United States unless the funds are specifically authorized. * * *

Now, the phrase “no cost incurred by NATO” by definition, as I understand it, means only one thing, the common budget—the common budget.

Now, if the chairman is concerned that we are going to, out of U.S. taxpayers' dollars, spend money on a new NATO admittee, Poland, let us say, that is not part of the common budget by saying, “You know, NATO has agreed we're going to extend a runway in Warsaw” or wherever we are going to do it. That is a common budget requirement. NATO must pay for that. It is not the national defense budget of Poland that pays for that. Since all of NATO is going to use it, we all are going to pay for it.

On the other hand, if you want to buy F-15 aircraft, we, the United States, will sell them to you under a Foreign Military Sales Act which is subsidized. We will be taking taxpayers' dollars, subsidizing the Polish military, if we sell them under the Foreign Military Sales Act. That is not out of the common budget.

Now, if what the chairman is trying to capture is those kinds of expendi-

tures that exceed the common budget, I understand that, and I will support that, requiring a specific authorization. But if he is talking about any common budget expenditures by NATO, I see no distinction, by requiring a specific common budget expenditure that falls under the \$10 ceiling, because we will be limited by the first amendment to spending no more than \$10 the next year.

If, in fact, we require no specific authorization to extend the runway in Germany, and if it is a common budget investment and a NATO investment to extend a runway on German land for a NATO facility, and we don't have to have a specific authorization to do that as long as it doesn't exceed the cap of \$10 total spending, then I don't understand why we would have to have a specific authorization to do the same exact thing with an equal member of NATO—assuming Poland is admitted—in Poland. It is not doing anything other than meeting a NATO obligation we will have had to sign on to.

Secondly, if I am right—and I may not be, because I may not understand the second amendment—when I read the phrase, “No cost incurred by NATO in connection with admission of new members”——

Mr. STEVENS. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. BIDEN. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I am more than happy to put into the second amendment, which is 2065, the phrase, “other than common funded budgets of NATO.”

Mr. BIDEN. I will be happy to accept the amendment if the Senator does that.

Mr. STEVENS. I have no intention, if the Senator will yield further, to cover the issues—he is talking about the one that puts a cap on the 1998 expenditures—unless authorized by law. The other one is intended to cover those costs where I believe the United States is going to venture out and say we will do this.

We have had that experience with the expenditures before. I think we will have it again in these new areas, and these new areas are the ones that need the most in terms of expenditure. Very frankly, we cannot afford to go it alone anymore. We want to see a requirement that Congress review the expenditures of funds in these areas.

Mr. HELMS. I would like to send a modification to the desk so we can accept that.

Mr. BIDEN. If the chairman will withhold for just a minute, I have no objection to agreeing to what you have stated. I would like to, and we have plenty of time to do this, and you have my commitment we will do it if our staffs can make sure that I am not misunderstanding what is being said.

Mr. HELMS. That is fair.

Mr. BIDEN. But I am 99 percent certain we agree fully, I say to the Senator from Alaska, in what he is attempting to do, and if he just changed

the language "any NATO expenditure" and we say "any U.S. expenditure beyond a common budget affecting any of these three nations requires"—I am not a draftsman—"requires the authorization committee to do it," I will accept that.

Mr. STEVENS. I state to my friend from Delaware that I am preparing to change the amendment so that it reads, "requirement of payments of funds specifically authorized, no cost incurred by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, other than the common funded budgets of NATO in connection with the admission of membership participation of any country not a member of NATO as of March 1, 1998, may be paid out of funds from any agency," et cetera.

We do not seek to be redundant with the second amendment, but 2065 addresses the voyeurism of our people in Europe to go and do it alone in interoperability, in communications, in the whole series of things that they wish to have these new members of NATO have, without regard to common funded budgets, and to go obligate the United States, and then we get the bills brought to us in Appropriations without any authorization, without any review of Foreign Relations Committee, of Armed Services Committee, and suddenly the Appropriations Committee is faced with making decisions which we shouldn't have to make.

I am told all the time these areas should be authorized by law, and here is the chairman of the Appropriations Committee saying why don't we have a requirement they be authorized by law. It is sort of like a role reversal here of the husband saying, "I've got a headache tonight, dear." It is not quite the normal thing to be hearing from an authorizer that this is wrong for us to say. Make them get the authorization by law before they present the Appropriations Committee a bill to be paid.

Mr. LOTT. If the Senator will yield, we have a unanimous consent we would like to enter, and it would give the Senator a minute to see if they can get an agreement on this point.

Mr. STEVENS. I yield.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—CONFERENCE REPORT TO H.R. 3579

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent, as if in legislative session, that the majority leader, after notification of the Democratic leader, may proceed, after disposition of the NATO treaty, to the conference report to accompany H.R. 3579, the supplemental appropriations bill, and, further, the reading of the conference report be waived.

I further ask there be 1 hour of debate equally divided in the usual form, and following the expiration or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to a vote on the adoption of the conference report, with no intervening action or debate.

Mr. KERRY. Reserving the right to object—I could not hear—the majority leader intends to proceed to this after what?

Mr. LOTT. After disposition of the NATO treaty, with debate not to exceed 1 hour, and then a final vote.

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

EXECUTIVE AMENDMENT NO. 2065

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I say to my friend from Alaska, I am quite sure I can accept this amendment 2065, but I would like to not do it at the moment. I want to make sure I run the "traps" with my counterpart on the Armed Services Committee and to make sure it is right.

Secondly, I must tell him, as a former chairman of an authorizing committee and now a ranking member of an authorizing committee, I am heartened and my soul is soaring to hear a chairman of the Appropriations Committee say, "First get an authorization." That is, all by itself, reason to be excited about this.

Mr. STEVENS. I am glad you don't have a headache tonight, dear.

Let me ask that this amendment 2065 be set aside temporarily until the Senator from Delaware concurs in my revision.

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

EXECUTIVE AMENDMENT NO. 2066, AS MODIFIED (Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate regarding the United States share of NATO's common-funded budgets, and to require an annual limitation on the amount of United States expenditures for payments to the common-funded budgets of NATO)

Mr. STEVENS. I ask now that amendment 2066 be placed before the Senate. It will be accepted, and I ask that 2066 be voted upon.

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

The clerk will report the next amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Mr. STEVENS], for himself, Mr. BYRD, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. ROBERTS, proposes an executive amendment numbered 2066, as modified.

Mr. STEVENS. I ask unanimous consent reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of section 3(2) of the resolution, add the following:

(C) UNITED STATES FUTURE PAYMENTS TO THE COMMON-FUNDED BUDGETS OF NATO.—

(i) SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING UNITED STATES SHARE OF NATO'S COMMON-FUNDED BUDGETS.—It is the sense of the Senate that, beginning with fiscal year 1999, and for each fiscal year thereafter through the fiscal year 2003, the President should—

(A) propose to NATO a limitation on the United States percentage share of the common-funded budgets of NATO for that fiscal year equal to the United States percentage share of those budgets for the preceding fiscal year, minus one percent; and

(B) not later than 60 days after the date of the United States proposal under subparagraph (A), submit a report to Congress describing the action, if any, taken by NATO to carry out the United States proposal.

(ii) ANNUAL LIMITATION ON UNITED STATES EXPENDITURES FOR NATO.—Unless specifically authorized by law, the total amount of expenditures by the United States in any fiscal year beginning on or after October 1, 1998, for payments to the common-funded budgets of NATO shall not exceed the total of all such payments made by the United States in fiscal year 1998.

(iii) DEFINITIONS.—In this subparagraph:

(I) COMMON-FUNDED BUDGETS OF NATO.—The term "common-funded budgets of NATO" means—

(aa) the Military Budget, the Security Investment Program, and the Civil Budget of NATO; and

(bb) any successor or additional account or program of NATO.

(II) UNITED STATES PERCENTAGE SHARE OF THE COMMON-FUNDED BUDGETS OF NATO.—The term "United States percentage share of the common-funded budgets of NATO" means the percentage that the total of all United States payments during a fiscal year to the common-funded budgets of NATO represent to the total amounts payable by all NATO members to those budgets during that fiscal year.

Mr. STEVENS. We just discussed this, and both sides have agreed to it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2066), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS. I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. BIDEN. I move to lay it on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. STEVENS. Parliamentary inquiry. It is my understanding amendment 2065 is temporarily set aside until a later time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I want to take a few minutes, if I may, to speak to the issue of the expansion. I have watched closely and participated closely as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, and I have a number of different thoughts about the place we find ourselves in now with respect to this first Eastern European expansion of new democracies to NATO—first Eastern European, obviously, since 1949.

I think most Americans who follow this kind of topic very closely are somewhat surprised by the level of the debate, the nature of the debate over the past week, sort of interrupted as it was for a period of time, and also by the seeming lack of significant concern in the country about this. There is, obviously, in the past weeks a sense by many of the pundits watching this who have observed it and pointed it out that, given the momentous nature of the transfer that is taking place, there might have been considerably more concern. Obviously, some of that concern has been heightened in the last weeks.

Nevertheless, I think it is fair to say the American public is fundamentally relatively oblivious to the fact that we are extending NATO's geographic range and military commitments. The debate

we now find ourselves in certainly doesn't seem joined like past debates of momentous impact on our foreign policy that many of us took part in and remember when Russia was the Soviet Union and issues of arms control loomed larger on our horizon.

One might ask why that is. Why is there this lack of confrontation or drama? I think it is quite simply because we are fundamentally presented with a fait accompli. It is true that the basic decisions have fundamentally been taken by Europe, by the President, by NATO, and I might point out significantly by Russia. Russia, recognizing some time ago that this was essentially a done deal, took steps to join in the available opportunities for cooperation that were made available. But at the highest levels of government it was very apparent to our leaders in bilateral discussions and otherwise that we were moving down this road. I suppose we have to be careful here, because if they mistakenly believe that somehow if they had offered greater opposition it might have been otherwise, I don't think that is necessarily the case, but clearly the debate would have been different, at least somewhat different.

So here we are in the Senate constitutionally charged with the power of advising and consenting of treaties. But essentially the Senate itself has been packaged and delivered much as the treaty has. I know that some outside of the Senate argued, "Well, it is never too late. We can always make a different decision." But I think everybody understands the reality of where we find ourselves.

I have talked to a great many of my colleagues, each of whom have expressed the notion that perhaps a partnership-of-a-peace approach, or some other approach, might have been more advisable, but finding themselves where they were, they came out of that dilemma and that equation where we are today also.

It must also be pointed out, though, at the same time for those who have been complaining about the process, that the U.S. Senate had ample opportunity to do what it seems to be expressing a desire to do at the next stage, and that is be more a part of the process, impose itself more, know the consultative process, and, frankly, be more vigilant with respect to what the consequences are of some of the resolutions that come to the floor in the meantime, it is clear, however, that one of the reasons of the sense of lack of engagement at this moment is the reality that the Senate has gone on record a number of times in the last few years as being totally supportive of moving forward with enlargement.

So I think that all of this really underscores the dilemma of this ratification process at this stage. It has been very hard for anybody to object also to the notion that reconnecting Europe's east and west, performing modern diplomatic plastic surgery on a historical

dividing line, which reminds everyone of Soviet oppression, and that post-World War II allied lassitude is somehow wrong.

In addition, many have found it difficult to say no, even if they thought they had reservations, to the countries of people who have so constructively and plentifully contributed to the life in the United States in which we are so connected historically, culturally, and politically; and many have found it difficult to even say no knowing that those countries at some point in the future in the meantime—depending on what Russia evolves into, depending on what history decides to lay in front of us, what history ultimately will be in the region—might someday ask the question that was on their lips in the not so distant past, which is, Why didn't you help us when you could?

So we are engaged in a debate that is rooted significantly in the emotions and the memories of the cold war, and with only a minimal and late reference to the changes that have already taken place, both in Europe and the rest of the world and in Russia, and to the full ramifications of the process of enlargement once begun.

The truth is that NATO already is no longer the same entity that it was a decade ago, and it no longer faces the same threat. For 40 years, NATO has stood as a bulwark, preserving European security, and, by extension, our own security for one very simple reason. It was poised against the threat that was posed by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. NATO was the simple wall of deterrence against Soviet expansionism and nuclear Armageddon. It drew its power and its *raison d'être* from the geopolitical circumstances of the times. It was there like Everest, and it deterred because of its unwavering presence. It was not because of what NATO did that it drew its power. It was because of what was on paper, and in possibility. But now, with the Soviet Union's empire and the threat that they pose is gone, the truth is that so too is NATO's original mission. Today, democratic elements with varying degrees of success are taking root where communism once held sway even in Russia. To my knowledge, not one military expert or intelligence analyst has suggested that a threat like the old threat could emerge again without at least 10 years of buildup and warning. To be sure, Russia continues to be a nuclear power, but obviously a very different kind of nuclear power than the Soviet Union of yesterday. It is a country trying to make the transition to democracy and to Western institutions and values, both at home and abroad.

So while NATO continues to be a "collective defense alliance," its mission today is not at least, so we state, to defend against the Russian threat, but nevertheless if we are to be honest, it is certainly at least still a principal rationale of it that we maintain it for and enlarge it as a hedge against the

potential of future threats against the unknown, including that of the potential of recidivism in Russia.

Now with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the breakup of the Soviet Union, and the change in the nature of the threat, NATO has already begun a kind of transition expanding its mission to include other tasks. For example, peacekeeping, as evidenced by the presence in Bosnia, and the new NATO, if you will, has an expanded vision of the range of potential threats that include not only challenges posed by ethnic and political rivalries within Europe to global threats, such as terrorism or nuclear proliferation, but also a greater willingness to undertake certain kinds of missions to cope with those threats.

I know some of my colleagues find that transformation particularly troubling. Some may believe that what we passed with respect to the language and the scope of the NATO mission doesn't, in fact, change any of that. But I suspect as we go down the road and think about enlargement later on in other countries, the questions about those roles will become even more significant.

Mr. President, in my judgment, notwithstanding some of those cautionary instincts that a lot of us have about this process, and notwithstanding the potential difficulties that we may face down the road, I believe it is clear that the three countries in question—Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic—meet the basic requirements for membership in NATO, and that we need to recognize that in less than a decade those nations have successfully transformed themselves from Communist states into vital democracies with emerging market economies.

They have taken steps to establish civilian control over the military, and as participants in NATO's Partnership for Peace programs since 1994, they have already begun the process of integration into the NATO force structure and command. Each of these three nations has made it clear they are prepared to foot the cost of membership, and they have taken the steps to improve relations with their neighbors in an effort to earn that membership.

I believe that the benefits of bringing Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO are real. It will heighten the sense of security within those three countries not only through the extension of NATO's military guarantee but also through the psychological benefits of being a European member and a member of the NATO club, and interactions within the alliance will clearly help to strengthen the new democracies and their abilities to assimilate themselves into Europe both economically and politically, and obviously militarily within NATO's integrated force structure.

Their membership will enhance stability in Central Europe and strengthen NATO itself through the acquisition of additional forces and personnel to cope with future threats and missions.

These benefits notwithstanding—I think they are real—I express the concern that, as a number of colleagues have expressed it, admission of these countries, unless we do our job properly in the Senate, unless the consultation process is thoroughly pursued in the course of the next year, and unless we measure carefully the aftermath of the process of integration, the questions raised by the Senator from Alaska about funding, the questions raised by Senator WARNER and Senator MOYNIHAN, I think, are legitimate questions, not sufficient in and of themselves to stop us from proceeding forward, but questions which will have to be answered and addressed in order to be able to proceed forward.

It is important for us in the Senate not to permit the first tranche of admission to somehow create an automatic dynamic for further expansion to countries whose membership in NATO could conceivably—not definitely, but conceivably—pose serious strategic implications for the security of Europe and of the United States.

Personally, I believe, as others have expressed the fact, that it might have been equally as sensible, perhaps more sensible but equally as feasible, to proceed along the same line of building our relationships, building the democracies, integrating forces while simultaneously achieving the goal of START II and force reduction in Russia and building the democracy of Russia by dealing with the Partnership for Peace.

That was not the choice that was made, so we cannot stand here and debate what might have been. But I am convinced that a longer period of integration of armed forces and economic development over the next months will be critical to making the judgment about the next tranche, and it is critical for all of us not to allow this first vote to somehow create expectations that are unmeetable or create a dynamic that takes control of the process in and of itself.

One of the reasons I think it makes so much sense, obviously, and so much easier to accomplish what we are accomplishing now, which is why I think the vote will be significant in affirming it, is that historically these particular countries were a part of Europe before falling prey to Soviet domination during the cold war and culturally they do regard themselves as European. At the moment, there is no immediate threat to the security of those countries, but perhaps most importantly, the most significant component of Russia's leadership, beginning with President Yeltsin, came to recognize the inevitability of our initial intentions as well as to work out a process with the United States to make that acceptance possible.

The real question that has been asked eloquently by a number of our colleagues and needs to be watched carefully as we go forward from here is, when other countries of greater geographical or strategic significance to

Russia push to admission, we have to carefully measure what the ramifications of that acceptance or rejection may be at that time. And I am confident that because of this process in the last weeks, the Senate is more prepared to do that than it may have been previously.

I believe the administration deserves significant credit for the way it has, in fact, managed this process. They have been, I think, particularly adept at focusing on those issues which have been raised in the Chamber with respect to Russia, and in my judgment they have laid the groundwork for our capacity to proceed down a cooperative, not a confrontational, road with Russia as a result. But clearly transitional politics in Russia, future issues about succession, and the politics of that nation have to play into our consideration in subsequent rounds.

We have to distinctly remember, I think, several critical facts. Democracy in Russia is in its earliest stages; Russia is still a nuclear power and the principal potential threat to European and American security; and, third, a good working relationship with Russia is clearly necessary if we are to achieve a whole set of other critical objectives on our foreign policy agenda, particularly that of nuclear proliferation, nuclear weapons reduction, and the containment of Iraq both now and in the future.

The rationale for NATO expansion is rooted in the presumption that the continued existence of NATO is in our interests. It is the world's only established, effective, integrated military force with readiness and training. It benefits both us and Europe by tying us together and anchoring our involvement with the continent. It acts as a stabilizing influence on members that might otherwise come to blows, such as Greece and Turkey. It helps to nourish and strengthen the shared values and interests of its members and, through its security guarantee, it promotes the development of a united and secure Europe.

All of these offer very legitimate reasons for this current step that we take, but, again, one should not assume that that process of expansion or all of those interests will be served in the same way or be risk free as we go down the road.

Russia, as Secretary Albright acknowledged during the Foreign Relations Committee hearings, has always had strong nationalist forces which interpret every move that the West makes as anti-Russian. And while these forces may not have prevailed during this first round of expansion, there is no certainty as to what will happen in the future or that the next time we confront this issue, they may not be dominant within the life of the politics of Russia. In fact, the immediate prospect of NATO extending such an invitation could well propel those forces to dominance, given the transitional and tenuous aspects of the domestic politics of Russia.

So I think the question has to be asked as we go down the road, Will we and Europe be more secure if that were to occur or if Russia decided to enhance its security by increasing its reliance on nuclear weapons, therefore reversing the course that began with the ratification of START I and the signing of START II? Clearly, a country not defined an enemy today is hopefully not going to be made an enemy in the future by our unwillingness to be sensitive to some of those kinds of considerations.

Administration officials have stated thus far that no commitments or promises have been made about other nations' membership, and I placed into the RECORD earlier a letter from the President to the effect that he intends to adhere to a very strict consultative process in the future and that no secret or private commitments regarding membership will be made in the interval.

It seems to me that is the most important fact for us to focus on as we consider the future and the potential of what the Senate may face down the road. Some people may view that the assurances of the President are inadequate, but I disagree. I think when you really examine the full nature of the consultative process that we have had previously—the NAC visits, our visits to Europe, our discussions with NATO, our discussions in Brussels, the various meetings that took place between defense ministers and the Parliament and Congress—there has really been, I think, a much more lengthy consultative process than many Members have been willing to acknowledge.

In my judgment, as I said, Congress in many ways ratified most of that by passing a number of different resolutions along the course of time which stated that we were supportive of that particular enlargement. In light of that examination, of that process of consultation, and the President's commitment to replicate it as well as to avoid any private commitments, I think Congress is going to have ample opportunity, as we go down the road, to make the judgments about which some of our colleagues have expressed some concern.

I agree with the administration and with the Senator from North Carolina and others that we must never give Russia or any country a veto over our foreign policy. We certainly should not give them a veto over the question fundamentally of NATO enlargement. I agree with that. But I also strongly believe we have a fundamental responsibility to consider any country's likely reactions to the steps we take and other kinds of cooperative efforts that may be available to us at any point in time to secure the same interests that we may or may not be seeking to occur from actions that would, in fact, create a counterreaction.

I look forward to that future deliberation, and I also look forward to a greater clarity that will come through

the act of this first expansion with respect to the budgets and the true costs and true interests as they will define themselves as we go down the road. The bottom line is, however, that this expansion of NATO at this point in time under these circumstances will make NATO stronger and will also protect, enhance, and serve the interests of the United States of America. Those are the fundamental reasons for which we should enter into any kind of treaty, and that is why I will vote for this treaty.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HELMS. On behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent when the Senate resumes consideration of the Conrad amendment numbered 2320, there be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form. I further ask that following the expiration of time, the Senate proceed to a vote on or in relation to the Conrad amendment.

Mr. KERRY. This would occur when?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Upon the resumption of the amendment.

Mr. HELMS. I could not hear.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the Senator from Massachusetts restate his inquiry.

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, the Senator from Massachusetts was asking when this would occur. I understand it is when it is called up. And it is not being called up at this time; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment has not been called up.

Mr. KERRY. And it would have to be called up before we proceed?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. KERRY. I thank the Chair.

I do not object.

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

Mr. HELMS. Let me say that I remember the old adage is, "I like a finished speaker. I really, truly do. I don't mean one who's polished, I just mean one who's through."

I deliberately stayed away from the podium yesterday because I wanted everybody to have their say on this matter, and I think it is time for us to move along and become finished speakers. But before I do, I want to make a few comments that occurred to me when I listened in my office and on the floor—a combination of the two—to various statements that were being made.

The Conrad amendment—and I have the greatest respect for Senator CONRAD—I must unalterably oppose because the United States has never, never agreed to tactical nuclear weapons reductions with the Russians, or the Soviets, for good reason.

First, these weapons are essential to an equitable sharing of the risk and burden associated with NATO's nuclear mission. Further, they are a visible sign that NATO is prepared to use any and all force necessary to deter an attack. Finally, there is absolutely no way that the United States can verify

Russian compliance with an agreement to eliminate tactical nuclear weapons.

Mr. President, I am increasingly fascinated by the wailing, tearing of hair, and gnashing of teeth engaged in by the more liberal of our brethren, the news media, and otherwise, regarding the impact that NATO expansion would have on the United States-Russian relationship. It seems that the only argument against NATO enlargement—aside from the "cost bugaboo"—is that Senate approval of this treaty will derail Russian ratification of START II, imperil future arms control agreements, and I have heard over and over again that it will turn Russia into a hostile power. I am going to agree to discuss these things as time goes by, but not this afternoon.

Mr. President, there has been a surfeit of bellyaching about the START II treaty. It has been nearly 5½ years since the United States and Russia signed that treaty. Since that time, Russia has used START II ratification as a pretext to hold hostage an ever-changing, ever-growing number of issues. And, of course, the weak-kneed arms controllers and Russia apologists in the United States have, in the past 5 years, been feeding the beast, encouraging the Russians to take one hostage after another. I could walk you through the various Russian threats, such as the Russians have threatened that there would be no START II treaty if the United States deploys a national missile defense.

At a press conference before the March 1997 Helsinki summit, President Yeltsin criticized U.S. discussion of a national missile defense stating, "Well, you understand, of course, why it is that the state Duma has not yet ratified START II—because ABM was suspended."

Why does Russia not want the United States to abandon the ABM Treaty? Because with it we are prevented from having a national missile defense and Russia can hold our citizens hostage to its intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Then there is a second threat. The Russians have threatened that there would be no START II unless the United States makes more foreign aid concessions. In 1996, the chairman of the Duma's defense committee, Sergei Yushkov, tied START II ratification not just merely to the ABM Treaty but to "the provision of adequate funds for the maintenance of Russia's strategic nuclear arsenal."

Threat No. 3: The Russians declared there would be no START II unless the United States makes other, unspecified concessions. In September of 1997, last year, there was a powerful voice that controls a sizable block of Duma votes who declared that START II should not be ratified until "a favorable moment" and that Russia should hold out for more U.S. concessions. According to this man, this leader, "We have created a powerful missile complex, and we must use it to get certain advantages."

Threat No. 4: The Russians declared there would be no START II if the U.S.

mounts air-strikes against Saddam Hussein. In connection with the U.S. military build-up in the Persian Gulf, the Deputy Speaker of the Duma declared that START II would never be approved if the United States were to use force against Iraq.

In the wake of that particular threat, the Russian diplomats at the United Nations have been working overtime to phase out international inspections of Saddam Hussein's chemical and biological warfare facilities. We already caught the Russians red-handed trying to sell the Iraqis a fermenter specially-designed for biological weapons, and without UNSCOM inspectors poking around, Saddam's cooperation with Russia in developing these horrible weapons will be free and unimpeded.

Threat No. 5: The Russians declared there would be no START II unless the U.S. agrees to allow continued Russian violation of the START Treaty. Most recently, U.S. arms control negotiators were told that their refusal to shelve U.S. concerns over repeated Russian violations of the START Treaty would jeopardize START II ratification.

I was amazed to hear some point to the recent, massive salvo of submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) which the Russians launched to their destruction as the kind of cooperation that will cease if NATO is enlarged. Senators should know, as should others in the executive branch, that these SLBM launches were not emblematic of arms control cooperation.

In fact, the Administration has noted that these SLBM launches were violations of the START Treaty because Russia refused to provide telemetry as required. They simply brushed aside our concerns and went on with their plans.

Mr. President, the bottom line is that the Russian threat over NATO Enlargement is just one in a long, tired litany of ever-changing excuses for not ratifying START II. I urge the American people, and my fellow Senators, not to be taken in by this ludicrous argument.

I urge those who are bemoaning the abuse that we are doing to our "Russian friends" to listen very carefully:

There is not one arms control treaty signed by Russia that it is not violating! As I have said, Russia stands today in violation of its START Treaty obligations.

Likewise, Russia consistently has engaged in the worst, most abhorrent perversions of bio-chemistry known to man. Russian scientists continue to work overtime at weaponizing biological pathogens in violation of the Biological Weapons Convention. According to key Russian defectors, Russia has placed enough biological agent—for example, small pox and various fever viruses—on its intercontinental ballistic missiles to wipe the human race from the face of the earth.

Similarly, as I warned during the course of debate on the Chemical

Weapons Convention, Russia is violating that treaty by clandestinely producing a series of nerve agents more lethal than any other chemical substance known to man.

And we have all read in recent days about the robust and continuing Russian assistance to Iran's ballistic missile program, in violation of their obligations under the Missile Technology Control Regime.

Mr. President, the list of arms control violations goes on and on. I am amazed that we are wringing our hands about antagonizing a country that is engaging in such abhorrent, reprehensible behavior. I challenge anyone to defend that regime's record of flagrant disregard for its treaty obligations, and its calculated assistance to regimes hostile to the United States. In light of these facts, piling another item onto the arms control agenda seems particularly ill-advised.

Russia is becoming, despite our best efforts to the contrary, a rogue nation bent on challenging the United States at every turn. Neither tactical nuclear weapons nor NATO expansion have anything to do with it.

EXECUTIVE AMENDMENT NO. 2320

Mr. HELMS. I call for the regular order, the Conrad amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Amendment No. 2320, previously proposed by the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. CONRAD, for himself and Mr. BINGAMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 30 minutes equally divided.

Mr. HELMS. There is a 30-minute time limitation; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina is correct.

If neither side yields time, time will run equally.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, is the pending order the Conrad-Bingaman amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct. The Senator from North Dakota has 13 minutes.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank the Chair.

Mr. President, the Conrad-Bingaman amendment is designed to address the question of tactical nuclear weapons. Let me just review briefly the circumstance we face, and remind my colleagues that unlike strategic weapons, unlike conventional systems, we have no treaty with respect to tactical nuclear weapons.

This chart shows the record on arms control. The red line is Russian forces; the blue line, U.S. or NATO forces. We can see under the Conventional Forces Treaty we have had steep reductions. In terms of strategic systems under the START accords, the same pattern—deep reductions on both sides on strategic systems. But on tactical nuclear weapons we don't know what has happened on the Russian side, although we have an estimate from our strategic commander, General Habiger, that they have 7,000 to 12,000 tactical nuclear weapons; we have about 1,600.

Russia's tactical nuclear arsenal—we need to know more. In 1991, Russia had 15,000; the United States, 3,500 in Europe. Today, in Europe we have roughly 400; they have between 7,000 and 12,000.

Terrorist use of a tactical nuclear weapons would be devastating. It would make what went off in Oklahoma look like a firecracker. That was a two one-thousandths kiloton equivalent, the bomb that went off in Oklahoma. The bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima was 13 kilotons. The smaller tactical weapons of the day run in the 10-kiloton range. The larger tactical nuclear weapons are 300 kilotons plus.

There is also a strategic breakout danger. Under the strategic limits of START III, both sides would be at about 2,250 systems. Tactical nuclear weapons today: The United States, roughly 1,500 or 1,600; the Russians, 7,000 to 12,000. That becomes a strategic concern, that great differential between the tactical systems of the two sides.

This chart shows the strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. The distinction between the two is disappearing. During the cold-war period, strategic systems ran 500 kilotons to 10 megatons. The tactical systems currently run 10 kilotons up to 400 kilotons. But today's strategic weapons have been dramatically reduced in yield, down to 300 kilotons to 1 megaton. So the difference between tactical nuclear weapons and strategic nuclear weapons is disappearing.

Let's listen to America's nuclear commander, the head of strategic forces. General Habiger said, "The Russians have anywhere from 7,000 to more than 12,000 of these nonstrategic nuclear weapons and we need to bring them into the equation."

That is what the Conrad-Bingaman amendment is about. It is not about reducing United States tactical nuclear weapons. It is not about taking United States tactical nuclear weapons out of Europe. It is not about those things.

It is about saying that we ought to engage the Russians in a discussion on reduction of tactical nuclear weapons because of the enormous disparity that they enjoy in these forces. It is about asking for a certification from the administration that they are engaged in that course. It is about a report on what we know about these tactical nuclear weapons.

I yield 3 minutes to my distinguished colleague and cosponsor, Senator BINGAMAN of New Mexico.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from North Dakota and compliment him on his leadership in proposing this amendment.

Mr. President, I have expressed grave concern about this whole proposal to expand NATO. One concern that I have expressed is that it diverts our attention from our real national security threats as I see them today. This

amendment by the Senator from North Dakota tries to bring us back to those real national security threats by talking about the threat that is posed by these tactical nuclear weapons. For that reason I think it is a very good amendment and one that I am very honored to cosponsor.

Let me point out that we have had various hearings on this issue in the Armed Services Committee. There is no question but what the lack of agreement, the lack of progress, on dealing with tactical nuclear weapons is a serious concern for our military and a serious concern for our planners generally.

This amendment is extremely modest in its language. Let me just call people's attention to specific provisions of it.

First of all, it is a sense of the Senate. It does not have binding language in it. It essentially puts the Senate on record as favoring a certain position.

It says:

It is the sense of the Senate that . . . Prior to the deposit of instruments of ratification, the Administration shall certify to the Senate that with regard to non-strategic nuclear weapons

(i) it is the policy of the United States to work with the Russian Federation to increase transparency, exchange data, increase warhead security, and facilitate weapon dismantlement. . . .

It is hard for me to understand what kind of argument our colleagues can make against that general proposition.

It is further stated that it is our policy that discussions toward these ends need to be initiated with the Russian Federation.

Mr. President, one of the arguments I have heard people present in opposition to this is that, sure, it may be a decent amendment, but it is not appropriate to consider it in the context of NATO enlargement.

I think just the contrary is the case, because clearly NATO enlargement can only be justified if it adds to our security in the European theater. This amendment will do more to add to our security in the European theater than the expansion of NATO that is now contemplated. For that reason, I think it is appropriate that we move ahead, that we vote for this amendment.

Quite frankly, I have great difficulty understanding why it cannot be accepted by all parties. It clearly states a position I believe the American people strongly believe in, which is that we need to do more to press the Russians to reduce their tactical nuclear weapons arsenal, and I hope very much we will do that in the very near future.

I appreciate the time that has been yielded, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. KYL addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. Thank you, Mr. President.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment. It calls on the administration to initiate arms control negotiations with Russia on tactical nuclear

weapons in Europe. The amendment seeks to push the United States down what I think is an extremely ill-advised path.

First of all, tactical nuclear weapons are essential to NATO. A credible alliance nuclear policy requires widespread participation in nuclear roles by our European allies.

The dual-capable aircraft and the few hundred substrategic nuclear gravity bombs which are deployed in Europe provide an essential political and military link between the European and the North Atlantic members of the alliance. The devices deployed on European soil are essential to an equitable sharing of the risk and burden associated with NATO's nuclear mission.

Second, the presence of U.S. tactical nuclear systems in Europe is an important demonstration of the U.S. commitment to deterring all threats to the territory of the alliance. These weapons are a visible sign that NATO is prepared to use any and all force necessary to deter an attack. For this reason, the defense ministers of the alliance have on multiple occasions expressed their support for the continued stationing of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

I ask my colleagues to ponder for a moment the message that this amendment would send if the United States were to expand NATO while simultaneously abandoning our nuclear commitments. Such a step would mean the hollowing out of the United States article V commitments and would gut the world's most powerful, stable defensive military alliance. NATO is different and vastly superior to other multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations, because the members of the alliance do not merely pay lip service to the principles of collective defense.

Third, the fact that we have tactical nuclear weapons in Europe has nothing to do with the existence of or the number of Russian tactical nuclear weapons. We maintain them in Europe for reasons that I just mentioned. Throwing our tactical nuclear weapons into an arms control agreement with Russian tactical weapons makes no sense.

Finally, in the past, the United States has refused to agree to negotiate these weapons, for good reason. Simply put, it would be impossible to verify that the Russians are, in fact, complying with any agreement. Instead, the United States prudently focused on limiting delivery systems, such as missiles and bombs, which are large and observable and, therefore, verifiable. Given the importance of these weapons to the United States and the NATO alliance, and given the fact we would not be able to match the Russians cheating, as they have done on every arms control treaty we have ever signed with them, this amendment is conceptually flawed.

Again, I urge all of my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

Mr. CONRAD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I don't know what amendment the Senator from Arizona is referring to, but it is not my amendment. It is not the amendment that is before us. There is nothing in the Conrad-Bingaman amendment that talks about taking U.S. tactical nuclear weapons out of Europe—nothing.

The point is, the Russians have an enormous edge on us with respect to tactical nuclear weapons. Let's review the facts. Today, the United States has roughly 400 tactical nuclear weapons in Europe; the Russians have between 7,000 and 12,000. How is it not in our interest to push them to reduce their tactical nuclear weapons? It is absolutely in our interest, just as it has been in our interest to get them to reduce conventional forces, as we have done by treaty negotiations, just as it has been in our interest to reduce strategic systems. But it is, I believe, dangerous to allow the Russians to have this kind of edge on us in tactical nuclear weapons in Europe.

Again, I emphasize to my colleagues, there is nothing in my amendment—nothing—that talks about taking U.S. tactical nuclear weapons out of Europe.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. BIDEN addressed the Chair.

Mr. KYL. I will take 2 or 3 minutes.

Mr. BIDEN. I am sorry.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I think that the flaw in the argument just stated is obvious. It is true, as Senator CONRAD points out, that there are no words in his amendment that talk about taking American tactical weapons out of Europe. That is not the point I was making. It is also true he could have said that there are no words in here that specifically call for the United States to reduce the number of American missiles.

He then makes the point that it would be desirable, since the Russians have more tactical nuclear weapons than we do, to get them to reduce those numbers. Indeed, it would. But I ask you, Mr. President, how we are going to initiate discussions—which is what this amendment precisely calls for as a condition to moving forward here—without putting at risk some of the American tactical nuclear weapons. I discussed all of the reasons why we need those tactical nuclear weapons. The very point that Senator CONRAD makes, that the Russians have a lot more than we do, makes the point that we can't afford to reduce the number that we have.

So, as a practical matter, while the words about reducing our tactical weapons are not in the amendment, there is no way to get the Russians to reduce their numbers unless we reduce our numbers as well. That is why, as I said, Mr. President, this amendment,

which would have the effect, if these negotiations are in any way successful from Senator CONRAD's point of view, of reducing American tactical nuclear weapons. That is why this amendment should be rejected.

Mr. CONRAD. How much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Three minutes 36 seconds.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I say to my colleague from Arizona, the argument that he advances makes no sense to this Senator.

On conventional forces we, by treaty, have gotten them to dramatically reduce their forces as have we. The same is true of strategic systems. The place where there is an enormous disparity is tactical nuclear weapons. They have the advantage. And we are not engaging them in discussions on reduction?

I will tell you, if we could have a situation in which we take a 50 percent reduction and they take a 50 percent reduction, I would take that deal right now, because we would lose 200 and they would lose between 3,500 and 6,000. For us not to engage in discussions on "loose nukes," which are the very ones that are most subject to terrorists, to being used in ways that are totally against the U.S. interests, makes no sense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. BIDEN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I have been here 25 years. The chairman of the full committee knows that there may have been, and there are people who have been, more effective people in pursuing arms control than the Senator from Delaware but none more consistently and more fervently than the Senator from Delaware.

This is not the place for this amendment. This is a treaty. This is a treaty. It is a treaty about expanding NATO. One of our colleagues on the Republican side, I was told earlier, had an amendment on the Kyoto environmental treaty saying we could not—I am told; I did not see it; but I am told he had been talked out of it, I believe—that we could not expand NATO unless Kyoto was dealt with.

Another one has an amendment that may come up here tonight dealing with—I believe, the distinguished Senator from Oklahoma, at least he was talking about an amendment relating to a position I know the chairman shares, which I do not share, relating to strategic defense initiatives. This is not the place for that.

Secondly, I find it absolutely fascinating that some of the very Senators who have come to the floor and said, look, what we want to do here is we want to slow down passage, stop passage, or slow down new members coming in, because we are fearful it is going to offend the Russians or the Russians are going to get upset—a legitimate concern. But then they come

along and say, and by the way, before—before—we can deposit these instruments, the Russians have to agree to cut their tactical nuclear weapons, or whatever.

Now, that is giving to Russia a veto power over expansion in NATO.

Mr. CONRAD. Would the Senator yield?

Mr. BIDEN. I am happy to.

Mr. CONRAD. Is there anything in the amendment that is before the Senate now that requires a reduction on anybody's part before there is ratification?

Mr. BIDEN. Maybe the Senator can help me out.

Mr. President, maybe the Senator can help me out. It says, "Prior to the deposit of the instruments of ratification, the Administration shall certify to the Senate that with regard to [the following]," and it lists the following nonstrategic nuclear weapons, that "it is the policy of the United States . . . that discussions toward these ends have been initiated with the Russian Federation."

All the Russian Federation can say is, "I'm not going to discuss this with you," done, period, over; they have vetoed it. Look, if I am sitting in the Russian Duma, I am going to—and we are all worried about these reactionary nationalists who are the browns and the reds undercutting Yeltsin—I have got a real easy one. I go to Yeltsin and say, I tell you what, you've indicated to us you don't want to expand NATO but there is nothing you can do to stop it. I've got the way to stop it right now. When the President picks up the phone and calls you and says, "By the way, I want to initiate discussions relative to tactical nuclear weapons," tell him, "No. No."

Guess what? By definition, no expansion of NATO, because the President cannot deposit these instruments until—until—he can certify to the U.S. Senate that discussions with the Russian Federation have been initiated.

Now, call me paranoid, if you would like, but I know what I would do. I am a pretty good politician. The Senator from North Dakota is even a better politician. We are all politicians in here. They are not any different in the Duma. They are no different in the Russian Federation. So I have a real easy one. And by the way, if they had not figured it out, I just told them.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, would the Senator yield?

Mr. BIDEN. On his time I would be delighted to yield, since I have very limited time.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, would the Senator refer to the bottom of page 2. It says there, "Sense of the Senate. It is the sense of the Senate. . . ." There is no binding language in this amendment. This calls upon the administration to try to initiate discussion with the Russians.

Mr. CONRAD. It would not stop NATO enlargement from going forward. This is not some scheme to stop

NATO enlargement. I am opposed to NATO enlargement, but this does not stop enlargement. This does do something about sending a signal we ought to do something about tactical nuclear weapons when they enjoy this incredible edge over us and we seem to not pay much attention.

Mr. BIDEN. I am confused then. I am confused. Why is certification—I have never heard of a certification on the part of the President in a sense of the Senate. Explain that to me. Explain how a sense of the Senate requires a formal certification from a President. Like I said, I have been here a while. That is a new one.

So you mean the President can say, when we pass this, "You know, BINGAMAN and CONRAD are good guys, they're my buddies and allies, but I'm not going to pay attention to them; I'm not going to certify anything"? Can he just say, "I'm not going to certify it"?

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, in response, I would point out that there are many occasions where that has happened, and I am saying, it could happen here. This is a statement by the Senate, if it were to pass, a statement by the Senate, as I see it, that the Senate believes that the President should initiate discussions and should certify to us that he has done so. If he does not do so, he still has legal authority to go ahead and file the articles of ratification.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I have a question. Is the Senator saying that the President of the United States will fully be within the law if, when this passes tonight, if this were attached, if he is in a press conference and says, "I want to compliment the Senate on expanding NATO, and I want to tell Senator CONRAD I'm not certifying anything"—would that be OK legally?

Mr. CONRAD. Yes. This is a sense—I mean, I do not know—

Mr. BIDEN. Great. I think that is wonderful.

Mr. CONRAD. This is a sense-of-the-Senate resolution. Nobody knows better than the Senator from Delaware a sense-of-the-Senate resolution and its legal standing. What we are trying to do is direct the attention of this administration and our colleagues to the very real threat that "loose nukes" present. And we are trying to take the words of General Habiger, who has said to us they have 7,000 to 12,000 of these tactical nuclear weapons and we ought to address that differential.

Mr. BIDEN. May I ask how much time I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware has 1 minute 57 seconds.

Mr. BIDEN. I yield the remainder of my time to the Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. First of all, I appreciate the comments of the Senator from Delaware and certainly support the points he made.

I think it is critical to go directly to the heart of what is behind this amendment. It has been a longstanding objec-

tive of the Russians to break our tactical nuclear connection with our NATO allies; make no mistake about that. We should do nothing in the U.S. Senate that assists the Russians in achieving this long-term goal.

Secondly, we need tactical nuclear weapons in the so-called credibility ladder. I would be very concerned if the only weapons we had at our disposal to act as a deterrent were strategic nuclear weapons. Mr. President, sometimes you need a graduated response. And to suggest that we should reduce the number of our weapons and we can do that by cutting out half if the Russians cut out half, that would leave us very few weapons, not enough to pose a credible deterrence. To suggest that we do that and then rely upon strategic weapons I think is something that no one in this Chamber would want to support.

And finally, as our colleague from Delaware said, we should not be tying up NATO expansion with this particular amendment. So I urge my colleagues again to vote against the Conrad amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. BIDEN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. I am sorry.

Mr. HELMS. No. Go ahead.

Mr. BIDEN. I just want to make a point. I may be mistaken, but I think if my colleagues will look at this amendment, it is section (B) that is a sense of the Senate. The sense of the Senate controls language; only section B, a completely separate section is section C. If my colleagues wish to make the title of this sense of the Senate, it would be a different deal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). The Senator from North Dakota has 25 seconds.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I want to answer, again, the Senator from Arizona. There is absolutely no intent to require the United States to reduce its tactical nuclear weapons at all. The thrust of this amendment is the concern that a number of us have that Russia has an enormous edge on tactical nuclear weapons, and we ought to engage in discussions with them to get a reduction in those tactical nuclear weapons. That is clearly in the U.S. interest.

I hope our colleagues would support this amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired on this amendment.

Mr. HELMS. I was assigned this afternoon to make the train run and to save Senators a lot of time. In that connection, I ask unanimous consent the Conrad amendment 2320 be laid aside, and Senator BINGAMAN be recognized to offer his amendment regarding strategic concept, and there be 30 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form; I further ask following the expiration time, the amendment be laid aside.

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

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President might I ask for the yeas and nays on the Conrad amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I believe there are 15 minutes reserved on my side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

EXECUTIVE AMENDMENT NO. 2324

(Purpose: To require a certification of United States policy not to support further enlargement of NATO (other than Poland, Hungary, or the Czech Republic) until revision of the Strategic Concept of NATO is completed)

Mr. BINGAMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the Chair advise me when 10 of those minutes have expired and that the remaining 5 minutes be reserved for me to use prior to the vote on my amendment.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, without yet objecting, I would like to know if there is any time for a response to that prior to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator wishing to oppose the amendment will have 15 minutes of time. It has not been allocated as to when that will occur.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I have no concern as to how you allocate that time.

Mr. KYL. I will not object.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, let me explain this amendment and use the 10 minutes I have at this point. First, let me send an amendment to the desk and ask for its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Mexico [Mr. BINGAMAN], proposes an executive amendment numbered 2324.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The executive amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place in section 3 of the resolution, insert the following:

() UNITED STATES POLICY LIMITING NATO ENLARGEMENT UNTIL THE STRATEGIC CONCEPT OF NATO IS REVISED.—Prior to the date of deposit of the United States instrument of ratification, the President shall certify to the Senate that, until such time as the North Atlantic Council agrees on a revised Strategic Concept of NATO, it is the policy of the United States not to support the accession to the North Atlantic Treaty of, or the invitation to begin accession talks with, any European state, other than Poland, Hungary, or the Czech Republic.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, this amendment relates to what is called the NATO strategic concept. We have had quite a bit of discussion over the last couple of days about the NATO strategic concept and the fact that NATO countries, NATO members, including ourselves, have been engaged in

serious discussions over the last year or two in an effort to revise the NATO strategic concept.

I think we are all aware that the current strategic concept for NATO is one that was arrived at back in 1991. It predates the disillusion of the Soviet Union, and the resulting emergence of new independent states. It does not account for the Civil War in Bosnia or NATO's peacekeeping operations there. It does not allow or contemplate the current nuclear or strategic concept, does not contemplate the denuclearization of Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, and it does not contemplate the special relationships that NATO has established with Russia and separately with the Ukraine. So there is clearly a need to revise and update this strategic concept.

What my amendment says very simply is that the United States will withhold consent to inviting any additional countries other than the three we are talking about here today—Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. We will not go forward with inviting any additional countries to join NATO until after NATO has approved this revised strategic concept.

This is simply a matter of understanding what NATO is doing before we agree to take in more members in addition to these three. NATO members need to decide on the alliance's mission before any new candidates or states are asked to join in the future.

I have great difficulty seeing why anyone would object to this. The reality is that the revised concept is expected to be completed even as soon as this summer. At the very latest it would be complete, as I understand it based on the statements by the NATO officials, before their meeting in 1999. So there is no attempt here to delay the invitation to other members in the future.

It simply says let's figure out what NATO is intended to do in this new post-cold-war world before we start inviting more people to join. Now, this doesn't strike me as a radical proposal. It is not radical from our point of view. It is certainly not radical from the point of view of potential new members. If I were representing a country that was considering admission to NATO I would be interested in what NATO's mission is, its new revised strategic concept is, before I would want to sign up. I think that is a reasonable thing for new members to want to know, and it is certainly reasonable for current members to want to settle on before we begin deciding which nations are appropriate new members and which are not. I think the amendment is very straightforward.

Let me make it crystal clear once more. It does not in any way relate to the enlargement of NATO to add Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. That is not part of my amendment. My amendment assumes we will go ahead with the enlargement of NATO that is presently proposed by the administration in this treaty. But it says we will not go beyond that. We will not invite

others until we settle on what this revised strategic concept is.

I have difficulty understanding, as I said, why this is objectionable. It seems to me imminently reasonable that this would be our position.

Let me make it crystal clear what I am doing. Let me read the one paragraph of the amendment into the record so it is clear what we are saying.

Prior to the date of deposit of the United States instrument of ratification, the President shall certify to the Senate that, until such time as the North Atlantic Council agrees on a revised strategic concept of NATO, it is the policy of the United States not to support the accession to the North Atlantic Treaty of, or the invitation to begin accession talks with any European state, other than Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

Basically, what we would be saying is the President needs to tell us that it is our policy, the U.S. Government policy, not to invite others to join until we get the strategic concept settled.

I hope very much my colleagues will support the amendment. To me, it is an imminently reasonable, common-sense approach and I hope we can add it to the treaty.

I yield the floor and reserve the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. I have great respect for the Senator from New Mexico. Much of what he says makes sense, but basically what is happening here is we are having a rerun of the Warner amendment. We are basically saying here that before any new members can come in, what has to happen is there has to be a new strategic concept agreed to.

Now, if I can make an analogy, that would be like saying my friend from Utah, the Presiding Officer, or of my friend from New Mexico, I am not certain what year their States came into the Union. The only claim to fame Delaware has is we are the very first State in the Union. I shouldn't say the only claim, one of the most notable claims. It would have been a little bit like Delaware, in the Thirteen Original Colonies, and the other States east of the Mississippi saying to you all out West, as long as the constitutional amendment for suffrage is under consideration to amend our document that controls our national affairs, no new States can come into the Union. Nobody is allowed in. As long as we are reconsidering—again, I don't know the years, and I apologize, when your States came into the Union. But as long as we are considering the 17th amendment, whether or not Senators are popularly elected, we are going to put on hold any new State becoming a member of the Union.

The 1991—and I don't have it with me—strategic concept was drafted by and agreed to by the 16-member nations after the Berlin Wall came down

and after the Soviet Union had disintegrated. The reason I bother to point that out, Mr. President, as my friend from New Hampshire kept saying yesterday—and appropriately—we have to look at the realities of the new world. This new strategic document took into consideration a new reality that there was no Soviet Union, there was no Warsaw Pact, there was a different world.

Now, what we said with the leadership of Senator KYL of Arizona yesterday, by a vote of 90–9, was the following. We said any new strategic concept that is to be agreed to in the future should accommodate the basic fundamental principles that we have adhered to thus far in NATO; and the Senator, with great skill, laid them out in specific form for all of us to see, incorporating the strategic notions that have underpinned NATO and the new reality.

So even though there is a consideration at the moment in NATO for an updated strategic concept, that could happen in a week, a year, a month, 5 years, or it could never be agreed to. And by an overwhelming vote in the Senate, 90 percent of us said, Mr. President, before you can agree to any new strategic concept, you have to make sure that what we have laid out here as the fundamental principles to guide that are incorporated in that concept. So I fully appreciate and believe that the Senator from New Mexico is concerned about strategic doctrine and is not using this amendment as a killer amendment to accomplish what Senator WARNER was unable to accomplish—that is, a de facto slowdown of any new admissions, an arbitrary judgment made that, without a new doctrine being consummated and another little blue and white book being published, no one can come in.

I further point out that the strategic concept of NATO is always under review, formally as well as informally. I assume the Senator's amendment speaks only to the formal review, the formal reconsideration of what that concept should be. Since 1991, NATO has changed internally with the creation of bodies such as the Partnership for Peace, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, NATO-Russian Founding Act, NATO Ukraine Commission, and a more distinct role for the European pillar of this operation has emerged. The European politico-military situation has also changed. There has been significant reduction in the conventional armed forces. Both Warsaw and the Soviet Union are dissolved. NATO subsequently decided, via the ministerial and summit statements, to invite new members. We are doing all these things that we are concerned about already. We sent out a glidepath and a guide book to the administration as to how they must proceed with the next one, and to say until that is all done, no new members, is another way of trying to do in a 15-minute debate what my friend from Virginia and the Senator

from Oregon and myself debated against for days.

So I respectfully suggest that our friend from Arizona has accommodated any concern about strategic doctrine with the amendment we overwhelmingly adopted, thereby clearing the way, and any justification for suggesting that the doctrine might change so radically that it might affect who we would be willing to bring in.

Mr. President, I reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, how much time remains of the 10 minutes that I had?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Three minutes 36 seconds.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, let me just make clear what I intend by this amendment and what I think the language of it says. As much as I like to think that the U.S. Senate is all powerful, we are, in NATO, only one of the members. NATO is an entire organization. The United States and the other members have set about to develop this revised strategic concept.

As I understand the history of this, in July of last year, in Madrid, there was agreed upon—NATO Ministers agreed at that time to develop a revised strategic concept, which would be presented to them in their planned summit of April of 1999.

What my amendment says is that until such time as the North Atlantic Council agrees on a revised strategic concept, whatever it is, for NATO, then we will not go ahead. At least the U.S. position is that we should not go ahead and participate in inviting new members. So I am talking about a very formal procedure here which is well underway. It was agreed to in July of last year in Madrid.

As I understand it, it is a three-stage process for conducting the review of the strategic concept. That three-stage process is well underway. There is no indication that I have seen that these deadlines will not be met. In fact, I have heard from people in the administration that they expect the revised strategic concept to be ready this summer, not in April of next year. So all I am saying is, let's figure out what NATO's purposes are and what its mission is before we take on additional members after we do these three.

So this is not an effort to delay, this is not an effort to postpone for 3 years, or 5 years, or indefinitely. I say, quite frankly, if we don't have agreement among the Council members, the Ministers of NATO, as to what the mission of NATO is, if we can't get agreement in the next period of time, then we should have it come back to us, and we ought to start thinking about how much more enlargement we want to do. That is the purpose of the amendment.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I will ask my friend a question on my time. What is the relevance of whether or not there is a new strategic concept as it relates to whether or not Austria is a new member of NATO? Are you suggesting

that if the 16 NATO members now agree—or 19 when we finish tonight—to a change in the strategic concept, that change might or might not influence whether we should let Austria in if they meet all other criteria?

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I assume that part of what is being considered in this review of the strategic concept is the role that nuclear weapons would play in the future of NATO, where those weapons might be stationed, what the policy of NATO would be in the use of weapons. All of these are factors that I think would be very important for new members to know before they apply for membership and would be important for us to know before we agree to expand and expand and expand. Every time a member comes into NATO, we are committing U.S. forces to defend that territory. I understand that. I think it is just appropriate that we have some caution in committing U.S. forces to defend more and more and more territory, and that is the purpose of the amendment—just to understand where we are before we keep moving ahead.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I appreciate the Senator's answer. The relevance is lost on me as to how that would affect who we would bring in or not. I understand the value of the strategic concept and why it is important that we should know it. These folks have already applied.

Let me point out one last thing. The Bingaman amendment would give sort of a pocket veto to further enlargement of certain countries. The French did not want the Slovenians in this time. But they didn't want to publicly say that they didn't want the Slovenians this time. This is my interpretation. And they said no Slovenians unless Romanians, because it is not very politic in Europe to say you don't want someone in directly. If I were the French or Germans or anyone else, I just don't agree to the new strategic concept. The present one works pretty well—en bloc membership.

I just think, Mr. President, this causal relationship being asserted between the strategic concept and new membership is tenuous. In changing the strategic concept, which we know has to follow the guide path of our friend from Arizona, we already know what it must contain for us to sign on to it. I just think it is totally unnecessary.

If the Senator is willing, and with the permission of the chairman, I am willing to yield back our time if there is any left, and move on, if my friend from New Mexico is willing to yield back his time.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, how much of the 10 minutes is still available?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico has 13 seconds.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I yield the 13 seconds. I still reserve the 5 minutes. Is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: My friend has kept 5 minutes prior to the vote. Is there any time in opposition prior to the vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. No.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be 5 minutes prior to the vote in opposition, if we choose to use it.

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

Mr. HELMS. Does the Senator want to ask for the yeas and nays?

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I will respond. I did not yet. But I at this time ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I ask that it be in order to propound a unanimous consent request regarding time for the next vote and the vote thereafter.

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

Mr. HELMS. I ask unanimous consent that the first vote to occur on the amendment No. 2320, the Conrad-Bingaman amendment, be a 15-minute vote; that the second vote on this pending amendment, the Bingaman No. 2324, be limited to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HELMS. Very well.

I suggest the absence of a quorum with the time being charged equally.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. 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. INHOFE. Mr. President, just to give others an indication as to where I am and where some of the others are with amendments, I do have an amendment. It will take some time to get through, and yet I have a very strong feeling I do not want to hold up the emergency supplemental. I just want to make sure to get that on record so everyone knows. I certainly would not object to taking up the emergency supplemental prior to completing the NATO expansion.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Will the Senator yield for a comment?

Mr. INHOFE. I yield.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Let me also agree with my colleague. I was somewhat surprised when the unanimous consent was offered, but I just want my colleagues to know I also have an amendment which is going to take a considerable amount of time, and I do not want to hold up Members, who may wish to leave, who need to vote or feel we should vote on the supplemental.

So let me echo the comments of the Senator from Oklahoma and indicate

that I am more than happy to agree to another UC to move the supplemental ahead of NATO if, in fact, it comes here in the near future.

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

I yield the floor.

Mr. HELMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I have examined the landscape, and it gets more complicated as the returns come in. Now we cannot vote until 7 o'clock, because several Senators are "far afield."

Then there is an agreement that was made without my knowledge—and nobody was required to get my knowledge, let alone consent—that the vote on the Bingaman amendment would not occur until the Ashcroft amendment was dealt with. So we are not going to be able to vote at 7 o'clock.

I ask unanimous consent that sharply at 7 o'clock the vote begin on amendment No. 2320, and then we will proceed from there.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Chair hears none, and it is so ordered.

Mr. HELMS. I thank the Chair.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded that I may speak on the ratification of NATO enlargement.

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, we shortly will be entering into the closing hours of this debate. I want to take this opportunity to offer some observations about the ratification and also why this is so important.

I would like to take a minute, though, to really congratulate the people of Israel on the 50th anniversary of the founding of that great state, and how special, unique, that we are debating NATO expansion and bringing Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO on the 50th anniversary of the founding of Israel. Forever and a day, I will always remember that we will have taken this vote at the same date of the anniversary of that state.

It will be important because, as we commemorate, soon, the 50th anniversary of NATO and the 50th anniversary of the founding of Israel, just like the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, as this century comes to an end, we will look at what came out of the end of World War II that created the institutions that will take us, hopefully, to a new century and a new millennium, where we will not repeat the despicable and inhumane practices of the old century, or ever again have to fight another war in Europe.

The Senate is about to take a historic vote and we are voting to make

Europe more stable and America more secure. We are voting for a safer world. This will be one of the most important votes I will cast. Voting for a treaty is, indeed, a very special obligation, reserved only for the U.S. Senate.

For those who have known me, they have known I have fought long and hard for Poland and other countries of Eastern Europe to become free and independent. I think about the dark days of martial law in Poland, when we worked to support the Solidarity movement in Poland. Since the end of the cold war, when the captive nations of Eastern Europe threw off the yoke of communism, I have yearned for this day. I have supported the aid that the American people so generously provided to help the people of Eastern Europe build free-market democracies. I have introduced legislation with former colleagues, Senator Brown of Colorado and Senator Simon of Illinois, to nudge our Government toward welcoming the newly freed countries into our Western institutions.

My passion for this issue, though, is based partly on my own personal history. Each ethnic group in America brings their own history to this country. My colleagues have heard me speak about Poland's history many times in the past, because I have never believed that America was a melting pot. I always believed that America was a mosaic. We each come with our history and our culture and become part of something bigger than ourselves. So I come with thousands of years of history behind me, in terms of my heritage.

The history of Poland has indeed been a melancholy one, because every king, kaiser, czar or comrade who ever wanted to have a war in Europe starts always, first, by invading Poland. It has been historically true for a thousand years, and it has certainly been true for the last 100 years. At the same time, Poland has always wanted to be part of the West in terms of its values and in terms of its orientation.

It felt so passionate about democracy that when we fought our own revolution it sent two of its finest heroes, Kosciuszko and Pulaski, to fight in the war for America's freedom. Pulaski came and was a brilliant soldier and led in the Battle of Savannah. Kosciuszko was a brilliant tactician and led in the founding and building of West Point and, at the same time, then, fought for the democracy and became a great friend of Jefferson. He returned to Poland to help the Polish people of that time establish the first constitutional monarchy in Europe.

Poland thought it would be free and have a constitutional monarchy, but that was not to happen. In the 19th century, Poland was divided into three parts, under Russia, Prussia, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and it remained that way. That is when my great-grandmother came to this country. She came, not because she just wanted to come and start a new life,

she came on a prearranged marriage, because she wanted to forever escape that kind of occupation.

This evening is not about history lessons, but Poland was occupied, partitioned, invaded in World War I, had a brief stint of democracy between World War I and World War II, only to be invaded by the Nazis in World War II and occupied.

For me, growing up as a Polish American in east Baltimore, I learned about the burning of Warsaw. I knew about the occupation of Poland by the Nazis. I have seen films of the occupation, in which the great cathedral had Nazi storm troopers in there, burning the statues of the Saints and our Dear Lord himself, with their weapons. I learned about the burning of Warsaw at the end of World War II, when the Germans burned it because of the Warsaw uprising. Soviet troops stood on the other side of the Vistula River and watched it burn.

Then we learned about the Katyn massacre, where Russians murdered more than 4,000 military officers and intellectuals in the Katyn Forest at the start of the Second World War, so there would not be an intellectual force in Poland, ever, to lead it to democracy. For 5 years our family hoped and prayed, hoping World War II would end, with my uncle serving in the military. And then, at end of the war only to see Potsdam and Yalta occur, where Poland was sold out. My great-grandmother had on her mantle, three pictures, one of Pius XII, one of my uncle who had become a member of the police force, and the other of Roosevelt, because she believed in the Democratic Party. After Potsdam and Yalta, she took the picture of Roosevelt and turned him face down, until the day she died.

Those were the kinds of stories that I grew up with, looking at Poland as part of the captive nation. Then suddenly, in August of 1980, an obscure electrician, working in the Gdansk Shipyard, jumped over a wall proclaiming the Solidarity movement. And when he jumped over that wall, he took the whole world with him, to continue the push in this part of the century to free Poland. And then the movement, also of dissidents, spread.

These are the kinds of stories. What I wear here today is a picture of the Blessed Mother of Czestochowa. She is the Patron Saint and Protectress of Poland. Members of the Solidarity movement wore exactly this emblem because they were forbidden under martial law to wear any symbol related to Solidarity. So they wore a religious symbol. I wear this symbol today because this, then, is the next step toward what we fought for in World War II, what dissidents in these countries have worked for—to create a democracy and a free-market economy, risking their lives, imprisoned, living under the boot of communism.

So now those are the kinds of things that we must grasp. This is a historic

moment, when three countries whose heart, soul, and political orientation is with us. So, I hope for those who worked so long and so hard, within Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, that we, then, understand the ratification of NATO enlargement.

Despite the importance of history, my support for NATO is based on the future. My support is based on what is best for our country. NATO enlargement will make Europe more stable and America more secure. It means the future generations of Americans, I believe, will not have to fight or die in Europe. It will make NATO stronger. It will make America stronger. And it will make Western civilization stronger.

Mr. President, I am only sorry my great-grandmother is not alive to see this, because when we vote to ratify this treaty, we will undo the historic tragedy that has often engulfed these nations and forever and ever, in the next century, ensure not only their protection but also ensure that despicable practices like the Holocaust will never again happen. That is what the 21st century is all about. That is why I will enthusiastically vote aye, when my name is called.

I yield the floor.

Mr. BIDEN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, for months and weeks and days, we have listened to the intellectual exchange, the foreign policy considerations, the financial impact and what effect what we are about to do will have on bilateral-multilateral relations of the United States with other nations. That gave a context for this debate.

My friend from Maryland showed us the soul of this debate. I am proud to have been on the floor to hear her at this moment make the statement she made. Not only is it historically accurate, but it reflects the wave of emotion that tens of millions of Americans of Polish descent are feeling at this moment.

I would like to say something that is going to make her very angry. I would like our colleagues to consider that when we get to 67—we are going to cast our votes from our seat; I don't know if it is possible; it has never been done before—I think she should have the honor of casting the 67th vote for this treaty. I don't know mechanically how to do that. But you have no idea how much this means to her. You have no idea how much this means to millions of people like my colleague from Maryland.

I don't know how to work this out, but I am going to try, with the Democratic and Republican staff, to figure out whether there is a way we can officially record that my friend from Maryland was the 67th vote cast to take care of a historic inequity that her grandmother brought as a burden to this country and she as a Senator will help end.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I say thank you. I will be happy to vote when my turn comes. Thank you.

Mr. LEAHY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the L's come before the M's. I will be very happy to withhold my vote when it comes time, if that helps to get the Senator from Maryland in that sequence.

Mr. President, the vote on the resolution to admit Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to NATO, as we have all said, is as important as any we have cast in many years.

The debate on this resolution has been gaining momentum for over the year. The issues have been discussed, not always in the depth or with the clarity that I would have liked, but I am not among those who feel that we have not had an opportunity to seriously consider this resolution. I only wish that we had had this week's debate a year ago, when the outcome of the vote was not a fait accompli.

I deeply respect many of the people on both sides of the issue. None more than Secretary of State Albright, an ardent proponent of NATO enlargement, with whom I spoke by telephone yesterday while she was in China. I yield to no member of this body in my admiration of her.

I also give great weight to the views of the former Senator from Georgia, Senator Nunn, and to my close friend Senator MOYNIHAN, whose thoughtful speeches on the subject I have read with keen interest. I have also appreciated the views of a number of Vermonters who have expertise in arms control and U.S.-Russian relations. There have been well-qualified and articulate Vermonters on both sides of the debate.

But despite that, I am no more convinced by the positions of either side than I was when the debate began. After everything that has been spoken and written, I remain profoundly troubled by this resolution, as I know many others are. It is not more debate that is needed, it is the ability to predict the future, which of course none of us can.

It is because the future is so unpredictable, and I am still not convinced on an issue of such historic importance, that I will vote against this resolution.

Mr. President, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has been the world's most powerful and successful military alliance. For half a century, NATO served as a deterrent to a Soviet invasion of Europe. It has helped to keep the peace in a region that has seen countless wars over the centuries, including two world wars in this century. When genocide erupted in Bosnia it was NATO, with, I might add, the help of Russian soldiers, that enforced the Dayton peace accords. The earlier failure of the United Nations in Bosnia is but one example of NATO's relevance today.

So I am not among those who believe that because the cold war is over NATO is no longer needed. Bosnia proved otherwise, and there are other threats to which NATO might be called upon to respond. One, although no one likes to contemplate it, is a Russia in which the democratic reformers are ousted by nationalists whose attitude is overtly hostile and aggressive toward the West. I do not see that happening, but it is possible.

Russia is in the midst of far-reaching changes. Much of what is happening there is encouraging, even remarkable. The old Soviet Union is gone forever, of that I have no doubt. But democracy remains extremely fragile, and some of what is happening in Russia is discouraging, even alarming.

Some things in Russia have not changed. It continues to possess thousands of nuclear weapons, and while we and the Russians are cooperating on a wide range of issues including arms control, no one knows what Russia will look like ten years or even ten months from now. More than anything else, to vote for this resolution one should feel confident that enlarging NATO will lead to a closer and more cooperative relationship between Russia and the West. There is no more important issue for the security of Europe and the United States.

Reaching the decision to oppose this resolution was extremely difficult. Over the past couple of months as the vote approached I have seen that, as in many debates, the issues are far from black and white. I finally settled on four questions. I decided that only if I could confidently answer each of them in the affirmative could I vote for what amounts to a fundamental reshaping of NATO. I discussed these questions with other Senators, with the Secretary of State, and with many others whose judgment and opinions I respect.

I asked myself whether admitting Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to NATO result in a more united and secure Europe?

Would it result in a stronger, more effective NATO?

Would it improve our relations with Russia, especially Russia's willingness to vigorously pursue deep reductions in nuclear weapons?

And would it result in benefits that justify substantial additional military costs to the United States and the new NATO members?

These are not novel questions. Any one of them could occupy hours or even days of debate. They have been discussed at length by members of this body, and by some of our most knowledgeable European and Russian scholars and analysts including former Secretaries of State and Defense. What has struck me as I have read and listened to their views is the certainty and conviction with which they express them. Perhaps that is the nature of advocacy, but I find it interesting nonetheless because their conclusions, on a subject of such immense importance to our future

security, are based on so much that is uncertain, indeed unknowable.

Mr. President, I began from the perspective that the presumption is against expanding NATO at this time. A rebuttable presumption, but NATO has served us well for over fifty years and we should be wary of any attempt to substantially alter its configuration.

That is not to say that NATO can or should remain static. Its mission does need to evolve with the changing times. But what is contemplated here, by voting to admit these three invitees and opening the door to further admissions in the future, amounts to a fundamental reshaping of NATO. Before we take that step I want to be convinced that the benefits of enlargement justify the risks and the cost.

Would enlargement result in a more united and secure Europe? More united, probably yes. But what if expansion does not extend to the republics of the former Soviet Union, or even to certain other Eastern European countries. Then we have simply created a new dividing line in Europe, and new rivalries between those inside NATO and those that are excluded.

Would enlargement result in a stronger, more effective NATO? Frankly, I have been disappointed with the direction and focus of NATO in recent years. At times I have felt it was adrift, and at no time more than when NATO sat on the sidelines as the United Nations floundered in Bosnia. NATO has redeemed itself there but not until many thousands of innocent people had died, including in so-called UN safe-havens. NATO should have acted sooner and with far more decisiveness.

The administration says that Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic accept the responsibilities of NATO membership and will contribute an additional 300,000 troops. Others argue that by adding new members we dilute NATO's effectiveness with poorly equipped, Soviet-trained forces. As Ambassador Paul Nitze has said, NATO would become "fat and feeble."

My own guess, and it is only a guess, is that NATO would probably not suffer, it might benefit from admitting these three invitees, but if additional countries are admitted next year or thereafter as most proponents of expansion anticipate, it would become unwieldy, even less decisive, and weakened.

My third question, and perhaps the most important, is whether enlargement would improve our relations with Russia, especially Russia's willingness to vigorously pursue deep reductions in nuclear weapons.

Mr. President, the administration asserts that NATO expansion will lead to improved relations between the West and Russia because it will result in a more stable and secure Europe, a more prosperous Europe, and a new relationship between Russia and the former Warsaw countries that is based on partnership.

I do not see the evidence to support such a rosy picture. But whether or not it is true, is a military alliance the best or only way to achieve that new relationship? I do not see why. The enlargement of NATO, no matter how benign, can only strengthen the hand of left and right-wing extremists in Russia, while undermining the position of the democrats we support.

On arms control, the administration offers a litany of examples of how Russia is continuing to engage and cooperate on a broad agenda of security issues. There is cooperation, most visibly in Bosnia where Russian and American soldiers are enforcing the Dayton accords side-by-side. There is talk of the Duma ratifying START II in the near future. There are other examples.

But it seems to me that the real question is how can we best take advantage—not of Russia's weakness—but of the opportunity for a fundamentally different relationship, an opportunity that comes rarely in history, and which is fortuitously presented by the transitional stage in which Russia finds itself today.

In World War I, Europe isolated and alienated a defeated Germany, and in so doing sowed the seeds for World War II. After that war, through the leadership of great Americans like General Marshall and President Truman, we embraced our former German enemies and in so doing fostered one of the world's strongest democracies. It would be unforgivable to repeat a mistake of such tragic proportions.

Do we build a closer relationship with Russia by enlarging a military alliance possibly to its very borders, an alliance that has served principally to deter Soviet aggression? The so-called "iron belt," as Senator WARNER has aptly called it? If Russia posed a serious military threat today I would see things differently. But the only serious military threat Russia poses is its arsenal of nuclear missiles, and I would argue that that threat is not diminished by expanding NATO eastward.

There is reason to suspect that NATO enlargement has already delayed DUMA ratification of START II, and that it has set back the cause for arms control in Russia. It has abandoned its "no-first-use" policy and, as its security situation deteriorates, Russia is headed toward greater reliance on nuclear weapons.

My point, Mr. President, is that while relations between Russia and the West are obviously far better than they were during the cold war, they are a far cry from what I believe they can and should be.

The Russians can be difficult to deal with. I am aware of that. They are obsessed with being treated as equals even though they are no longer a superpower. Russia in many respects is a poor, backward country. As we have seen in the recent spat with Latvia over Russian immigrants, Moscow is prone to reverting to its threatening, Cold War manner of dealing with its former territories.

But Russia is a big country. Big countries expect to exert a certain amount of power in their sphere of influence, and it will take time for Russia to recognize that those ways of acting are no longer acceptable.

No one knows who will follow President Yeltsin. Russia's future is too unpredictable for us to disband NATO, and in any event there are other important missions for NATO than to defend against Russian aggression. On that point I fully agree with the administration. I have lived most of my life in a world with NATO. I want future generations to benefit from this unmatched military alliance led by democratic nations. It serves us well.

But the United States should be doing everything possible to build a non-threatening, cooperative and stable relationship with Russia. Rather than rush to extend an historically anti-Russia alliance and build up the military capabilities of its neighbors—an approach that has undeniably caused great resentment and uneasiness in Russia, we should be building alliances that do not create new divisions between us.

Mr. President, my fourth question is whether enlargement would result in benefits that justify substantial additional military costs to the United States and the new NATO members.

One of the most troubling issues in this debate has been the cost projections. Estimates range from several hundred million dollars, which I find impossible to take seriously if these countries are to pull their own weight in NATO, to tens of billions of dollars. The administration's estimates have changed so many times that are virtually devoid of credibility.

As best I can tell, we only know that we do not know how much the admission of these three countries would cost, but that it would cost a lot and possibly a lot more than the administration says. When was the last time the Pentagon overestimated the cost of anything? I cannot recall a time.

Nor can I recall a time when we were asked to vote for something when the cost estimates differed so dramatically—from as little as \$400 million to as much as \$125 billion. That is a difference of over 300 times.

Nor do we know what it would cost to admit additional members after we cross this threshold. The President has said that "no qualified European democracy is ruled out as a future member." There are over twenty. That is a potentially huge investment and a bonanza for the arms manufacturers who are not surprisingly among NATO enlargement's greatest champions.

The last thing we want to encourage is for the newly admitted countries will go on a weapons buying spree when they should be spending their scarce resources on economic development and infrastructure.

What would NATO be with 22 new members? That may sound farfetched, but under the President's scenario it is

at least a plausible outcome and one we must consider before we start down the path of enlargement. I am afraid it would be a much weakened alliance, and one that Russia, rightly or wrongly, could quite reasonably regard as a threat.

And what commitments would we be making to those future members? President Clinton has said that NATO "enlargement requires that we extend to new members our alliance's most solemn security pledge, to treat an attack against one as an attack against all." That is what the NATO charter says, but it is far from obvious that the American people are ready to accept that commitment. Others speak vaguely of different types of missions. I have strongly supported international peacekeeping, but I am uneasy about the lack of specificity about what we are committing to here.

Mr. President, I do not doubt that Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic have every reason to want to be part of NATO. I also recognize that they have made tremendous progress in meeting the criteria set for NATO admission. But we must judge, above all, if enlarging NATO at this time in history is in the best interests of the United States—not Poland, not Hungary, not the Czech Republic, but the United States and NATO itself.

I have considered this resolution carefully, but I have been unable to satisfy myself that it is either necessary, or in our best interest. George Kennan, a man I admire greatly, called NATO expansion "the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post-cold-war era." I do not know if George Kennan is right. But neither am I confident that he is wrong. I am not prepared to gamble on his being wrong.

I hope that I am wrong. It appears that two-thirds of the Senate will vote for this resolution. I sincerely hope that the admission of new countries to NATO produces the desirable outcome the administration forecasts. If that happens I will be the first to admit that I was wrong, and to welcome that outcome.

As I said at the outset of my remarks, this has been a difficult decision for me. I obviously share the administration's goal of a united, secure and prosperous Europe. We all do. But I believe continued progress can be made to achieve that through Partnership for Peace and other means, without the risks and cost involved in enlarging NATO. Nothing, I am convinced, bears more directly on the future security of Europe and the United States than a democratic Russia that does not fear the West.

That should be our priority, that is what is at stake, and so the Senator from Vermont will oppose this resolution.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. HELMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, before we proceed to a vote, may I ask the distinguished Senator from Delaware, Mr. BIDEN, if he is satisfied now with TED STEVENS' amendment?

EXECUTIVE AMENDMENT NO. 2065, AS MODIFIED

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I am satisfied, and I will send to the desk, if I may, with the permission of the chairman, a modification that has been agreed to by Senator STEVENS and myself.

On behalf of Senator STEVENS, I ask that a modification to amendment No. 2065 be sent to the desk. This adds one word to the amendment which I have cleared with Senator STEVENS and with Chairman HELMS. I want to state my understanding about this amendment before we adopt it, which I have also cleared with the Senator from Alaska.

First, this amendment does not affect the Partnership for Peace Program.

Second, I understand this to mean that NATO cannot incur NATO expansion costs for which the United States would be obligated to pay except through NATO's common-funded budgets unless specifically authorized by law. And with those understandings, the amendment, as modified, is perfectly acceptable to me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is so modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

At the end of section 3(2) of the resolution, add the following:

(C) REQUIREMENT OF PAYMENT OUT OF FUNDS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED.—No cost incurred by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), other than through the common-funded budgets of NATO, in connection with the admission to membership, or participation, in NATO of any country that was not a member of NATO as of March 1, 1998, may be paid out of funds available to any department, agency, or other entity of the United States unless the funds are specifically authorized by law for that purpose.

Mr. BIDEN. I urge adoption of the amendment.

Mr. HELMS addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. HELMS. To keep the Record straight, that is No. 2066, as modified?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Amendment No. 2065, as modified.

Mr. BIDEN. Amendment 2065, as modified.

Mr. HELMS. Amendment 2065, as modified. Very well.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry. Do we need to vitiate the yeas and nays?

I move to vitiate the yeas and nays on the amendment.

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

Mr. BIDEN. I urge its adoption by voice.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is agreed to.

The executive amendment (No. 2065), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. HELMS. I think you have a UC, Mr. President.