

argue the case for NATO's double enlargement to the American people than it is for NATO's eastward enlargement alone. Americans understand that we have vital interests in Europe and they are willing to do their share to ensure that the new Europe which is emerging remains stable. They understand a strategy that posits that we and the Europeans are in this together and that we will work together to defend shared interests—both in Europe and beyond. What they will not understand is an arrangement where the United States is asked to do more in terms of extending new security guarantees, and more in terms of budgetary commitments, in order to extend stability to Europe's eastern half—and at the same time be expected to carry, more or less on its own, the responsibility for defending common Western interests outside of Europe.

RUSSIA

This brings us to a discussion of Russia. We all know how important Russia's future is for the future of European and international security. But where does Russia fit into the vision of the trans-Atlantic relationship I have laid out? My vision of the alliance does not depend on the existence or possible emergence of a new Russian threat in the East. We do not want an alliance whose vitality and success depends on failure in Russia. Instead, we want a Russia that will successfully reform—and whose success at reform make it a more interesting and useful strategic partner for the alliance.

The United States and Europe have an enormous stake in the success of the reform process in Russia. A stable and reformed Russia can be an active partner in maintaining security in Europe, in resolving regional conflicts, and in fighting the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We wish to establish a strategic partnership with Russia that takes account of Russia's position in Europe, a partnership that could and should, lead to formalized relationship with the alliance.

Russia's place, in my vision, is clear. I do not see Russia as a candidate member of the alliance. Russia is simply too big, too different. No member of the alliance today or in the foreseeable future would be willing to extend an article 5 guarantee to the Russo-Chinese border. And the Russians—unlike the East Europeans—are not really interested in assuming the obligations and responsibilities that NATO membership entails. At the same time, Russia will inevitably be more than a mere neighbor of this new and enlarged alliance. We hope it will become a partner, indeed a country with which we have a privileged partnership.

The NATO I envision is one which guarantees stability in Central Europe, a stability which is just as much in Russia's interest as our own. The Russians should realize that enlargement is not directed against anyone, certainly not against them. Stabilizing democracy in Eastern Europe does not

threaten democracy in Russia. Russia will be better off with Poland in NATO than outside of NATO. A Poland that is secure within NATO will be less anti-Russian and more interested in cooperation and bridge building. We cannot save reform in Russia by postponing or retarding reform in Eastern Europe.

The Alliance can and should have close strategic relations with Russia. NATO and Russia are allies in IFOR in Bosnia. We hope that this is not a one time affair but the start of a longer and more stable relationship. I hope to see the day when the border between an enlarged NATO and its Eastern neighbors, including Russia, are just as stable and secure as any others in Europe.

But it takes two to tango. Moscow has increasingly spoken out against enlargement, with some Russian commentators already bringing out their list of real or imagined countermeasures that they claim Moscow will have to take. Such talk is counterproductive.

I belong to those who not only supported NATO enlargement from the outset, but who believed that the Alliance should have moved sooner and more resolutely in enlarging. The Clinton administration, as well as the Alliance as a whole, opted for a slower approach than I would have preferred. And they did so in the hope that dealing with Moscow on the NATO enlargement issue would get easier over time as Russia came to understand the Alliance's true motivations.

But by now I think it is crystal clear that a policy of postponing key decisions has not made our lives easier. Some in Russia have misinterpreted Western patience as a sign of Alliance weakness and lack of resolve. Some Russians still believe that they can stop enlargement—and some of them are still tempted to try. As it has become increasingly clear that Russians do not support NATO enlargement, our policy increasingly looks to them like a kind of Chinese water torture. For several years, NATO has issued every couple of months a statement saying that it will enlarge, to which Moscow feels obliged to say that it opposes enlargement. When nothing happens, some observers in Moscow think that they have slowed or even stopped the NATO train.

It is too late now to go back and undo the policy decisions on timing. What is important now is that NATO not waver, that it stick to the agreed-upon timetable and move ahead with the initial decision on enlargement—irrespective of the outcome of the Russian elections.

CONCLUSIONS

Let me sum up.

There are many other factors that could yet shape the U.S. politics of NATO enlargement. If democratic reforms in the candidate states were to stall, the entire enlargement plan might be put on hold. It also makes

some difference whom the next President appoints to key posts such as Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense. Overall, however, while ratification of new NATO members faces many obstacles and pitfalls, there is little evidence for the claim that it is politically infeasible.

The real tragedy would be if the Senate, in successfully encouraging the administration through legislation to proceed with the inclusion of new members in the Alliance, jeopardized or neglected the development of a bipartisan consensus and public support necessary to secure the 67 votes it will take in the Senate to ratify NATO enlargement.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent that the previous consent agreement regarding controlled time be amended as follows: Senator COVERDELL, or his designee, be in control from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.; Senator DASCHLE, or his designee, be in control of 60 minutes.

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

Mr. LUGAR. I thank the Chair. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. 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. COVERDELL. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry, if I might. It is my understanding that the hour from 4 to 5 has been designated to myself or my designee, is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct. The time between 4 and 5 is to be under the control of the Senator from Georgia.

KEEPING CAMPAIGN PROMISES

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I am just going to make a very brief statement to begin this hour. I understand the Presiding Officer would like to comment. So if he will allow me, I will make an opening statement, and then I will relieve him in the Chair so that he might make the remarks he chooses.

Mr. President, I have always felt that there should be a relevance, a connection, a linkage between what a public policymaker contends or discusses in

the pursuit of office and what he or she does, if fortunate enough to achieve it. I think that much of the cynicism and anxiety that we have seen growing in our country can be tracked back to the failure of too many of us who seek public office relating what we said if we sought it to what we do if we achieve it.

I believe this administration is particularly vulnerable on at least three major subjects. The first one is taxes. This administration came to America and said, "We are going to lower taxes on the middle class." That is what was said. But what was done was that they were increased to unprecedented proportions.

We talked about and have heard the administration talk about its grave concern over drugs and crime, and drug abuse or drug usage, under this administration's watch, have skyrocketed to epidemic proportions. Just last week, there was a perfect example, where the President has said, "I am for a balanced budget," repeatedly, but stood foursquare in front of passage of the balanced budget amendment.

So, as I said, Mr. President—and I want to reiterate it here this afternoon—it is important that there be a linkage, a connection of relevance between what we say as we pursue public office and what we do if we are successful enough to achieve it.

Mr. President, I am going to relieve the Chair. I do not think I need to call for a quorum call. I will relieve the Chair so that he may make his comments.

(Mr. COVERDELL assumed the Chair.)

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I want to follow up on some of the comments that you were making.

A DIFFERENCE IN PRIORITIES

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, it is easy to campaign as a champion of the middle class. As you know, President Clinton did it in 1992, when he made the middle-class tax cut the centerpiece of his campaign. His very first television commercial that year featured the candidate looking directly into the camera and telling the voters that they deserve a change. "That is why I have offered a plan to get the economy moving again, starting with a middle-class tax cut," he said.

Of course, we all know what happened to that tax cut a year later. The candidate who pinned his campaign to the hopes and dreams of the middle class became the President who let the middle class down once he moved into the Oval Office. His campaign promise of a tax cut was transformed into a \$270 billion tax increase—the largest tax increase in American history. It was change, all right—but certainly not the kind of change the people had asked for or were promised.

Everyone who drives a motor vehicle knows what the President's 4.3-cent-per-gallon tax increase has done to

their annual gasoline bills—especially recently, with gas prices around the Nation at such high levels. By boosting the cost of gasoline by nearly \$5 billion every year, the gas tax has been particularly damaging for truckers, farmers, and anyone who lives in rural areas of the country.

Senior citizens, even those making as little as \$24,000 a year, saw their taxes rise as well once the President's 1993 tax bill increased the taxable portion of their Social Security benefits by 70 percent.

For the more than 80 percent of small business owners who file their income taxes as individuals, President Clinton's 1993 tax increase forced them to pay taxes at a rate as high as 44.5 percent. That is significantly above the corporate rate of 35 percent, and means the folks who run the local plumbing business or TV repair shops are paying taxes at a higher rate than Microsoft or General Motors.

Families, job providers, retirees, motorists—all of us felt the pinch when the President signed his 1993 tax bill into law.

Since President Clinton's election, the Government is taking more from the paychecks of middle-class Americans than it ever has before. The administration and the Democrats in Congress who voted for it and passed it say, but it was only targeted at the rich. But, today, the typical American family faces a total tax burden of 38 percent. In human costs, this means we taxpayers are turning more money over to the Government than we are spending for our family's food, clothing, shelter, and transportation combined. Tax freedom day—the day the American taxpayers are no longer working just to satisfy Uncle Sam and can begin keeping our dollars for ourselves and our families—has jumped ahead an entire week since President Clinton took office.

The various budget plans the President has submitted to Congress over the last year and a half paint a very different picture of priorities. The priorities for which BOB DOLE and our Congressional majority have repeatedly fought have been to protect families from the unreasonable demands of an unregulated Federal Government. The priorities of the President and the Democratic leadership have always been to protect the status-quo government, and too often, at the family's expense.

In his State of the Union Address in January, President Clinton boldly declared that "the era of big Government is over." "Big Government" presumably meant the high taxes that have squeezed the middle class—the gigantic bureaucracy that has made redtape synonymous with Washington inefficiency, and the wasteful spending that has drained the taxpayers of their precious dollars.

But big Government remained alive and well in the budget the President submitted for fiscal year 1997.

That budget was nothing more than the status quo the current administration continues to defend. It did not rein in the big spending that has generated our massive deficit and put our children and grandchildren on the line for decades of our financial mismanagement. It called for \$60 billion in tax increases over the next 7 years.

And where are the tax cuts the President has repeatedly promised American families? He offered nothing but token tax relief. His child tax credit began at just \$300 per child, was slowly ratcheted up to \$500, and then eliminated just 2 years later. By the way, teenagers were too old to qualify for that tax break.

Under the guidance of President Clinton and the Senate Democratic leadership, my colleagues across the aisle attempted to break the 1993 tax increase record when the President's budget came before this body in May. Had they prevailed, the amendments they offered during debate over the budget resolution, combined with the President's own tax mandates, would have amounted to another tax increase of \$295 billion, dwarfing the \$270 billion increase of 1993. Fortunately, the gentleman from Kansas has heard the demands of the American people in calling for fiscal restraint and relief from a crushing Federal tax burden, and under his leadership, we stood with the taxpayers in rejecting those attempts to further increase taxes on working-class families.

If the majority leader's balanced budget plan, with its \$245 billion in tax relief, had been signed into law instead of stopped with a Presidential veto last December, April 15 would have been very different for the millions of Americans who dread the annual arrival of tax day.

Let me describe the tax day that could have been under the Republican balanced budget plan.

A family sits down at the kitchen table to tackle their Federal tax return, but it is not with the sense of foreboding they usually feel this time of year. They have heard that when Congress and the President enacted a balanced budget, they created changes in the tax laws that are making a dramatic difference for middle-class families like theirs.

Because both parents have jobs—let us say one owns their own small business and the other works part time at a local hospital—the first decision they have always had to make in the past was whether to file jointly or as individuals. Back then, filing as a family always came at a cost because of a glitch in the tax code called the marriage penalty. Because the marriage penalty required joint filers to pay higher taxes than if they had filed separate returns, it seemed as though the Government was discouraging family life, instead of trying to nurture it.

But no longer, because they notice immediately under the balanced budget bill that Republicans passed, sent to