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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN  
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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

PLEASE STAFF

I THINK WE NEED TO DISCUSS  
HOW THE EUROPEANS FEEL ABOUT  
THIS AND WHY THEY ARE LIKELY  
TO DO

July 17, 1995

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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY LAKE

SUBJECT: European Security/NATO Enlargement Progress Report

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Rx

We are moving ahead on the study phase of NATO enlargement and are poised to make progress with Moscow on the NATO-Russian relationship. However, hardening Russian opposition to NATO enlargement, unease among some West Europeans and still-uncertain Congressional support pose a challenge to our policy. We will need to intensify our diplomatic and domestic activity this fall.

NATO Enlargement State-of-Play. The NATO study on enlargement's "how and why" is nearing completion and should be ready for presentation to interested partners this fall. In the run-up to the May Noordwijk NAC Ministerial, some Allies reacted to Russian criticisms of enlargement by suggesting that the Alliance slow the process. We successfully insisted NATO stick to the timetable agreed last year; Allies agreed that presentations will be completed well before the December NAC ministerial.

The study lays out in impressive detail principles to guide the integration of new members into NATO military structures and the political standards that aspirants need to meet. It identifies the Partnership for Peace (PFP) as a proving ground for Partners to demonstrate their interest in and eligibility for NATO membership as well as end in itself for partners not joining NATO. The study should reassure the Russians on stationing of nuclear and major conventional forces on new members' territory: NATO reserves the right to do so but sees no reason to undertake such deployments at present, particularly with respect to its nuclear posture.

As agreed at Noordwijk, Allies will consider next steps at the December NAC ministerial. No decisions have been taken either on enlargement's "who" and "when" or when to consider these crucial steps. The first half of 1996 will likely be taken up with refinement of the military aspects of enlargement and follow-on consultations with PFP partners on membership requirements. This deliberate pace is intended to reassure Russia that there will be

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By ✓ NARA, Date 9/10/2019

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cc: Vice President  
Chief of Staff

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no "hasty" enlargement and to deprive Russian nationalists of ammunition in advance of the June 1996 presidential election.

Establishing a NATO-Russia Relationship. In the meantime, in the wake of Russian agreement at Noordwijk to participate in PFP, NATO is pressing ahead with plans to develop a formalized NATO-Russia relationship in parallel with enlargement. Allies have agreed to negotiate a basic framework document with the Russians in time for the December ministerial. This would be the basis for a formal agreement, to be concluded later, establishing permanent NATO-Russian consultative bodies.

CEE Hopes and Anxieties. The prospect of security and integration into the West through NATO membership has strengthened reform throughout the region and boosted confidence the United States will remain in Europe. CEE governments appreciated your letter following the VE-Day Summit reaffirming our policy. They recognize that NATO, as it brings in new members, needs to formalize a constructive relationship with Russia. They are willing to wait for the first decisions on enlargement's "who" and "when" until after the Russian Presidential election, but expect decisions in 1996. Delay much beyond that point could bring on a crisis of confidence; some worry the West will slow or back away from its declared strategy in the face of strong Russian objections.

Intensifying Russian Opposition. Despite Yeltsin's agreement in May to join PFP and launch a "beyond PFP" process with NATO, opposition to NATO enlargement appears to be hardening across the political spectrum among the Russian political elite. Key Yeltsin advisors and members of the Duma argue that NATO enlargement and NATO-Russia cooperation are incompatible and are attacking Kozyrev for acquiescing in the West's agenda. Yeltsin has reportedly approved a set of "theses" by European Institute chief Karaganov laying out a strategy for delaying and possibly derailing NATO enlargement, including by sowing divisions within the Alliance and appealing to opponents in publics and parliaments. Yeltsin's national security advisor Ryurikov has reportedly set up a Kremlin committee to take charge of the issue from the foreign ministry.

Russian opposition to NATO enlargement is unlikely to yield in the near or medium term to some kind of grudging endorsement; Russia's opposition is deep and profound. For the period ahead, the Russian leadership will do its level best to derail our policy, given its conviction that any eastward expansion of NATO is at root antithetical to Russia's long-term interests. At the extreme, this could force us at some point during the second half of 1996 or the first half of 1997 to choose, at least implicitly, between the CEE and Russian legs of our current policy. Our

current policy -- the gradual and transparent enlargement of NATO coupled with the development of a substantial NATO-Russia relationship -- offers the best hope for avoiding this unpalatable choice, though we may nonetheless have to face it.

We thus should respond to the current Russian opposition by: a) steadiness in pursuit of gradual and transparent NATO enlargement, which may cause the Russians to reassess the efficacy of blanket opposition; and b) continued efforts to build a substantial NATO-Russia partnership that is of genuine value to Moscow (and NATO) in dealing with issues like nonproliferation and crisis management so that the Russians have a stake in remaining engaged by the time NATO takes in new members.

We do not seek Russian endorsement of NATO's enlargement in any case but simply a muted reaction in a context of broader cooperation. A key question is whether the Russians have learned lessons from earlier Soviet campaigns on European security issues (West German NATO membership, INF deployments). Strident campaigns only resulted in self-isolation until Moscow came around to accept the reality. (The immediate consequence, however, was a severe downturn in bilateral relations.)

Domestic Responses to Enlargement. European security/NATO enlargement has not yet emerged as a major domestic issue in the U.S. Congressional support is broad but thin. Euro-pundits have been active on both sides; some pressing for rapid enlargement, many urging a "go slow" or "no go" approach. Senator Nunn has argued that NATO enlargement should follow EU enlargement, -- probably 15 years away; he suggested that a faster pace would pose unacceptable risks of alienating Russia. Others have raised questions about enlargement's costs. (Given the modest short-term military threat, these are likely to be manageable. We will work to get rough cost estimates from Defense and State.)

The Road Ahead. We need to proceed on several fronts at once:

- **Domestically.** We need to be much more active both in explaining and in advocating our policy to Congress and the public. This fall we should launch high-level Congressional consultations, make our case in op-eds (Strobe Talbott has prepared a strong article for the *New York Review of Books*) and engage in more public speaking. *We may ask you to weigh in with Congressional leaders and to make a European security speech.*
- **NATO-Russia.** Our top priority is to craft a genuinely substantive NATO-Russia relationship with results visible through the Duma elections this fall and the Presidential elections next summer. At the same time, we need to

intensify our dialogue with the Russian elite, to challenge their outdated view of NATO, to convince them that our "parallel" strategy is designed to include, not isolate Russia and to apprise them of the probable costs to the bilateral relationship of any overt attempt to sabotage our policy. We also should launch an outreach program to the interested Russian public.

- **NATO Enlargement, CEE.** We will have to demonstrate steady progress in the enlargement process and in our bilateral military relations with key CEE countries, using 1996 to give aspirants the opportunity to implement reforms we believe necessary. This will carry us naturally into the fall of 1996.

*The December 1996 NAC will be the first occasion on which NATO could decide to invite one or more partners to begin accession talks. Alternatively, we could propose at some point in the second half of 1996 a spring 1997 NATO summit as the venue for the first "who" and "when" decisions. This should take place in parallel with comparable moves between NATO and Russia.*