

I look to my colleagues for any concluding comments they might make in the last 5 minutes or so. I will yield to the gentleman from Florida, and then I will go to the gentleman from Illinois and the gentleman from New York. The gentleman from Florida.

Mr. GOSS. Madam Speaker, I thank very much the chairman for leading this and for all he does on this subject. I honestly believe that the world has changed in a great many ways. It is not just the technology, it is not just the evolution, it is not just the alignment of countries and the sovereignty questions and borders. It is all those things and more we are confronted with. And we are confronted with them in an extraordinary way of great privilege and honor but great responsibility and duty as members of the United States Congress when we talk to parliamentarians elsewhere, because people do look to the United States of America for help and guidance in so many ways.

The point I would make is that I honestly believe that this window is open on enlargement. We have enthusiastic, spirit-filled activity going on in these countries. This is real commitment that we are seeing. And the good-news part of it, beyond all the good news that is inherent in that message, is that if these countries are able to qualify and come in in a steady way under the NATO defense umbrella, it seems to me that that removes uncertainty; and removing uncertainty removes playing fields for mischief makers. I think that is the nature of the security threat we have today, is too many mischief makers taking advantage of areas of uncertainty.

So I think that stability factor we talk about is very important, and I think this is a critical time for leadership. I congratulate the gentleman for his leadership, and I hope we can get other leadership to list as well. I know the Speaker of the House is very interested in this and has been a great ally, and I am sure he will continue to be.

Mr. BEREUTER. I thank the gentleman for his comments. And on a practical side, of course foreign investors, which are so important in that region, look to NATO membership as something that will bring security to their investments. We heard that in Bulgaria.

I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. SHIMKUS. I just want to highlight the bipartisan aspect of the resolution: 25 Republicans, 15 Democrats. I want to also mention the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), who is the co-chair of the House Baltic Caucus highlighting that point.

And just a statement to our European allies. We have been there for them year after year after year. They need to be there for these emerging democracies.

Mr. BEREUTER. If the gentleman from New York has any concluding remarks, I yield to him.

Mr. REYNOLDS. I thank the chairman, and I just want to say that I support the Shimkus resolution as a co-sponsor. As he advances that debate in the House, I look forward to participating with him and assisting him in the endeavor of that resolution.

I also want to say this is an important time, while our President is overseas in that part of the world that NATO's whole universe is about, the aspect of defense of our allies. So this is a tremendous time to launch the further debate on NATO enlargement and reminding not only ourselves but the world of the criteria that NATO has established and that these countries are working diligently to meet that strong criteria so that they can be partnering in a NATO alliance in the future.

I believe enlargement is a subject that, while we only discussed it today, should hopefully bring a result in Prague in 2002.

Mr. BEREUTER. I thank the gentleman very much for his remarks. I thank all my colleagues. And I want to say that I appreciate the written remarks submitted by our colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), our Democratic senior member of the Committee on International Relations, who is very supportive for NATO expansion. His views are very consistent with those I think we expressed here tonight.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I want to commend the distinguished gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) for calling this special order on the recent meeting in Vilnius of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. We in the House are indeed well served to by DOUG BEREUTER's outstanding leadership of the House delegation to the NATO parliamentary exchanges. He is serious and thoughtful in his leadership, and he has served our nation well through his commitment to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Madam Speaker, in NATO and in the growing European Union we have a powerful group of friends and allies who basically share our values and objectives. We have said during the Cold War—and I personally passionately believe it—that NATO was a defensive military alliance. I believe that today NATO is a defensive alliance.

I am completely supportive of NATO enlargement, once the countries which are candidates for membership meet the economic and political criteria that qualify them for membership. The three Baltic countries—Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia—are moving rapidly in this direction, and I strongly favor their admission into NATO. Whether it takes place in 2002, 2004, 2005 or 2006 is very secondary.

Madam Speaker, I want to make clear my strong belief that Baltic membership in NATO—or the membership of any other country in NATO—is not contrary to Russian interests. In fact, it is in Russia's interest to have the arena of stability and prosperity in Europe expanded to Russia's borders. It is clear that

as democratic forces gain strength within Russia, these democratic forces will welcome the enlargement of NATO and the growth of stable democracies in adjacent countries. It is not in Russia's interest to have countries such as Belarus run by a dictator on their border. It is in Russia's interest to have a country such as democratic Estonia—prosperous, free, and a member of NATO—to be near Russia.

I never accepted during the Cold War—and I do not accept now—the notion that NATO threatens Russia. There is no NATO leader that has the slightest ambition to invade or act in a way that is contrary to Russia's long-term interests. The NATO leadership hopes for the evolution of a democratic and prosperous and stable Russia. The leadership and the members of NATO want nothing more for the Russian people but an improvement in their economic conditions and the improvement of their political and civil liberties.

Madam Speaker, I disagree most strongly with the notion that we have to pay off the Russians in order to win their agreement to modify the ABM treaty in order to move ahead with our own system of missile defense. We should not truncate the natural growth of NATO in order to win concessions on missile defense, and we should definitely not allow Russian efforts at intimidation or blackmail to dissuade us from accepting the Baltic countries as members of NATO.

Madam Speaker, these were our goals with respect to Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland when they were accepted for NATO membership four years ago. These will be our objectives with Slovenia, Slovakia and all other countries that seek membership and are granted membership in NATO in the future.

COMMUNICATION FROM FORMER STAFF ASSISTANT OF HON. JIM MCCRERY, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Jennifer Lawrence, former staff assistant of the Honorable JIM MCCRERY, Member of Congress.

JUNE 7, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to formally notify you, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have been served with a criminal subpoena for trial testimony issued by the United States District Court for the Western District of Louisiana in a criminal case pending there.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that it is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House to comply with the subpoena.

Sincerely,
JENNIFER LAWRENCE,
Former Staff Assistant to Congressman
Jim McCrery of Louisiana.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE JOHN CONYERS, JR., MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN CONYERS, Jr., Member of Congress.