

It's time to end NATO, say Libertarians— not expand into turbulent Central Europe

Don't worry about Czechs & Poles: Worry about American taxpayers

WASHINGTON, DC — When it comes to NATO, the Libertarian Party says: *End it, don't extend it.*

“NATO now represents a Needless American Taxpayers' Obligation,” said Steve Dasbach, the party's national chairman, on the eve of a 16-nation NATO summit in Madrid, Spain.

“The Libertarian Party knows that we shouldn't expand NATO, spend *more* money subsidizing the defense of Europe, and risk *more* American lives. For the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the time is right to end it, not extend it,” he said.

At the Madrid summit on July 8th, President Clinton will formally invite Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to join the 48-year-old trans-Atlantic defense alliance.

But such an expansion of NATO is unnecessary, expensive, and risky, said Dasbach.

“Whatever usefulness NATO had during the Cold War, that usefulness is now over,” he said. “The primary reason why NATO was created — to protect Europe against a belligerent communist dictatorship in the USSR — no longer exists. Why is NATO getting bigger as our potential enemies get smaller?”

But even without a superpower threat, NATO expansion still carries needless military risks for America, he said.

“According to Article 5 of the NATO charter, the USA would have to go to war — up to and including nuclear conflict — to defend every nation in an expanded NATO alliance,” said Dasbach. “Why should we intertwine our fate more closely with small, unstable European nations that have long histories of ethnic, religious, territorial, and nationalistic quarrels?”

Finally, NATO expansion carries a hefty price tag that will be paid by American taxpayers, warned Dasbach.

“Clinton has already promised that the United States will pay at least 15% of the NATO-expansion costs — which could run from \$200 million a year up to \$10 billion a year, according to widely divergent estimates,” he noted.

“After spending almost 50 years subsidizing the defense of increasingly wealthy European nations, it's time to start worrying more about American taxpayers — and less about the citizens of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic,” said Dasbach. “It's time to hang a ‘Closed’ sign on NATO — not a sign that says ‘Welcome.’”

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