

Evgeny Primakov (Foreign Minister) Memo to Gennady Seleznev (Speaker of the State Duma), "Materials on the Subject of NATO for Use in Conversations and Public Statements"

January 31, 1997

1. Our position with regard to NATO expansion remains invariably negative. We oppose these plans and especially the possibility of moving NATO's military infrastructure to the East.

The main reason for our negativism comes down to the fact that realization of these plans, objectively, regardless of whether anybody sets this goal or not, will lead to the establishment of new dividing lines in Europe, [and] deterioration of the entire geopolitical situation globally.

We cannot agree with the statements that behind these plans of expansion there is no intention to create alienation between the European states. [NATO] expansion will inevitably create such alienation if one takes into account the psychological, political and military aspects connected to it; [it] could lead to a slide into a new confrontation, and an undermining of trust between Russia and the Western States.

2. We consider the entire rationale of NATO expansion unconvincing. In 1990-1991, the leadership of Western countries assured us that NATO would not move "one inch" to the East, and that accepting new members from Central and Eastern Europe into the alliance was completely ruled out. A question arises—does today's Russia represent a greater threat than the Soviet Union did at the time?

We are talking about a decision, the consequences of which will define the European configuration for decades in the future. Politicians who are in power today will bear historic responsibility [for that].

Primakov

GARF Fond 10100, Opis 14, delo 89, p. 55.

Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya



National Security Archive,
Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University,
2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037,
Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, nsarchiv@gwu.edu