

That is what we want, an up-or-down vote. That is what we want on this issue.

Let's come out here. They are always saying: Let us have a vote. I want to have a vote on this. I would like to test this to see how many votes we can get. I think it is too bad we are going to be forced to try to get 60 votes. And I think, for the work that has been done on this issue, it is too bad.

But I hope with the time that goes by, that by next week people in these States will rise up and say: You better vote for this. I am not counting out, by one second, the fact that we can't get 60 votes. I think we can.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Nevada for not only his kind but encouraging words. You see, I agree with him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will please suspend.

Anyone else who wants to have a conversation, leave the floor. The Senator from Maryland has the floor.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Again, I know Senator BIDEN is bringing a very important NATO debate here, and I do not want to delay it.

What concerns me about our amendment is that we are not going to get an up-and-down vote. It is going to be hidden behind parliamentary procedures. We thank Senator NICKLES for coming and at least engaging in an honest set of questions with us. They were questions worthy of debate: How much does it cost? Is a 35-year-old eligible? All those questions.

But to have an empty Chamber, to threaten a filibuster, and not even come here and talk, and then, again, hide behind a filibuster, where we have to get cloture, and go through so many hoops, I think the discussion of trade is important, I think our amendment is a critical one, but let's have it, and get rid of all this hiding behind parliamentary maneuvers that require 60 votes.

So we really ask our colleagues who agree with us to come to the floor. And for those who don't, let's just have it out. We respect them. We respect their opinions. We think ours are the best. We hope we prevail. We think the Senate way, the American way is, let's just come and let the majority prevail and not need a supermajority to overcome a parliamentary obstacle. Let's have a majority vote on a policy issue.

I thank the Chair and look forward to continuing this conversation later on.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I thank both Senators.

I say to the majority whip, Senator REID, that the thing I like best about his comments—and I appreciated them all—is that I, too, think we can get to 60. That is now what we have to do be-

cause there is an effort to filibuster this bill. But we are going to do everything we can.

There are a lot of working families who are going to be heard from over the next several days. And that is what we are going to do. I appreciate so much what he said. We have the majority.

Now we have to deal with an effort to block this with a filibuster. There will be more debate and more discussion. Believe me, this is going to go on for some time.

I know we are going to move on to other important legislation for tonight.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

COMMENDING THE PRESIDING OFFICER

Mr. REID. I would just comment, I appreciate very much your presiding. You have done such a great job upon coming to the Senate and presiding. You make sure that the Senate has the dignity that it is supposed to have. And I know you were taught by Senator BYRD. And he is the best teacher we have for Senate procedures.

I personally appreciate your action taken just a few minutes ago. And everyone should understand, the Senator from Minnesota is bipartisan in keeping this place quiet. Whether it is a Democratic Senator or a Republican Senator, Republican staff member or Democratic staff member, you treat them equally. I appreciate that very much. And I speak for all Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, now that the debate has concluded—and under the previous order, it indicates that when the last vote occurred, we would move to the NATO matter—I ask the Chair to call it up.

GERALD B.H. SOLOMON FREEDOM CONSOLIDATION ACT OF 2001

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 282, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3167) to endorse the vision of further enlargement of the NATO Alliance articulated by President George W. Bush on June 15, 2001, and by former President William J. Clinton on October 22, 1996, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call that I will suggest in just a moment not be charged against the bill. There is 2½ hours. It is not to be charged.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. AKAKA). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, may I ask what the business before the Senate is?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is H.R. 3167.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to support H.R. 3167, the Gerald B.H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001. This bill adds Slovakia to the countries eligible to receive assistance under the NATO Participation Act of 1994 and authorizes a total of \$55.5 million in foreign military financing under the Arms Export Control Act to seven countries—Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, and Romania.

This bill is a symbolic one. It authorizes funds that have already been appropriated, repackages them in order to highlight the ongoing process of NATO enlargement. Symbolism, however, in this case matters. Millions of central Europeans and east Europeans, and millions of Americans of central and eastern European descent, will welcome this restatement of NATO's so-called open-door policy—the policy of the Clinton administration and which had been continued by the current Bush administration.

At the end of March, Prime Ministers and Presidents of all the NATO candidate countries, plus several leaders from current alliance members, met in Bucharest, Romania, to discuss the next round of NATO enlargement. Deputy Secretary of State Armitage led a high-level U.S. delegation to the meeting, which was characterized by a spirit of cooperation among the aspirant countries, many of which had been ancient rivals, which itself validated the process of enlargement, in my view.

Parenthetically—I note that I have said before—even if the expansion of NATO in the last round did not materially impact upon the capacity of NATO and security of Europe, it did one incredibly important thing: Each of the aspirant countries, in order to be admitted to NATO, had to settle serious border disputes that existed; had to make sure their militaries were under civilian control; had to make sure they dealt with, in some cases, decades-old open sores within their society in order to demonstrate that they were part of the values, as well as the capacity, of NATO; that they shared the values of the West.

I would argue that much of this would not have happened were it not for the aspirant countries seeking so desperately to become part of NATO. I think that, in and of itself, would be rationale enough to move. Much more than that has occurred.

Four years ago, I had the honor of floor managing the resolution of ratification of an amendment to the Washington Treaty of 1949 whereby Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic were admitted to membership in NATO. On the night of April 30, 1998, in a dramatic rollcall vote in this Chamber,

the resolution passed by a vote of 80 to 19.

In November of this year, there will be an important NATO summit meeting in the ancient Czech capital of Prague. Several fundamental issues will be on the agenda in Prague, among them charting a new course for the alliance in the aftermath of September 11 and the antiterrorist campaign in Afghanistan, a qualitatively new relationship between NATO and Russia and a new round of enlargement of NATO.

Last spring, NATO publicly declared that there would be no "zero option" for enlargement at Prague. Translated from diplo-speak, this means the alliance anticipates there will be at least one candidate country qualified for membership at Prague, and that country, and probably others, will be extended an invitation to join NATO.

I have stated many times, including in the last round, that Slovenia has been qualified for NATO membership for several years and should have been invited to join the alliance as early as at the 1997 Madrid summit or at least at the 1999 Washington summit.

My strong suspicion is that several other countries will be judged qualified for membership as well, but naming names at this time I think would be premature. Later this year, the alliance will evaluate how well each candidate country has fulfilled its so-called membership action plan and, equally important, will judge the strength of its democratic institutions and society. By late summer, the list of qualified aspirant countries should become much clearer than it is today.

Meanwhile, this legislation wisely authorizes military assistance to all seven of the candidate countries generally judged to be in the running at this time and thereby sidesteps the pitfall of prematurely designating those to be invited.

It seems to me this is not the time for lengthy debate on the merits of the next round of NATO enlargement. There will be ample opportunity for a thorough debate after candidates have been invited and their credentials submitted for ratification to the parliaments of the current 19 members of the alliance, including us.

The rationale for enlargement, in my view, remains as valid as it was 4 years ago when this body overwhelmingly ratified the entry of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. NATO enlargement significantly furthers the process of moving the zone of stability eastward in Europe, thereby hastening the day when the continent will be truly whole and free.

The three new members of NATO have made major contributions to the alliance campaigns in Bosnia and Kosovo and lately in the war against terrorism. Contrary to occasional sensational articles in the press, they are loyal, democratic allies contributing to the security of the North Atlantic area.

Finally, NATO enlargement, contrary to the gloomy predictions of

some pundits and some Members of this body, has not worsened our ties with Russia.

A man I admire as much as any and with whom I served in the Senate, the distinguished former Senator from the State of New York, Patrick Moynihan—I hardly disagree with him on foreign policy. The one time we had a serious discussion and debate was on this issue. He was opposed to NATO enlargement. The basis for his rationale for being opposed to enlargement was that this would significantly damage bilateral relations with Russia at the time we needed to nurture that relationship.

I argue—not that I was right—that the end result in 2002, after enlargement—I am not saying because of enlargement—the relationship between the United States and Russia is better than it was before enlargement, and it is as good as it has been since the last czar was in control in Russia. We have a leader in Russia now, who, for his own reasons—and I am not offering him as a Jeffersonian Democrat—is leading his nation to an open democracy. I suggest that not since Peter the Great has any Russian leader looked as far west as this man has and cast his lot with the West as much as he has.

The predictions of doom and gloom relative to the relationship, for whatever reasons, have not turned out to be true. On the contrary, earlier this week, on May 14 at the NATO ministerial meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, the alliance and Russia put their relationship on an unprecedented cooperative basis for creating a new NATO-Russia Council to deal with a variety of security issues.

The Bush administration strongly supports this Freedom Consolidation Act. In a joint letter to me on May 7, Secretary of State Powell and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld wrote that the bill would "reinforce our nation's commitment to the achievement of freedom, peace, and security in Europe . . . [and] would greatly enhance our ability to work with aspirant countries as they prepare to join with NATO and work with us to meet the 21st century's threats to our common security."

Mr. President, I have no doubt that sometime next year this body will ratify the further enlargement of NATO by an overwhelming vote. For now, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for the Freedom Consolidation Act as a symbolic gesture to support this so-called open-door policy that has served the alliance and this country so well.

As I said, there will be time for us to debate whether or not the aspirant countries that are picked in Prague should or should not be the ones that are picked. I am sure we will have some disagreement in this Chamber about that. This is not to pick winners and losers. This is picking the aspirant countries that are known to everyone to have the most reasonable prospect of being issued an invitation to better

situate themselves in meeting the criteria to be offered that membership.

I look forward to discussion on this issue. I do not know there is all that much to discuss right now, but I look forward to discussion of this issue and to being in the Chamber with my two friends who are here to hopefully usher in a new round of members in the NATO enlargement scheme that will take place later in the year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator WARNER is recognized.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I have under my control as one in opposition to this measure how much time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 90 minutes.

Mr. WARNER. And my colleagues have an equal amount, I presume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They began with 60 minutes.

Mr. BIDEN. If the Senator will yield, how much time does the Senator from Delaware have under his control?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware has 49 minutes remaining.

Mr. BIDEN. If the Senator will continue to yield for just a moment, unless responding to questions, I do not plan on taking any more time. I am happy to yield the remainder of the time to Senator LUGAR and other Senators. I am told Senator DURBIN and others may want to speak.

For the information of my colleagues, I do not plan, other than responding to questions if my good friend from Virginia has any, on using any more time. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I thank the Presiding Officer.

Mr. President, I have notified several colleagues who have expressed an interest in utilizing some of the time in opposition. I wish to enter into a colloquy. I must say, in my years in the Senate, I do not know of anyone I enjoy having a colloquy with more than my great friend from Delaware. I hope he does not disappoint us tonight, but just a little rise in temperature at some point as we go along.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I am sure my temperature will not rise as long as my good friend from Virginia continues to be the gentleman he always is.

Mr. WARNER. I thank my colleague. I see my other dear friend from Indiana. There is no one in this Senate whom I admire more than my dear friend. I regret we have some differences on this issue.

First, I ask unanimous consent to print in this RECORD a letter addressed to me from Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, jointly signed by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, in which they support, on behalf of the President, the measure before the Senate.

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

MAY 7, 2002.

Hon. JOHN W. WARNER,
Committee on Armed Services,
U.S. Senate.

DEAR SENATOR WARNER: The Administration strongly supports S. 1572, the Freedom Consolidation Act. This bill, which reinforces the efforts of European democracies preparing themselves for the responsibilities of NATO membership, will enhance U.S. national security and advance vital American interests in a strengthened and enlarged Alliance.

Speaking in Warsaw last June, President Bush said that "Yalta did not ratify a natural divide, it divided a living civilization." From the day the Iron Curtain descended across Europe, our consistent bipartisan committee has been to overcome this division and build a Europe whole, free, and at peace. The 1997 Alliance decision to admit Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic brought us a step closer to this vision.

Later this year at NATO's Summit in Prague, we will have an opportunity to take a further historic step: to welcome those of Europe's democracies, that are ready and able to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security, into the strongest Alliance the world has known. As the President said in Warsaw, "As we plan the Prague Summit, we should not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom."

We believe that this bill, which builds on previous Congressional acts supportive of enlargement, would reinforce our nation's commitment to the achievement of freedom, peace, and security in Europe. Passage of the Freedom Consolidation Act would greatly enhance our ability to work with aspirant countries as they prepare to join with NATO and work with us to meet the 21st century's threats to our common security.

We hope we can count on your support for this bill, and look forward to working closely with you in the months ahead as we prepare to make historic decisions at Prague.

Sincerely,

DONALD H. RUMSFELD,
Secretary of Defense.
COLIN L. POWELL,
Secretary of State.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, if I can get my colleague's attention, this debate we are having tonight arose because last fall in December, as our Chamber was quite properly moving towards closing down—the Christmas season was upon us—I discovered we were about to authorize \$55.5 million to seven nations without a moment's debate.

The time was not there to have that debate. So I objected.

I do not object to the money proceeding to these seven nations. I have supported it in years before. I support the flow of money. My concern, I say to my colleague from Delaware, is the rhetoric in which that money is wrapped in this resolution.

Mr. BIDEN. Excuse me?

Mr. WARNER. The rhetoric, the verbiage, that is in the House measure. We are about to adopt the House measure, if my understanding is correct.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I believe that is correct.

Mr. WARNER. It is in honor of a very valued former colleague of the Congress whom I respect. All of that to one side, I believe the rhetoric as written and as framed could send the wrong

message. That is the sole reason I am here tonight, because if we were to separate the money from the rhetoric, or portions of the rhetoric—and this, of course, is not open to amendment—I would be voting with the Senator. So it is the verbiage that surrounds this.

I will ask my friend from Delaware a question or two. I am not entirely sure, procedurally, what it is we are going to achieve by this vote because the money has already been appropriated. Even though the Senator from Virginia stopped the authorization, as we know that does not necessarily stop the appropriators. I share a good laugh with my colleague because they are a law unto themselves.

This magnificent Senate is predicated on the rules that we have the authorizing committee, of which my colleague from Delaware is the chairman—I am the ranking on the Armed Services Committee—and we authorize. The appropriators then agree or disagree with regard to the amounts of money, but in this case, as they have done in others, they went ahead and appropriated the funds. So in a sense, we are talking about a hollow victory tonight, but I direct my attention, once again, to the rhetoric.

My friend from Delaware said the open-door policy, but I go to the letter from the Secretaries of State and Defense which says the following:

Later this year at the NATO summit in Prague we will have an opportunity to take a further historic step to welcome those of Europe's democracies that are ready and able to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security into the strongest alliance the world has ever known.

I agree with that. I am not opposed to any further enlargement, but I do not subscribe to this concept of open door. I say to the distinguished chairman, at what point does the Senate have the opportunity to make an assessment as to what each of these countries bring, so to speak, to the table? How well prepared are they?

What we are doing is saying to the American taxpayer, and we are saying to the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States, an attack against one is an attack against all. Such new members as we may admit, what do they bring to the table to participate in, first, deterring an attack, and then, if necessary, repelling that attack? Do they bring sufficient to hold their own, or is there going to be an increased dependency, I say to my two good friends, on the American military?

In Kosovo, over 70 percent of the airlift was U.S. Approximately 50 percent of the combat missions in bringing ordnance from air to ground were U.S. Now, that is disproportionate. At another time—I am not going to belabor this tonight, but if one looks at the NATO budgets, they are not all increasing, as our President is increasing, by 44-plus billion dollars, a bill for the American taxpayers, our budget, to strengthen our military.

I say to my colleagues, they cannot point out one single NATO country that proportionately is increasing their military budget as great as ours. So my question to my friend—he used the phrase "open-door policy," but I presume he subscribes to what is in the Secretary's letter; namely, "that are ready and able to contribute to security." Am I correct in that analysis?

Mr. BIDEN. If the Senator will yield for me to answer, the answer is: The Senator is correct in his analysis as it relates to what the Secretary said.

Let me speak to the first question, as I understood the specific question: When will the Senate get an opportunity to ascertain whether or not the countries chosen to be invited to become members of NATO are worthy of invitation and membership, and to answer indirectly the question, able to contribute to our mutual security?

The answer is: We will do that at the time of the ratification debate. In the meantime, as my friend pointed out, the money has already been appropriated. The money is already going to these aspirant countries. I think it should have gone by the authorization process, and then the appropriations process. That is why I was smiling.

We share a similar fate in armed services and foreign relations, more in foreign relations, quite frankly, than armed services, where the appropriators move in the absence of our moving.

Let me be more specific. I argue that, even if not a single state that was, in fact, the recipient of any of this money, was invited to join NATO, it is in our interest that the money goes because the money is going for those aspirant countries to meet criteria we have set out, that we believe to be in the U.S. interest. It is in the U.S. interest that every one of the militaries in aspirant countries is under civilian control. It is in the U.S. interest that they have participatory democracies. It is in the U.S. interest they have no border disputes with their neighbors. It is also in the European interest.

So even if not a single aspirant country meets the criteria that must be met, as cited by the Senator from Virginia quoting the Secretary of Defense, it is money well spent.

The second reason we are doing this now is that it is important, in my view, to continue to display to these European aspirants that we are serious about considering them. What I do not want to see happen is us saying, well, we know only one of you are going to get in, and the other six say, well, what am I doing this for? Why am I making this effort? Why am I engaged in this? I want them to know we are serious about this. So even though the money is going forward, you say, well, they already know we are serious. We have already sent the money. It is being spent; it is being used. This authorization—which is putting, as my grandpop used to say, the sleigh before the horse—demonstrates to these folks that, if and

when the President of the United States and NATO pick aspirants to join and the President sends the treaty up for amendment to the Senate, we are serious about it as well.

This is not a game. This is not a game in our separation of powers—most countries do not have the same system as we have. We confuse people a little bit because they have a parliamentary system. We have an executive branch and a legislative branch and never the twain shall meet, and constitutionally you have to get both of our approval. Notwithstanding the fact that the President may say we want to see Slovakia or Slovenia or whomever to join NATO, that is not good enough. It has to have a supermajority of the Senate saying yes as well. This legislation is an authorization after the fact.

I promise there is not a single solitary ambassador representing any one of the countries who does not have C-SPAN on now listening to us. They know it doesn't mean much now. This is not going to resolve anything tonight, tomorrow, or next month, until the meeting in Prague, and it may not resolve anything then.

This is to send the signal that we are serious, we mean it. You go out and do the things that are necessary to meet the criteria set out by the President, and the additional requirements, and we will seriously consider you. We are in the game with the President.

The third point is the issue of whether or not these aspirant countries, if invited by 19 members of NATO to become a member of NATO, the question is, will they contribute to the security of the United States of America? Or will they be, as my friend implies or states—I don't want to put words in his mouth—a drag on our military?

He cites Kosovo. It is true what my friend cites about the percentage of the airlift, the percentage of the air missions, the percentage of the munitions used, et cetera. But I also point out only 10 percent of those forces that remain in Kosovo are American forces. Mr. President, 85 percent are European and other willing nations there, keeping the peace. And I might add that if we do something too well, it is taken for granted and we forget what we did in the first place.

I remind my friend that before we got into Kosovo, before we went to Bosnia, there were over a quarter million people killed, women and children. There were close to half a million people in the hills, freezing in the middle of the winter and we worried about them freezing. Every European capital was on edge worrying about immigration flows. It started this xenophobia about minority portions of the populations of Germany, France, and other countries.

It is in our interest that there be a stable Europe. It is in our interest that a LePen is not getting 50 percent of the vote instead of 15 percent of the vote. It is in our interest that the skinheads in Germany do not become a morph of

the neo-Nazi organizations that impact German policy. They have not. But I believe had another million people flowed out of the Balkans into those capitals, it would have further destabilized the political circumstance.

It is true that no nation, none of our NATO allies, have kept their commitment to expand their military capability as we have. None have. He is absolutely right. Where does our interest lie?

A number of our colleagues very much want to see us move into Iraq. It would be very useful if Bulgaria were part of NATO. We don't have to worry about overflight rights. They are part of NATO. We do not have to worry about a little thing like we worry about with our fickle Saudi friends as to whether they allow us to use an airbase we built for them and their protection. So I argue when we were trying to deal with this situation in Kosovo, Hungary became a valued ally.

The issue for me is not so much that I think any aspirant country is going to be able to be the one man for a U.S. Air Force stealth aircraft moving on a precision-guided mission against an enemy. That will not happen. If the measure is, can they keep up with our technological capability, the answer is that none of the countries will ever qualify. I might add that some of our greatest and oldest allies may not qualify.

Conversely, though, if the measure is, does their membership in NATO lend an additional capacity that impacts positively on U.S. interests, and they pay their way, then the answer to that question is, yes, they should be a part of NATO. That is a debate I am sure my friend and I will have when the President of the United States, if he does, comes back from Prague and says, I am sending up to Senator WARNER and company an amendment to the Washington treaty asking for the following—1, or 7, or whatever—nations to become part of NATO. He will because he is so diligent and so knowledgeable about the U.S. military and military matters. I know him too well. And he should do this. We are lucky to have someone who will have the ability to do this.

And then we will debate whether or not they warrant membership. What does Slovenia bring? What does so and so bring? That is the moment when that debate will take place.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WARNER. I say to my good friend, and then I hope our good colleague from Indiana will join, I can see that day. It will be beautifully embossed, a document on every desk. Do you think the Senate in that period of time, in that debate, will turn down one of those countries?

That is the flaw in this process which eventually I will point out in my direct statement. We are going to be handed a fait accompli. We will not have had the opportunity, unless your committee or mine—and I shall press in my com-

mittee—have some advance hearings on the likely nominee countries and using the criteria in the Secretary of State's letter "ready and able to contribute to security."

That is what we should be doing, not waiting until that resolution comes up. That is an obligation. We have so much invested in NATO. It is a treaty that has worked beyond expectation. I remember on the 50th anniversary engaging in that marvelous debate we had in the Senate, extolling the virtues of this treaty.

What I am trying to do is to preserve it so it remains strong and any nation that comes in is able, willing, and ready to pick up its share of the load and carry it and not be dependent, as we saw in Kosovo, upon the good old USA, its service persons, and its taxpayers.

Some Members around here with gray hair remember things. Do you remember the Libya operation? Did we get overflights of NATO countries in that operation? Go back and check it, Senator. Go back and check. NATO did not open its airspace for that operation. It was a vital operation at that time.

Do not say to this Chamber that by virtue of a nation joining NATO it will automatically open the skies, automatically open its borders. No, it will be the individual nations that make a decision. That Libya raid is the case in point.

I invite our colleagues, tell me, is it a fait accompli that we will be handed in November all the panoply, the ceremony, and this Chamber will get up and reject the Nation? I don't think it will happen that way.

Mr. BIDEN. Let me respond briefly and then yield to my friend from Indiana or whoever seeks the floor.

What I think we should be straight about here—I am not implying in any way the Senator from Virginia is not being straight—is that there is a growing school of thought that reflects the underlying view of my friend from Virginia—and, I might add, is made up of some of the most seasoned Members of the Senate, some of whom are World War II veterans, men who have been strongly supportive of NATO in the past and of our military—who basically do not think NATO is worth much anymore.

The fact of the matter is, the indictment that the Senator paints is equally applicable to Britain, Germany, Spain, Italy—every NATO nation. Not the new guys. It was the old guys who did not let us have the overflight, remember?

Mr. WARNER. Yes.

Mr. BIDEN. The new guys are so gung ho being part of NATO, they would probably decide to give each of us citizenship if we asked for it. I am not at all worried about the new guys. I am worried about the old guys.

We should have a debate someday on the floor, unrelated to expansion, about the utility of NATO because, in

truth, many in the Defense Department and many—some on this floor—think we are misallocating our resources to NATO, period; unrelated to Kosovo, unrelated to anything else.

So I call everyone's attention to the subtext in this debate that really doesn't relate to new members. It relates to whether NATO has outlived its usefulness and whether we should be spending billions of dollars on NATO without any new members. It is a legitimate debate. I think it is dead wrong, but I think it is a legitimate debate.

With regard to the issue of whether there is a *fait accompli* when an embossed document ends up on our desk, I might point out that my friend from Virginia had no difficulty with an embossed document that was the single most important treaty in the minds of our NATO allies—no difficulty rejecting it. It was called the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. It did not slow you up a beat.

Mr. WARNER. Not only didn't it slow me up, it was our committee, not your committee, that held the hearings that adduced the facts and brought them to the floor of the Senate which resulted in the rejection of that treaty. Our committee did that work.

Mr. BIDEN. That may be. We can argue about that.

Mr. WARNER. It is a fact.

Mr. BIDEN. I don't doubt that. You were wrong then, you are wrong now. But that is irrelevant.

The point is this. I was responding to a specific assertion. The Senator said: How will this body ever reject something that is put on our desk that is embossed, that has worldwide publicity, that the whole world is looking at, that all of our European friends are seeing? How could we ever reject anything like that?

I point out that we have done that. We have no problem rejecting things in this place that we don't think we should do. I might add that we had multiple hearings in my committee—I don't remember, but I suspect also in my friend's committee, the Armed Services Committee. We had more than a dozen hearings before we voted on expansion, on whether or not the aspirant countries were qualified.

Some of us, I think including the Senator from Virginia, traveled to the aspirant countries, sat down with their leadership, sat down with their chiefs of staff, sat down with their military and parliamentary leaders, and looked at their books—literally, not figuratively.

I know I spent, with my colleague Dr. Haltzel, about 7 days doing that in the aspirant countries: Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. I spent that time as my other colleagues did.

So I have no worry that we are going to have time. I am responding to the point made by the Senator, which is: Hey, look, this is a *fait accompli*. We are getting set up here. You guys

passed this; you authorized this in addition to the money already going. What is going to happen here is we are going to come bouncing along and on December 9, or next January 14, or whatever date, we are going to have an embossed treaty, and it is going to be done, and there is not going to be any real debate, and it is going to be all over.

I would say the past is prologue. The Foreign Relations Committee published a 550-page report on the last round of NATO enlargement. It contained the transcript of the hearings, a lengthy report on the trip that I took to Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, and many other reports. I do not remember—I do not want to state something I am not certain of—but I think the Armed Services Committee had hearings as well.

So there is going to be no doubt there will be hearings. If the Senator, in Armed Services—if they want to hold hearings, I think that is a fine thing; no problem. I think it is premature now to hold those hearings. We had 7 days of debate on the floor the last time on NATO enlargement.

I understand the concern of the Senator that we are going to, in effect, be presented with a *fait accompli*. Maybe his real worry is it is a *fait accompli* because he is a Republican and a Republican President would be submitting this. But I tell you, we Democrats are going to have no problem. We didn't have any problem with the last guy who submitted it, and my Republican friends had no problem when the last guy submitted it, a Democrat. I think it is an unfounded worry. If I believed the Senator was correct and the Senate is going to be put in a position of rubber-stamping or walking away, I would say you are right, Senator. But I see nothing from the past NATO enlargement round we went through, and I do not anticipate anything in this round, that will preclude a thorough investigation giving all 100 Members of the Senate and the American public an opportunity to make their own judgments about it, whether or not to accept the President's recommendation.

When I say President's recommendation, if he doesn't sign on in Prague to the expansion, then there is no expansion. All 18 other nations can sign on, it doesn't matter. If he says no—no. Done. Finished. So that is what I mean when I say the President's recommendation.

I have no doubt we are going to have an opportunity to fully explore this. My guess is—I make a prediction, which is a dangerous thing to do. The bulk of the debate on this floor will be why wasn't so-and-so included, as opposed to why did you include such-and-such country.

But that remains to be seen. The bottom line is—and I will yield the floor to whomever seeks it—the bottom line is that we will have plenty of opportunity to debate whether or not the named countries—if there are any

named countries, and there will be, I believe—whether they warrant the supermajority of the Senate to say: Yes, you are now a member of NATO because you met all the criteria and including the paragraph read from the Secretary of Defense's letter.

I further state that the criticisms we can debate in other contexts that the Senator from Virginia raises about NATO aspirants are equally applicable to the original NATO members—that is a different story.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, just a short comment and then I hope others will engage in the debate.

If the Senators from Delaware and Indiana would be willing to just strip out a lot of rhetoric which causes me a problem—because I think for those who do not follow the key debate that we are having, and this is a good debate—I would simply say I would voice vote the authorization for this money and let's get on with it. But just take out this rhetoric which gives rise to expectations in all of these countries. That is my concern. It gives rise to it. Implicitly it says, by the Senate voting on this tomorrow: Oh, the Senate has now said this rhetoric is correct, that all nations should be this, and all nations desiring it—I think it can be misconstrued and misinterpreted.

If you want the money, sever the rhetoric and I will voice vote it tonight.

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, we have the votes to win this anyway, notwithstanding the fact I truly appreciate the Senator's generous offer. I would be happy to try to accommodate him if I could. You cannot amend this.

Mr. WARNER. That is by unanimous consent. We could amend it tomorrow.

Mr. BIDEN. The idea of us getting unanimous consent—he can seek unanimous consent. I imagine there are enough people—I don't think that is possible.

The bottom line is I understand the Senator. I do not have the same concerns with any of the rhetoric. The rhetoric of George Bush:

[a]ll of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between, should have the same chance for security and freedom—and the same chance to join the institutions of Europe—as Europe's old democracies have . . . I believe in NATO membership for all of Europe's democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibilities that NATO brings . . . [a]s we plan to enlarge NATO, no nation should be used as a pawn in the agenda of others . . . [w]e will not trade away the fate of free European peoples . . . [n]o more Munichs . . . [n]o more Yaltas . . . [a]s we plan the Prague Summit, we should not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom.

That is the most shining rhetoric in here. I am not prepared to support the withdrawal of the President's rhetoric from this legislation.

Mr. WARNER. Then I ask a question of my friend. I realize you have the votes. It is going to stay in, but at

least I make the gesture. But I say to my friend, other than the money, which I agree should flow, has flowed, been appropriated, to what does this bill commit the United States and the Congress?

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, it does not commit the United States and Congress to anything, except it communicates—

Mr. WARNER. That is an important statement, Mr. President.

Mr. BIDEN. It communicates to all of the European aspirants that if they meet the requirements in the eyes of the Senate, and if they are recommended by our President, we will seriously consider their admission to NATO. We, the U.S. Senate, if they meet what each of us individually thinks is the minimum criteria or the maximum criteria, we take it seriously. This is not just a gesture of sending you money to help you move toward democratization to modernize your military. We, like the President, mean it.

So if the Senator does not agree with—and I understand—the statement by President Bush, which I happen to agree with, which I fully respect, then he should not support this. I happen to agree with President Bush and the other, as the Senator says, “rhetoric” in this piece of legislation.

So all it commits the United States to is to say the same thing President Bush said: We believe that all of Europe should be open and free, and that we will consider NATO membership for all European democracies that seek it and are ready to seek the responsibility NATO brings. That is what it commits us to, and that is why I support this.

I thank my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I say, then, Mr. President, the purpose for my initiating this debate has been accomplished. I respect my President. I largely agree with him. But you have now stated your views, and I hope my colleague from Indiana will join you.

Beyond the authorization of these funds, this document does not commit us—this Senate, this Congress—to anything beyond the authorization of specific amounts of dollars. It is simply a statement with regard to the future.

I also received the assurances from my colleague that this body, through its committee hearings, and otherwise, will eventually be able to look at each country individually and their criteria by which eventually they can be judged as to become members or not.

I thank my colleague from Delaware.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Virginia for the questions as well as the conclusions. I would simply succinctly join my colleague, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, in saying that S. 1572, the legislation before

us now, endorses the continued enlargement of the NATO alliance and assists potential members in meeting membership criteria. Very clearly, that leaves open the question of whether they meet the criteria, and who is selected, and when that occurs.

But the President of the United States, in his Warsaw speech, talked about enlargement. He talked about it, but he gave a grand vision. That was important.

Mr. President, before I commence my statement, I ask unanimous consent that Senator COCHRAN be added as a co-sponsor of S. 1572.

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

The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001 because I believe this legislation makes important contributions to the future of European security and trans-Atlantic relations by endorsing the continued enlargement of the NATO alliance and assisting potential members in meeting membership criteria.

Last year, President George Bush delivered a visionary speech in Warsaw Poland on NATO's future. He noted that “all of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between, should have the same chance for security and freedom.”

He went on to say that he believed “. . . in NATO memberships for all of Europe's democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibilities that NATO brings.” And he concluded that “we should not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom.”

Some believe the United States-European relationship should be diminished. I can hardly imagine a more strategically shortsighted or dangerous policy shift by the United States or Europe. Such arguments ignore a basic fact: Europe and America are increasingly intertwined in security, economic, and cultural matters. The cold war may be over, but the security and welfare of America and Europe are closely linked. Our common goal must be to complete the building of a Europe whole and free in strong alliance with the United States of America. Now is not the time to discuss withdrawal. Now is the time to strengthen the NATO alliance. This legislation—the Freedom Consolidation Act—makes important and encouraging strides in that direction.

The last round of enlargement was a tremendous first step. The lines of Yalta have begun to recede. Central Europe is not only free but safe. And now, 10 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, it is time to finish the job and make Europe whole and free. It is my belief that the continued enlargement of NATO is the best means to achieve this goal. President Bush has laid out such a vision and has committed the United States to its implementation.

I might add that a reason we are debating this issue at this late hour on a Thursday evening is that the President of the United States very much wants to have this legislation as he goes to a historic summit with President Putin of Russia and as he proceeds on to visits with European allies.

The President has not only given a visionary speech in Warsaw, he is about to embark upon an extraordinary trip on behalf of our security and our foreign policy. He has asked us to consider this legislation, and to pass it enthusiastically, to join our colleagues in the House in that endorsement.

Continued enlargement provides an opportunity for NATO to be proactive in shaping a stable security framework in Europe. Potential NATO membership has given countries the incentive to accelerate reforms, to peacefully settle disputes, and to increase cooperation. These hopes have been a tremendous driving force of democratization and peace. Those nations who have made the most progress should be rewarded with an invitation to join NATO. Such a move will ensure that NATO's aspirations will continue to spur reform and purge cold war ideologies and dividing lines.

While maintaining NATO's high standards, we should invite those nations ready to assume membership responsibilities and contribute to European stability and security to be a part of NATO.

If countries such as Slovenia and Slovakia stay the course, they would be among the strongest candidates. Given the importance of stabilizing southern Europe, I also believe we should invite Bulgaria and Romania. I am hopeful they will continue their remarkable progress and become strong members of the alliance.

The defining issue will be the Baltic States, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. They are among the great success stories of Europe's post-Communist transition. Their illegal annexation by the former Soviet Union 60 years ago should not determine Western policy today. If the Baltic States continue to perform and meet our standards, we should bring them in, all of them, at the Prague summit.

I have addressed that issue, at least to give my personal views as a Senator, for the last year. I felt it was important, as the Senator from Virginia has pointed out in this debate, for us to consider individually each of these countries, to initiate that debate a long time before the Prague summit or even before the trip our President is to take to visit with President Putin.

As the distinguished chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee has pointed out, he has made a number of trips to Europe to visit not only with the aspirants in the first round of NATO enlargement but with the current group. I went to Europe last September for a similar purpose. I made it a point to visit each of the Baltic

States to meet with the leadership of those countries, with their military people, as well as their diplomats, and continued on to Romania and Bulgaria for an equally interesting and important visit to enlarge my own understanding of where they stood, what they were doing, what kind of criteria they understood membership required.

I visited the NATO headquarters in Brussels in January at the invitation of our Ambassador Burns to address a NATO workshop which included 10 aspiring countries in a roundtable discussion. Of those 10, I have identified 7 that I believe are logical candidates if they fulfill the criteria. But that is a rigorous course. Ambassador Burns, on behalf of this country, has visited each of the countries that I have mentioned recently. He has gone through a rigorous outline of what our anticipations would be. This is not a free ride for any country, and meeting those criteria will take some doing in each of the seven cases that I have cited.

This legislation does not make that decision, even if this Senator and others have come to some conclusions about the merits of various countries. That is a debate still ahead of us. I would simply counsel my friends who are interested in this issue and all who have spoken this evening to continue visitation of the countries, to continue encouragement of meeting the criteria, to show interest on behalf of the United States in these countries. Those are the steps we ought to be taking presently, and they will lead to a formal and, I hope, a wise decision, long before there is a final Prague summit and our President makes a commitment, at least of his own resources, on behalf of the United States.

NATO's open-door policy toward new members, as established in article 10 of the Washington treaty, is truly fundamental. To retract it would risk undermining the tremendous gains that have been made across the region. The result of a closed-door policy would be the creation of new dividing lines across Europe. Those nations outside might become disillusioned and insecure and thus inclined to adopt the competitive and destabilizing security positions of Europe's past.

NATO's decision to enlarge in stages recognizes that not all new applicants are equally ready or equally willing to be security allies, and some states may never be ready. But the maintenance of the open door to future membership will continue to be a powerful motivating force in Europe.

NATO has launched a new initiative to expand cooperation and consultation with Russia. From my perspective, NATO enlargement need not be a zero-sum game. One can be a strong supporter of NATO enlargement and of a new United States-Russian strategic partnership, as I am. We need to continue to invest in the promotion of the security and the stability of Russia and the other newly independent states, and it is in the interest of both NATO

and Russia for a democratic Russia to emerge and to regularize its cooperation with the alliance.

For this reason, I support the Bush administration's efforts to draw Russia closer to NATO, to deal with mutual security concerns in reciprocal fashion, and to support Russia's consolidation of a nonimperialist, peaceful democracy.

If NATO is to continue to be an effective organization meeting the security needs of its members, it must play a central role in addressing the major security challenges of our time, which in my judgment are the war on terrorism and the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction.

That will require NATO to change, and in a very large way. But the alliance has demonstrated in the past that with U.S. leadership, it has the capacity to adapt to new challenges. We must take the next logical step in a world in which terrorist "Article V" attacks on our countries can be planned in Germany, financed in Asia, and carried out in the United States. Under these circumstances, old distinctions between "in" and "out of area" have become meaningless. If Article V threats to our security can come from beyond Europe, NATO must be able to act beyond Europe to meet them.

If we cannot organize ourselves to meet this new threat, we will have given the terrorists a huge advantage. There is nothing they would like more than to see Western democracies divided on this key issue. We are now cooperating closely with our European allies. While we don't publicize it for understandable reasons, the security cooperation, the intelligence sharing is unprecedented. Today there are more Europeans on the ground in Afghanistan than Americans. It is Europe, not America, that is going to foot much of the bill for Afghan reconstruction. In those areas, Europeans have been exceptional allies.

But I have a sober understanding of where we differ with our allies and the hurdles we need to overcome if we are going to succeed. The Europeans have neglected their defenses. While I detect a growing willingness to try to remedy that, it is not going to be easy so long as their economies are in recession. It would be a historic mistake to let this opportunity to forge a new transatlantic understanding slip through our fingers. America is at war. The threat we face is global and existential. We need allies and coalitions to confront it effectively, and NATO is our premiere military alliance. Therefore, NATO enlargement should be pursued as part of a broader strategic dialog aimed at establishing common transatlantic approaches to meet the key strategic challenges in Europe and around the globe.

Fifty years ago, NATO's founders made a political decision that the United States and Europe needed a common strategy to meet common threats. Today we need to make a simi-

lar commitment with our allies to complete the vision of a united, free Europe, and to defend our common values and interests in Europe and beyond.

President Bush and his administration placed a continued NATO enlargement at the core of the transatlantic agenda. I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD a letter sent to leaders of the Senate from Secretary of State Colin Powell and Secretary of Defense Don Rumsfeld.

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

MAY 7, 2002.

Hon. JESSE HELMS,
Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate.

DEAR SENATOR HELMS: The Administration strongly supports S. 1572, the Freedom Consolidation Act. This bill, which reinforces the efforts of European democracies preparing themselves for the responsibilities of NATO membership, will enhance U.S. national security and advance vital American interests in a strengthened and enlarged Alliance.

Speaking in Warsaw last June, President Bush said that "Yalta did not ratify a natural divide, it divided a living civilization." From the day the Iron Curtain descended across Europe, our consistent bipartisan commitment has been to overcome this division and build a Europe whole, free, and at peace. The 1997 Alliance decision to admit Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic brought us a step closer to this vision.

Later this year at NATO's Summit in Prague, we will have an opportunity to take a further historic step: to welcome those of Europe's democracies, that are ready and able to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security, into the strongest Alliance the world has known. As the President said in Warsaw, "As we plan the Prague Summit, we should not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom."

We believe that this bill, which builds on previous Congressional acts supportive of enlargement, would reinforce our nation's commitment to the achievement of freedom, peace, and security in Europe. Passage of the Freedom Consolidation Act would greatly enhance our ability to work with aspirant countries as they prepare to join with NATO and work with us to meet the 21st century's threats to our common security.

We hope we can count on your support for this bill, and look forward to working closely with you in the months ahead as we prepare to make historic decisions at Prague.

Sincerely,

DONALD H. RUMSFELD,
Secretary of Defense.
COLIN L. POWELL,
Secretary of State.

Mr. LUGAR. They write, in part, Mr. President:

We believe that this bill, which builds on previous congressional acts supportive of enlargement, would reinforce our Nation's commitment to the achievement of freedom, peace, and security in Europe. Passage of the Freedom Consolidation Act would greatly enhance our ability to work with aspirant countries as they prepare to join with NATO and work with us to meet the 21st century's threat to our common security.

We must seize this unprecedented opportunity to expand the zone of peace and security to all of Europe. It is time

to finish the job and the next step in passage of this important legislation is to act, and to act promptly.

Mr. President, I note the presence of the distinguished Senator from Ohio.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Indiana for his courtesy. I am pleased to have opportunity to speak today on behalf of the Freedom Consolidation Act.

I have long supported expansion of the NATO alliance to include Europe's new democracies, and I believe this piece of legislation sends an important signal to countries aspiring to join the alliance. The U.S. Senate supports the process of enlargement that began in Madrid in 1997, and believes NATO should remain open to Europe's new democracies able to accept the responsibilities that come with membership in the alliance.

During the cold war, as a public official in the State of Ohio, I remained a strong supporter of the captive nations, who were for so many years denied the right of self-determination by the former Soviet Union. That strong support of the captive nations was generated back in my youth. As a matter of fact, the first paper that I wrote in undergraduate school at Ohio University was about how the United States sold out Yugoslavia at Tehran and Yalta. That grieved me, and I wondered whether those nations would ever have the self-determination that they were promised.

When I was mayor of Cleveland during the 1980s, we celebrated the independence days of the captive nations at city hall—flying their flags, singing their songs, and praying that one day those countries would know the freedom that we enjoy in the United States.

In August of 1991, as communism's grip loosened, I wrote a letter to then-President George H.W. Bush urging him to recognize the independence of the Baltic nations. Now these countries are among those being considered for membership in the NATO alliance. I know the President remembers last year when we were in Vilnius, Lithuania, on the square before 2,000 Lithuanians. I could not help but think back 15 years and being at the Lithuanian hall of Our Lady of Perpetual Help and wondering if the Lithuania people would ever enjoy freedom. There they were before us, and I had tears rolling out of my eyes. They wanted to join NATO.

Last month, I had the opportunity to meet with representatives with ties to NATO-aspirant countries at a meeting organized by the Embassy of the Slovak Republic and cosponsored by the Polish American Congress, strong supporters of the Solidarity movement in Poland and great advocates of Poland becoming a member of NATO. The meeting included individuals from nine aspirant countries, including Albania,

Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, and Slovakia, as well as Croatia, which was formally invited to join the NATO accession process at the NATO ministerial meeting this week. Representatives from the Czech and Hungarian communities were also there, who were also in favor of continued expansion of the alliance.

They came together to promote the merits of enlargement as a single, unified group, and to deliver the message that NATO expansion is in the best interest of the United States of America, Europe, and the broader international community of democracies.

The spirit of that meeting I think is encapsulated in this bill; it does not divide; it does not endorse one candidate country over another; rather, it encourages emerging Central and Eastern European democracies to continue reforms to promote democracy, the rule of law, the merits of free market economies, respect for human rights, and military reform. These values are the hallmark of the NATO alliance. And I can tell you that the progress that we have seen in those countries toward the issues I have just enunciated would not have been as aggressive if it wasn't involved in their trying to prove to the other NATO members that they were worthy of membership in NATO.

I strongly support that message, and I share the sentiments expressed by President Bush in remarks he delivered in Poland last June, when he was at the NATO summit in Prague. He said:

We should not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom.

When NATO heads of state join in Prague this November for the summit of the alliance, three primary items will fill their agenda: First, discussion about capabilities and the future of the alliance; next, the selection of new members; and, finally, new relationships with Russia, Ukraine, and other members of the international community.

As the Senator from Indiana said, without a doubt, the events of September 11 have dramatically impacted the conversations that will take place in Prague. As the United States and other members of NATO consider each of these issues, it is within the broader context of a changed world post-9-11.

This reality was seen this week when Secretary of State Colin Powell joined his NATO colleagues for a NATO ministerial meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland. New threats facing the alliance in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks against the U.S. influenced discussions on Russia, as NATO foreign ministers reached a historic agreement on a new NATO-Russian Council, and they certainly influenced conversations about the urgent need to address the growing capabilities gap between the United States and our European allies, which I am sure the Senator from Virginia is very much concerned about.

They also influenced discussions on NATO enlargement, as the foreign ministers reaffirmed their support of the alliance at Prague.

Although there are, without a doubt, a number of pressing questions that the alliance must begin to answer, I believe NATO enlargement is still a high priority because of its importance to U.S. national security and peace in the world.

I strongly support a statement made by Under Secretary of State Mark Grossman in his testimony before the Foreign Relations Committee earlier this month, when he said:

The events of the September 11 show us that the more allies we have, the better off we are going to be; the more allies we have to prosecute the war on terrorism, the better off we are going to be. And if we are going to meet these new threats to our security, we need to build the broadest and strongest coalition possible of countries that share our values and are able to act effectively with us. With freedom under attack, we must demonstrate our resolve to do as much as we can to advance our cause.

Since September 11, the United States and NATO have called on members of the international community to provide critical assistance in a number of areas outside of the traditional military realm. While these do not outweigh the need for improved defense capabilities, such as strategic airlift capabilities and improved communication systems, they are nonetheless critical to thwarting future terrorist attacks.

We have seen the benefit of these contributions as the international community continues to engage in a global campaign against terrorism. The nine NATO aspirant countries, as well as Croatia, have reached out to the United States in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. They have pledged their solidarity, volunteered their resources, and shared intelligence information with the United States and NATO. They have decided to not act as aspirants, but as allies, and their strong support is highly important. Senator LUGAR, in his remarks, pointed out how much help they have given us so far.

As significant as this cooperation has been, the work is not done. It is critical that countries aspiring to join the alliance continue their efforts to make progress in areas outlined in the membership action plan—developing free market economies, promoting democracy and the rule of law, respecting the rights of minorities, implementing military reforms, and committing resources to their defense budgets, just as we are doing.

I have made it clear to all of these countries that are seeking membership in NATO that it is the MAP, the membership application plan—we are going to watch what you do, and there is not going to be any automatic entry into NATO; you are going to have to prove you are worthy and show us through your actions and also in your ability to use a good portion of your budget and invest it in defense.

As a Member of Congress who has long been involved with transatlantic issues, I understand the importance of NATO expansion to strengthening security and stability in Europe. I supported the enlargement of the alliance in 1997, and I will again support enlargement at Prague. I believe NATO should be open to further expansion in the future.

There are probably very few Members of this body who have visited all of the NATO aspirants. I have, with the exception of Slovakia. I have been impressed with what they are doing. I will visit Slovakia, Macedonia, and Slovenia after attending the National Assembly meeting in Bulgaria later this month.

Last year Senator DURBIN and I visited Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and were impressed with the commitment they were making to qualify themselves as members of NATO.

I remember before we attended the OSE meeting in Paris we visited with General Ralston in Normandy, and he spoke eloquently about what he had seen when he visited the Baltic countries, with heavy emphasis on communications, the BaltNet they put in place, which he said was better than countries that already belonged to NATO, and then being in Slovenia 2 years ago and seeing the communication system they put in place.

I will never forget General Kronkaitis, a former U.S. Army General who is now the adviser to the Lithuanian army, and how he really made me very proud of how he had inculcated the spirit that he received from being a member of our U.S. military.

I strongly support and believe NATO expansion demonstrates our country's commitment to freedom and democracy in the global arena, and I will continue to promote expansion of the alliance to include Europe's new democracies which demonstrate the ability to handle the responsibility of NATO membership.

Ronald Reagan used to talk about trust but verify. Although we have entered into some new negotiations with President Putin and Russia, my history makes me a little bit uneasy. One of the thoughts I had is that now that these countries, which I so longed to have freedom, have freedom, we verify they will continue to have freedom.

In other words, they have their self-determination, they have freedom, but the only thing that will make me comfortable before I am taken to some other place is that we verify this trustful relationship we have with Russia.

Mr. President, the only way I think we can verify that relationship is to make sure these democracies become part of NATO. That will assure me that the big boot of someone will not again step on those nations that have been through so much during the last century.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important legislation which makes clear the Senate's strong

support for NATO enlargement in Prague this November.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I commend my good friend from Ohio. He has a very clear understanding through many long years of travel experience and, indeed, his proud heritage. In many debates we have had in this Chamber, particularly with regard to the Baltics, he has brought an important perspective, and I commend him.

I am glad the Senator spoke with reference to Russia. I join with my colleague from Indiana. I hope our President is able to make further progress with President Putin. They made good progress to date. I am supportive of the arms control initiatives that will soon be brought to this Chamber. Ronald Reagan's credo, "trust but verify," we should all follow.

I remember, I say to my colleagues, by coincidence I was visiting with Secretary of Defense Cohen, our former colleague, in NATO, sitting in the council room of the North Atlantic Council when for the first time a Russian marshal walked in and was seated those many years ago, and they started a relationship with Russia. Does my colleague remember that? I also remember there came a time when Russia abdicated that relationship and walked away from it.

I support the initiatives by the President, but let's be mindful of the past.

I wish to say to my good friends in the Chamber of the Senate tonight, I seem to be the sole vote of the conscience that I worry about this expansion. If we were to admit nine nations, I say to my dear friend from Ohio, nine nations—and that is what this document basically says. It sort of endorses, to use Senator LUGAR's word, this document we are about to adopt tomorrow morning endorses—does my colleague realize that if all nine go in, that will be 28 nations, give a nation or two; that is just about double the original size of NATO.

I am heartened by this debate because we have succeeded in this debate tonight to establish, No. 1, that the Senate will have the facts before it is to act intelligently at such time—I say intelligently, I also mean being well informed to make an intelligent decision about the facts of each of the aspirant countries before we hand them a final document as submitted by our President.

I say to my good friend from Delaware, in his earlier debate he said: We will have a chance to act. The President will send up a list of nations, and I was proud to do it last time. I remind the Senator, that will be too late for the Senate to act in an informed way.

If we examine the record tomorrow of this very fine debate, we will see he now recognizes that we need time, as does the Senator from Indiana, and both Senators committed to bringing the Senate through a hearing process

on the facts on which to make a judgment.

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, will the Senator from Virginia yield for a question?

Mr. WARNER. I yield.

Mr. VOINOVICH. From what the Senator from Virginia just said, is it his understanding that if this bill passes tomorrow, that means we are automatically going to—

Mr. WARNER. No, and I am glad the Senator has raised that point. It was drawn up very skillfully in the House of Representatives, picking selective quotes from our great President, whom I support, but those of us in the Chamber recognize, and as I have elicited from the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and as agreed upon by my distinguished friend from Indiana, the ranking member, this document commits us to nothing more than the authorization of specific amounts of dollars to the nations that are aspiring to join. That is all it is. But as it is reproduced and sent across the ocean to Europe and printed in the papers, I think people can say: Oh, the Senate has now acted; not maybe in finality, but we are one step closer before we have the facts before the body.

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. WARNER. Yes.

Mr. VOINOVICH. I must tell the Senator that my support does not guarantee I will support all nine of those countries coming in because we are going to distinguish between those that are qualified and not qualified. As I mentioned in my remarks, I made it very clear to the leaders of these aspirant countries that they cannot take for granted that they are going to be admitted into NATO unless they comply with the requirements of the membership application plan.

I was with the President last Friday and discussed this issue with him. He made it very clear to me that in spite of the fact he has made some very strong statements about NATO expansion, he has made it very clear to those aspirant countries, to their Prime Ministers and Presidents, that they had to meet the requirements.

I want to make it clear, no one should assume from my vote on this and I hope a lot of others, that this is a layup shot and all these countries are going to be coming into NATO because they have a long way for that to happen.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I draw to my colleagues' attention, "this act may be cited as the Gerald B. H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001."

What is freedom consolidation? I am not sure. That is what concerns me. There are a number of phrases in here carefully elicited from speeches, documents by our President and others, which portray—I know one of my great loves in life is to paint a little bit. It is like a montage. It is rather pretty. It is like a great painting, but if you look at

it from afar you might say, "We hear that we're in."

I am glad tonight the distinguished Senators from Ohio, Indiana, and Delaware have made it very clear in response to my questions, this document upon which we are about to vote tomorrow does nothing more than authorize sums of money.

Mr. LUGAR. May I respond to the distinguished Senator on that point?

Mr. WARNER. Yes.

Mr. LUGAR. I think the Senator is correct. I add that the actual authorization of money will go to seven of the nine countries.

Mr. WARNER. Yes.

Mr. LUGAR. The Senator is correct that the MAP program refers to nine, and therefore vigilantly we are looking at those criteria. I would further offer my assurance that I plan to work with the distinguished chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee so that hearings will elicit from the administration what the findings have been from this MAP program, and that will have some bearing upon the vote of the Senator for various individuals.

My purpose in giving speeches early on this issue—and the distinguished Senator has likewise been doing this—was to make sure the debate was of a better quality than the last time around, when in fact at the summit some decisions were made in what otherwise would be called international horse trading. Granted, criteria had been met, and a lot of debate had occurred, but in fact we are ahead of the game, as we ought to be.

I respect the Senator's questions to make certain we are vigilant in getting the facts and evaluating these countries closely.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for those comments.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I strongly support this bill, but at the outset I want to make clear what this bill does and does not do.

This bill makes a clear and unequivocal statement endorsing further enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and it authorizes assistance to aspirant countries.

The bill does not choose which countries will be asked to join NATO in Prague in November, nor does it pre-judge the vote in the Senate when the treaty changes that includes new members comes before the Senate for its advice and consent.

We want to pass this bill today to make a strong statement prior to the President's trip to Europe that the Senate welcomes another round of enlargement to include those countries that are ready to accept the responsibilities of membership.

Many nations aspire to join NATO including Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Croatia, and Albania. It will be up to NATO to decide which countries have met the criteria of democratic governance and military preparedness.

I want to focus my remarks on the Baltic states, not because I oppose the membership of other aspirant states. I always confess my prejudice when I speak about the Baltic states. My mother was born in Lithuania. So when I speak of the Baltic countries, it is with particular personal feeling. I have visited Lithuania on four or five different occasions and have also visited Latvia and Estonia several times.

I went to Lithuania a few years ago, along with my late brother, Bill. We went to see the tiny town where our mother was born, Jurbarkas. When we were there, we found that we had relatives, cousins, that we never knew we had—family separated by the Iron Curtain.

I did not believe in my lifetime that I would see the changes that have taken place in those three tiny countries. When I first visited Lithuania back in 1979, it was under Soviet domination, and it was a rather sad period in the history of that country. The United States said for decades that we never recognized the Soviet takeover of the Baltic States. We always believed them to be independent nations that were unfortunately invaded and taken over by the Soviets.

But in 1979, I saw the efforts of the Soviet Union to impose Russian culture upon the people in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

The Soviets expatriated many of the local people and sent them off to Siberia and places in the far reaches of Russia; and then they sent Russians into the Baltic states in an effort to try to homogenize them into some entity that was more Russian than it was Baltic.

But it did not work. The people maintained—zealously maintained—their own cultures, and they kept their own religion, their own languages, and their own literature and their own dreams. I did not imagine in 1979 that I would ever see these Baltic states once again free, and yet I lived to see that happen.

On March 1, 1990, Lithuania re-asserted its independence from the domination of the Soviet Union. Latvia and Estonia followed with declarations canceling the Soviet annexation of their countries.

These declarations were not without cost. In January 1991, Soviet paratroopers stormed the Press House in Vilnius, injuring four people. Barricades were set up in front of the Lithuanian Parliament, the Seimas. On January 13, 1991, Soviet forces attacked the television station and tower in Vilnius, killing 14 Lithuanians. One woman was killed when she tried to block a Soviet armored personnel carrier. Five hundred people were injured during these attacks. In Latvia, peaceful, but courageous crowds surrounded the parliament building in Riga to prevent a Soviet attack.

The images of crowds of unarmed civilians facing down Soviet tanks to protect their parliaments in Vilnius

and Riga was a powerful message of resistance that shocked Moscow and resonated throughout the Soviet Union. Their courage led the way for other Soviet Republics to throw off the yolk of Soviet Communist imperialism, resulting in the disintegration of the Soviet Union in August 1991.

Today these three nations have worked hard to become market economies, to watch their democracies flourish. The fact that they want so much to be part of NATO is an affirmation of great hope and great optimism for the future of Europe. As countries like Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and so many others that were either part of the Warsaw Pact or even Soviet Republics become [part of NATO, they show the dramatic transformation into a democratic form and a new democratic vision in Europe, whole and free.

The Baltic countries have nurtured their relations with the West, but they have also worked to have good relations with Russia. Despite the bitter experience of years of Soviet occupation each Baltic country has worked to be sure that its citizenship and language laws conform to European standards, taking care not to discriminate against ethnic Russians.

As a result of these steps, and because of the United States and NATO's efforts to engage Russia in a positive relationship with NATO, Russia's opposition to Baltic membership in NATO has evaporated, or at least receded to grudging acceptance.

The Baltic countries have also taken steps to fact up to the bitter history of the Holocaust, when hundreds of thousands of Lithuanian, Estonian, and Latvian Jews perished, by setting up a Holocaust museum, teaching about the history of the Holocaust in school, returning Torah scrolls, and working to restore Jewish property.

If we refuse to enlarge NATO further, we would have told these countries that despite their epic and inspiring struggle to liberate themselves from communism, the West had once again turned its back on them. We must make it clear that Russia is welcome to cooperate with the undivided, free, pros, and secure Europe that is being built.

Some people have questioned what these tiny countries would bring to NATO. NATO is not a country club, after all it is a military alliance.

When the Soviets troops finally left the Baltic countries, they took everything. There wasn't even a toilet seat left in a barracks, the drain pipes were cemented shut, and the military hardware was gone. They started from scratch. This has made their effort to building a military harder and more expensive, but in some ways, it has been a blessing. The old Soviet ways disappeared along with their equipment. Western ways of thinking about military organization were welcomed. In 10 years, with the help of the United States, Poland, Great Britain, Germany, the Nordic countries, and others

in Europe, these countries have built new militaries on a Western model.

To be sure, they are small countries, but they have their niche. The Baltic countries can and will make a positive contribution to NATO. They are building small militaries with a reserve system that can be called up in time of war. They have specialized in peacekeeping and logical support and have participated in missions in Bosnia, Kosovo, and now in Kyrgyzstan. They each are spending the requisite 2 percent of GDP on defense, but have also pooled their resources and cooperated on a Baltic Naval Squadron, a Baltic Defense College, and a Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion. They have worked together to create a joint air surveillance network that NATO will be able to use and are contributing some facilities, including an important former Soviet airbase.

When we ratified the membership of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, some in the Senate doubted their contributions, worried about cost burdens, and feared adding these new members would have NATO cumbersome and unworkable. These problems have not materialized; rather, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have been our staunch allies in NATO.

The model of the last round serves as well for this one. I believe we must complete the job we started in 1999 to expand NATO and cement a stable, democratic, whole, and free Europe.

Mr. HAGEL. Mr. President, I rise today in support of HR 3167, the Gerald B.H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act. I am a cosponsor of S. 1572, the Senate companion to this important bill.

Today freedom and democracy flourish from the Balkans to the Black Sea. One cannot help but marvel at the transformation over the last decade in Central and Eastern Europe. These countries have moved from members of the Warsaw Pact to allies of the United States in military operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.

An issue that has united these nations during this time of historic transformation has been the commitment to democratic reforms and closer relations with the United States. NATO membership, the strongest link between Europe and the United States, has been a cornerstone of the foreign and security policy goals of each of the member countries.

On May 19, 2000, the Foreign Ministers from nine NATO aspirant countries met in Vilnius, Lithuania to jointly reiterate their desire to firmly entrench their nations in the western community of democracies. Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Albania, Macedonia, Romania and Bulgaria were at various stages of readiness for membership. But from that day forward, these nations have demonstrated that they could work together to pursue their individual goals for security. In May 2001, Croatia joined this group—now called the “Vilnius 10.”

NATO has recognized their aspirations and has made clear its intention to extend invitations for membership at the Prague summit this November. Each candidate nation will be judged on its own merits and progress.

And as the process of NATO enlargement moves forward, it is important to ensure that it does so in a way that enhances NATO and peace and stability in Europe.

The standards for new members are most clearly stated in Article X of the Washington Treaty of 1949 the founding NATO document, which provides two major criteria for membership. First, a nation must be, “in a position to further the principles of this Treaty.” In other words, a nation must have a strong and demonstrated commitment to democratic ideals.

Second, the nation must be in a position “to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area.” NATO is a military alliance, and new allies should strengthen, not weaken, transatlantic security.

Economic stability is part of these two requirements for joining the alliance. Military reforms and military commitments cost money, these nations must be able to pay for the commitments they make to the alliance. And economic stability also means political stability, a theme that has underlined our current debate on trade policy.

Each of the Vilnius nations will be examined on the criteria. I mentioned above. This legislation does nothing to prejudge the decisions that will be made by the NATO member countries on which of the aspirant nations will be invited to join the alliance.

This legislation unequivocally declares congressional and Presidential support for continued responsible enlargement of NATO.

This legislation also provides financial assistance, in the form of foreign military financing, to NATO candidate countries as they conduct the reform and restructuring of their military forces to meet NATO requirements.

We must be wise enough to seize this moment of dramatic and positive changes in Europe, building onto what has been accomplished during the first 50 years of NATO. NATO expansion will help consolidate the freedom the nations of Central and Eastern Europe have secured by including them in the world’s most successful alliance, NATO.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, today we are considering the Gerald B.H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act. This bill, which passed overwhelmingly in the House of Representatives is identical to S. 1572 and has over 30 cosponsors here in the Senate was reported out unanimously by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in December of last year.

The Gerald B.H. Solomon Freedom Consolidation Act reaffirms the Sen-

ate’s support for continued enlargement of NATO, without naming any names of who should receive an invitation to join. It also demonstrates that extending security and stability in Europe through the enlargement of the most successful military alliance in modern history is not a partisan issue.

The bill endorses the vision of further enlargement of NATO articulated by President Bush on June 15, 2001, when he stated that, “all of Europe’s new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between, should have the same chance for security and freedom.”

It also endorses the statement of former President Clinton, who in 1996, said, “NATO’s doors will not close behind its first new members . . . [but] NATO should remain open to all of Europe’s emerging democracies who are ready to shoulder the responsibilities of membership.”

While President Bush said we should see how much and not how little we can do, inviting new members into the alliance is a serious exercise requiring careful consideration of applicant countries’ capabilities and their commitment to democratic values.

When the time comes to select which countries should receive an invitation to join NATO, we should ensure that the inclusion of a particular candidate will make the alliance stronger.

In other words, does its military, geographic, political and public commitment strengthen the Atlantic alliance and its ability to preserve a stable and secure Europe?

NATO membership is not based solely on military capability. If NATO were only about aligning the world’s greatest militaries then its membership roster would include Israel and Russia or China and North Korea rather than Iceland and Norway.

I think we can all agree that values matter. Democratic values, the rule of law, religious freedoms, protection of minorities.

When the time comes to look at which countries should be invited to join the alliance from those participating in the MAP, Membership Action Plan, process, we certainly should examine what capabilities they bring to European security, the trans-Atlantic relationship and the global war on terror.

However, perhaps what is more important than what contribution they have made to KFOR, SFOR or Operation Enduring Freedom, or more important than their geography or the overflight rights they have granted, is what they are doing within their own country.

Are they advancing a democratic society, working to eliminate government corruption, preventing their country from being used as a transit for the trafficking of women and children, protecting the rights of minorities and settling regional divisions?

Is bigger better? It can be.

The countries actively being considered for NATO membership that are in

the MAP process all see the value of revitalizing the Atlantic alliance. They have demonstrated that they are ready to be an ally through contributions in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

Every Slovak, Latvian, or Romanian that is back filling NATO in KFOR or SFOR or engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom means one less American that is in harms way.

The time has come for NATO to address how decisions are made as not to repeat what came to be known in Kosovo as "war by committee" when target selection had to be cleared through the NATO capitals rather than the NATO military commander.

Supporters and opponents to NATO Enlargement agree that the growing capabilities gap between the United States and our European allies must be addressed and will be addressed at the NATO summit in Prague.

We in the United States must be able to turn to our NATO allies as they do us for capabilities to face the threats of today.

The world that we face has in fact changed and we, as well as our NATO allies, must do the real work of building the capabilities to address what Secretary Rumsfeld called asymmetrical threats even prior to September 11.

It seems to me that top on the list of threats that both we and Europe face is the growing threat of weapons of mass destruction.

At the Prague Summit in November, NATO must properly address what we can do together to address the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction in the hands of our new common enemy, global terrorism.

What NATO's mission will be in the future is an important question. Thirty-six years ago, in "The Troubled Partnership," Henry Kissinger wrote of the difficulties in the Atlantic Alliance, and queried whether we and Europe had the same vision for the future of NATO.

Differences still exist, however, we should not jeopardize all that NATO is by focusing on what it is not; rather we should see how NATO can better address the threats that we see so clearly since September 11.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, when I first came to Congress, Slovakia and Slovenia didn't exist at all, Bulgaria and Romania were hostile states in the darkest depths of the Soviet empire, and the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania lived only in the hearts and souls of their people, their sovereign nationhood snuffed out by Soviet annexation. This evening, we debate a clear and noncontroversial Sense of the Senate resolution expressing our support for these same nations' aspirations to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the alliance we formed to counter the aggression that once placed each of these nations on the far side of the Iron Curtain, in one of the greatest organized assaults on our values since we claimed them as our own.

Our consideration of these nations' candidacy to join NATO at the Prague Summit in November is a victory for democracy, for freedom, for what we fought from 1941 until 1989 to bring about: a Europe whole and free. Our Alliance reflects Europe's continuing and historic transition from hostile division to a continental zone of enlightened rule within secure borders. But that transition remains incomplete.

NATO's fate, and that of Europe, rests upon completing the job we started at the 1999 Washington summit, and which we will continue in Prague this November. As President Bush stated last summer in Warsaw: all of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltics to the Black Sea, should have a chance to join the North Atlantic Alliance.

The last round of NATO enlargement demonstrated the importance of the alliance as a living, vibrant institution, committed to meeting the security challenges of the Euro-Atlantic region. Cold war-minded critics contended then that we were creating a new dividing line in Europe. But the result of enlargement was to extend stability and security eastwards, into lands where the absence of these qualities has frequently led to armed conflict in the past.

Critics of the last round of enlargement said NATO's consensual decision-making process would become bogged down by the addition of new members. But to the extent that consensus over NATO's response to Slobodan Milosevic's crimes in Kosovo was difficult to achieve, the newest members of the alliance often provided the strongest support within our councils for joint military action. NATO's newest members also made important human, material, and geographic contributions to the alliance's mission.

Now, critics argue that the new threats of terrorism and mass destruction bring NATO's mission and future into question. It is hard to understand why. Yes, America and some of our European allies have disagreed about how best to pursue the war on terrorism. But our shared conviction about the common values that require our defense is not in doubt. NATO is not less important after September 11; it is more important. For the first time in its history, the alliance invoked Article V, the mutual self-defense clause binding upon all members, after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. Until very recently, allied aircraft patrolled America's skies. Today, 16 of the existing 19 members of the alliance have boots on the ground alongside American forces in and around Afghanistan. Remarkably, a number of the nations that aspire to NATO membership have also deployed forces to support allied military operations. They don't yet have a treaty commitment, but they are acting like they do, in a gesture of goodwill that transcends mere rhetoric about our common values by putting men in harm's way to defend them.

Our fundamental goal at Prague must be to transform what has become a somewhat divisive trans-Atlantic debate about the role and relevance of our NATO partners in the war on terrorism into a concrete plan of action to align the alliance's purpose of collective defense with the threats of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction—dangers that threaten the people of Europe no less than the American people, as we saw most recently in the tragic bombing in Karachi, Pakistan that took the lives of 11 French nationals.

I believe the hand-wringing in Washington academic circles and the corridors of Brussels about the alliance's existential crisis is misplaced. Rather than engaging in a stifling, bureaucratic debate about NATO's core purpose, we should devote our attention to sustaining the success our Alliance has enjoyed in deterring Soviet aggression, bringing a stable peace to the Balkans, and uniting our community of values. The Bush administration's far-sighted agenda for Prague reflects an effort to build on NATO's successes in concert with our allies, in order that its future in the defense of freedom may be as storied as its past.

The Freedom Consolidation Act addresses the enlargement pillar of this agenda. We do not require the mere ceremonies of enlargement, and the new faces it brings to our councils, for fear of institutional failure, or for lack of some higher purpose. We must enlarge this alliance to complete the task we started in 1949: to create an impregnable zone of stability, security, and peace in Europe that is upheld by our joint military power, rooted in our resolve to defend this territory against aggression, and inspired by our commitment to the principles of liberty, to which we pledge our sacred honor.

In doing so, we replace the containment strategy of the cold war era with the enlargement of our community of values. We relegate Yalta's division of Europe to the history books. We forge a new Euro-Atlantic community, transformed by the values we fought the cold war to defend. And we celebrate the freedom that almost all European peoples enjoy today as a consequence of our mutual sacrifice.

Our task is to invigorate our alliance with this premise: that the Atlantic community is not a group of cold war-era military allies looking for new missions to stay relevant, but a political community of like-minded nations, challenging the cruel dictates of history and geography, that is dedicated to the principles of democracy, and to fostering a continent where war is unimaginable and security, guaranteed—even as it faces new and grave threats to these core principles. The threats have changed since 1949; our commitment to the defense of freedom has not. NATO's purpose remains sound, and its role, indispensable.

Seven nations are serious contenders to receive invitations to join our alliance in November. Three more are engaged in a longer-term process of preparing themselves to meet NATO's membership criteria. I cannot think of a better example of the triumph of our values, and the success of the institutions we have built to serve and protect them, than the urgency with which the aspirant nations now pursue membership in our alliance. We should welcome them, when they are ready. I believe the seven serious candidates for this round of enlargement will be. They hold their destiny in their hands, and we wish them well in working aggressively to meet the criteria for NATO membership. I hope we can soon call these nations our allies, in the truest sense of the word.

While I support a "Big Bang" enlargement of the alliance into northern, central, and southern Europe, I believe the southern dimension of NATO enlargement is perhaps the most compelling on strategic grounds. NATO's southeastern expansion into Bulgaria and Romania would secure Europe's southern flank, enhance stability in the western Balkans, and end Turkey's strategic isolation from the alliance. It would help diminish continuing frictions in Turkey's relationship with the EU, minimizing Turkish grievances over the question of an independent European security identity and opening the door to the development of effective coordination between the EU and NATO. A visionary enlargement of the NATO alliance to the south combined with the EU's historic expansion to the east would bring about a new and welcome cohesion of Turkey to Europe. This is in the interests of Turkey, the European Union, the United States, and NATO.

The most compelling defense of war is the moral claim that it allows the victors to define a stronger and more enduring basis for peace. Just as September 11 revolutionized our resolve to defeat our enemies, so has it brought into focus the opportunities we now have to secure and expand freedom.

Senate passage of the Freedom Consolidation Act sends an important signal to our allies, present and future, about America's commitment to sustaining the success our alliance has enjoyed for 50 years. It provides the administration an enthusiastic vote of confidence in its visionary campaign to enlarge and transform NATO to meet the new threats. It reminds us all that freedom's power is multiplied, not diminished, as more people share in it.

Former Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar wrote a wonderful book about the Estonian resistance to Soviet occupation. He recalls the fervor with which Estonian patriots resisted Soviet aggression, and their dreadful realization that no outside power would intervene to save their nation from Soviet tyranny. He writes:

Nobody believed that Estonia would, for decades and decades, be left in the hands of

the Soviets. That wasn't even a possibility. It's only a question of time, everybody thought. But after decades went by, the idea about the West coming to their aid disappeared. The fight in the forest became a personal thing. These people fought because they simply wanted to die as free men.

Today, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Slovenians, Slovaks, Bulgarians, and Romanians live as free men, and women, in testament to the same values for which patriots before them lived, and died. The values we in the U.S. Senate invoke today as we express our support for the right of these nations to choose their destiny in the collective defense of freedom.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is an alliance of free, democratic nations, unique in human history for its characteristics and its success. Today, the alliance's principled strength not only protects the peace and freedom of the transatlantic community, but contributes to building a world that is ever more free, more democratic, and more prosperous.

For years, physical defense of member nations' home soil, as defined under Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty, has been the core of our alliance. Since the end of the cold war, NATO has constantly reconsidered the landscape of threats to security and freedom and has responded to that changing landscape by defining new missions and new capability needs. In Bosnia and then Kosovo, NATO applied appropriate force just outside its immediate borders for the common good of stability in Europe. And it did so successfully with partner forces from non-NATO European states.

Partner states are learning from NATO and striving to emulate the alliance's standards of military professionalism, transparent civilian control of military power and resources, and the legal and civil foundations of popular legitimacy. Many of those partner states aspire to full membership in the alliance. I believe that opening membership to a large number of nations will make NATO an even more potent protector of transatlantic and global security from threats including terrorism, a better facilitator of regional conflict resolution, and a more influential incubator of democracy.

Senator WARNER reminds us, correctly, that the alliance is so successful because it provides history's standard for rigorous and professional military planning and execution. But NATO is also the flagship institution in America's post-WWII success in widening the circle of democracy, stability, and prosperity across the transatlantic region. The achievement of "Europe, whole, free and at peace" will likely be remembered as the greatest legacy of American foreign policy in the 20th century, because it is the foundation for greater opportunity in this century, as well as greater collective security.

I believe that any democratic European nation that meets NATO's cri-

teria and can be a net contributor to the security of the alliance should be admitted. I support welcoming into NATO at the Prague summit as many candidate nations as meet these criteria.

Let us focus for a moment on the alliance's adaptation to new missions. The awful events of September 11th prompted NATO to invoke Article V and respond to attacks on American soil by supporting a war against an enemy half a world away from the United States. Technology has collapsed geographical distinctions to the point that today, a plot conceived anywhere in the world can pose just as serious a threat to NATO members' security as an aggressive military movement across a European border. Clearly, NATO accepts this new reality and must embrace a more expansive geographical understanding of its mission. This evolution in alliance thinking is realistic and healthy.

The aspirant states embrace this mission, too. Declaring their intent to act as *de facto* allies of the United States, partner states have offered enhanced information sharing, overflight rights, transit and basing privileges, military and police forces, medical units and transport support to U.S. efforts. Most of the aspirant states are participating in some fashion in the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, working well with our forces under Central Command.

The North Atlantic Alliance has before it a summit meeting in Prague this November, at which all the crucial issues—adapting methods of operation, refining NATO's mission, committing to achieve the necessary capabilities, and enlargement—require our engagement. I trust that the administration is working with allies to achieve a consensus on enlargement before the Prague Summit. And I take the administration at its word that it will consult the Congress and especially the Senate regularly about summit issues, as it has done in the February 28 hearing of the Armed Services Committee and at staff level in the months before. In due course, the Senate will deliberate over the individual accession agreements that the alliance may negotiate with aspirant states. Our scrutiny of those candidates and their commitments will provide them with added impetus to raise democratic and military standards and be the best allies they can be.

The Freedom Consolidation Act of 2001, which I cosponsored here in the Senate, is our political signal that the Senate welcomes consideration of new members and holds fast to the vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace, a vision which Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush have articulated. It also authorizes part of the investment our Nation is making in states that share our vision. The bill will do the following: reaffirm Congressional support for continued NATO enlargement; designate Slovakia as eligible to

receive U.S. assistance under the NATO Participation Act of 1994; and, endorse the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) levels for the Baltic states, Slovenia, Romania, and Bulgaria that the administration sought for the current fiscal year.

In the Armed Services Committee on February 28 we had a thorough airing of questions about the aspirant states. NATO Supreme Commander General Ralston's testimony in particular illustrated that there is practical work going on with all of them and that they expect further scrutiny of their preparedness. The aspirants know they each have a case to make. They are busy in the Congress and expert community explaining their progress and asking what they need to do more or better. In terms of money and military-to-military cooperation, we are already doing what this bill conveys, both bilaterally and in NATO.

And so I urge my colleagues to join Senator HELMS, the other cosponsors and myself in sending this signal that America values the NATO alliance, that we value the security arrangements and political principles NATO so crucially advances, and that we value friendly states that share our values and vision.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3167, the Freedom Consolidation Act of 2002.

The title of this bill says it all, our goal here today, and our goal when we enlarge NATO this November, is to consolidate the gains that freedom has made in Europe since 1989.

Thirteen years ago, in a series of wonderful evolutions and revolutions, the people of eastern Europe threw off the shackles of communism and sent the Warsaw Pact to the dustbin of history.

Since then, the many nations of eastern and central Europe, some of them brand new, have striven mightily to establish democratic institutions and develop market-based economies. This is nothing short of a Herculean task, given the magnitude of the problems that beset communist systems as they were in their terminal phase.

The people carrying out this difficult and historic transformation need and deserve all the support we can give them. One of the ways we can provide that support is to encourage the further enlargement of NATO. Membership in NATO will ease the strain on these newly free countries and assist in their transformation to market democracies.

This is true for several reasons. First, membership in NATO, with its bedrock security commitment contained in Article V, will promote a stable environment in which these countries can pursue reforms. Second, membership in NATO will foster an ever greater flow of information and ideas between the U.S., western Europe and these new democracies. Third, membership in NATO will require these nations to maintain democratic systems

and uphold the rule of law, thus giving them the incentive to continually deepen their reform process.

These benefits of NATO enlargement, the consolidation of freedom, the encouragement of the reform process in former communist countries, and the expansion of the zone of stability and peace in Europe, are all very much in the U.S. interest.

I think that recognition of these benefits is why there has been such strong congressional support for NATO enlargement dating back to at least 1994. By reaffirming past statements of support for enlargement by Congress, by Presidents Bush and Clinton and by NATO itself, and by authorizing assistance to seven aspirant countries, this bill continues that tradition.

At Munich and Yalta, it was decided that, as Neville Chamberlain termed them, "small, far-away" countries could be sacrificed. The ghosts of those two tragic episodes have haunted Europe for over 60 years. A further round of NATO enlargement will help exorcize those ghosts. Therefore, as NATO prepares for its Prague Summit in November, I hope it will heed the words of President Bush, who stated last year that "as we plan to enlarge NATO, . . . we should not calculate how little we can get away with, but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom."

In other words, we should seek to offer NATO membership to as many new members as possible. That being said, NATO must of course be judicious in the selection process. NATO is not a club, it's an alliance. And enlargement is not a free pass to security for new members. NATO membership demands commitment from and places obligations upon those new members.

One of those obligations is the maintenance of adequate defense budgets. New members must be able to offer equipment, forces and capabilities that actually make a net contribution to NATO. As has been much discussed of late, NATO already suffers from the so-called capabilities gap. That is, as we have learned from the campaigns in the Balkans and Afghanistan, there is a large and growing gap between the military capabilities of the United States and most of its NATO allies.

Although the United States has reduced defense spending over the past decade or so, the cuts in Europe have been even more severe. This is reflected in the fact that while we devote over 3 percent of our GDP to defense, the European average is now below 2 percent. This simple fact goes a long way toward explaining why NATO, despite its very helpful and much appreciated invocation of Article V after September 11, has not participated in the campaign in Afghanistan. NATO should not exacerbate the capabilities gap by offering membership to countries that are not serious about actually contributing to a military alliance.

Still, NATO must seize this moment. This is a historic opportunity to make

Europe whole again after decades of war, division, and tyranny. That is why I support this bill and hope it will pass overwhelmingly.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DURBIN). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I will close this debate, unless others seek recognition, by reiterating my concern is for the American service person—soldier, sailor, airman, and marine—who at some point in time, because of the articles of this treaty, "an attack on one is an attack on all", our service persons could be in the foxhole fighting, repelling that attack with someone who is not trained, not equipped, cannot communicate and all the other problems we have had in seeking a uniformity of standards and military capabilities among the NATO forces.

We are putting our people at risk. We are asking our taxpayers, again, to spend enormous sums of money as we did in the Balkan operations. I supported the Balkan operations. We did the right thing: 70 percent of the combat missions, 50 percent of the airlift.

This is not the lone dissenter, I suppose, in the Senate speaking. This is the Secretary General of NATO, Lord Robertson, whom my colleague from Indiana and I have met through many years, former Minister of Defense from Great Britain, now Secretary General of NATO, who said the following. And I will quote from Secretary General Robertson's speech on NATO's future at the February 2000 Wehrkunde Conference in Munich:

The United States must have partners who can contribute their fair share to operations which benefit the entire Euro-Atlantic community. . . . But the reality is . . . hardly any European country can deploy usable and effective forces in significant numbers outside their borders, and sustain them for months or even years as we all need to do today. For all Europe's rhetoric, an annual investment of over \$140 billion by NATO's European members—

That is the current 18, our Nation being the 19th. And I remind my colleagues, our military budget is \$379 billion, which I am privileged to join with Chairman LEVIN to bring to the floor shortly. The total of all other 18 is \$140 billion.

For all Europe's rhetoric, an annual investment of over \$140 billion by NATO's European members, we still need U.S. help to move, command, and provision a major operation. American critics of Europe's military incapability are right. So, if we are to ensure that the United States moves neither towards unilateralism nor isolationism, all European countries must show a new willingness to develop effective crisis management capabilities.

I am delighted we have had this debate tonight. I thank colleagues for coming over at this very late hour and participating. It has given me the opportunity to make my points, to elicit very important commitments from colleagues in position of authority. I am not discussing withdrawal from NATO, as may have been inferred by some. I have not reached any conclusion about any one or several countries at this

point in time as to whether they should or should not be admitted into NATO. I do not believe this is an open-door policy.

I read article 10. It is quite specific in the treaty. It says again, you must have the capability to contribute and bear your burden for the security of the entire NATO.

I support efforts by our President with regard to Russia. Again, I think we have covered that. To the extent that the additional nations in NATO can help in this war on terrorism, you will have my support. We have had a good debate. I will do everything I can, and now tonight I am assured by others, to see this is done before the final document is voted upon by the Senate.

I would like to add one thing to this debate. Our good colleague from Delaware, the chairman, said he thought perhaps tonight the only people following this debate would be the ambassadors of the aspirant countries and perhaps ambassadors from other countries, but I have found there is a remarkable infrastructure in the Nation's Capital, and perhaps elsewhere. Many of them are volunteers, such as Mrs. Julie Finley, who is a lifetime friend of mine and who has done a lot of hard work and constructive effort on her own initiative to invite members of the aspirant nations, be they the prime ministers or the defense ministers or the foreign ministers, to events so that colleagues can share and have the opportunity to meet them. So I think there is a tremendous infrastructure. They may not be watching this debate tonight, but I think they will make reference to the record that we have put together.

So I thank my good friend from Indiana because I believe what we have contributed tonight is a very important step towards strengthening NATO.

Mr. LUGAR. I agree with the distinguished Senator from Virginia. I would join him in paying tribute to Julie Finley, whose hospitality I have enjoyed. It has been an opportunity, as the Senator has suggested, for an educational experience about NATO members and aspirants to NATO.

I join the Senator also in his comments about Lord Robertson, who visited this country recently. He spoke to the Council on Foreign Relations and was very candid, as the Senator from Virginia has pointed out, about the obligations of European countries, the lack of lift capacity, the lack of sophisticated communication gear, the lack of the ability to bring in aircraft for specific strikes, the ordnance for this equipment. These are recognized problems.

This debate, and other ways we can focus on NATO, are very important in sharpening our own view of the alliance and of the possibilities of this alliance in our mutual fight against terrorism. I thank the Chair. I thank my distinguished colleague. On our side of the argument, I yield back the time allotted to Senator BIDEN and to myself.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the bill is considered read the third time.

The Senator from Nevada.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE—H.R. 3009

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the next Democrat amendments in the sequence be the following: Feingold amendment regarding extraneous provisions; a Feingold amendment regarding tax increases on fast track.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak therein for a period not to exceed 5 minutes each.

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

MYCHAL JUDGE POLICE AND FIRE CHAPLAINS PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS' BENEFIT ACT OF 2002 AND LAW ENFORCEMENT TRIBUTE ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, yesterday I was honored to attend the 21st Annual National Peace Officers Memorial Day Services at the Capitol.

Sadly, last year was the deadliest year in law enforcement history since 1974. In 2001, 230 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty including 72 fallen heroes who were killed on September 11.

These brave public servants risked and sacrificed their own lives so that others might live. Each one of us owes these courageous men and women, and their families, a debt of gratitude that we can never fully repay.

During Police Memorial Week, I hope that Congress will act on two pieces of legislation to appropriately honor the families of brave public safety officers who sacrificed their own lives for their fellow Americans.

First, I urge the House of Representatives to take up the Mychal Judge Police and Fire Chaplains Public Safety Officers' Benefit Act of 2002, S. 2431.

The Senate passed this bipartisan legislation more than a week ago. It is needed to amend the Public Safety Officers' Benefit Program to permit the families of 10 public safety officers killed on September 11 to retroactively receive \$250,000 each in Federal death benefits.

Senator CAMPBELL and I introduced this bipartisan measure, cosponsored by Senators SCHUMER, CLINTON, BIDEN and FEINGOLD, to retroactively restructure the Public Safety Officers' Benefit Program to provide benefits to fallen officers who died without a surviving spouse, child, or parent.

I commend Representatives MANZULLO and NADLER for their bipartisan leadership on the House version of this bill, H.R. 3297.

Named for Chaplain Mychal Judge, who was killed while responding with the New York City Fire Department to the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, our bipartisan legislation recognizes the invaluable service of police and fire chaplains in crisis situations by allowing for their eligibility in the Public Safety Officers' Benefit Program.

Father Judge, while deemed eligible for public safety officer benefits, was survived by his two sisters who, under current law, are ineligible to receive death benefits. This is simply wrong and must be remedied.

Indeed, Father Judge is among 10 public safety officers killed on September 11 whose survivors are ineligible for Federal death benefits because they are not surviving spouses, children, or parents of the officers. This bill would retroactively correct this injustice by expanding the list of those who may receive public safety officer benefits to the beneficiaries named on the most recently executed life insurance policy of the deceased officer. This change would go into effect on September 11 of last year to make sure the families of Father Judge and the nine other fallen heroes receive their public safety officer benefits.

By taking up the Senate-passed Mychal Judge Police and Fire Chaplains Public Safety Officers' Benefit Act during Police Memorial Week, the House of Representatives can provide much-needed relief for 10 families of public safety officers who sacrificed their lives on September 11.

Second, I hope that later today the Senate will consider the Law Enforcement Tribute Act, S. 2179, introduced by Senator CARNAHAN.

The Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously approved this legislation to create a \$3 million Department of Justice grant program to help States, local governments and Indian tribes establish permanent tributes to fallen public safety officers. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of Senator CARNAHAN's bill to honor officers killed in the line of duty.

During Police Memorial Week, the Senate should pass Senator CARNAHAN's legislation to provide Federal resources to our States and local communities to pay proper tribute to the brave public safety officers.

I hope Congress will act expeditiously on these two important pieces of legislation to salute public safety officers across the country and honor the brave men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice to serve and protect us.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I had the honor this morning of serving as the commencement speaker for the graduation ceremonies at the Virginia Military Institute. This longstanding