

**From the diary of V.P. Lukin**

**Record of Conversation with First Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and Special Adviser to the Secretary of State Jim Collins**

December 16, 1994

I received Strobe Talbott and Jim Collins at their request.

S. Talbott stated that lately the relationship between Russia and the U.S. has been marked by an incongruity of positions and approaches on certain issues, in particular on the question of European security and NATO expansion. Nevertheless, he pointed out, the administration believes there is still a foundation for mutual trust between our countries.

In explaining the American line, my interlocutor emphasized that the decision to expand NATO was not taken at the expense of the relationship with Russia. According to him, the U.S. used all possible channels to inform Russia of the West's positions ahead of time. This position later became the foundation for the documents accepted in Brussels. The U.S. State Department believes that the outcomes of the meeting in Brussels should not come as a surprise to Moscow. S. Talbott said that in formulating its policy on the future of NATO, the U.S. will adhere to the following principles: 1) no hasty decisions; 2) no surprises; 3) no exceptions. He also noted that Ukraine is experiencing a certain nervousness regarding NATO expansion, and spoke in favor of including Ukraine jointly with Russia in a dialogue on this issue.

S. Talbott expressed the opinion that NATO is at present a universal structure of European security, and it is successfully fulfilling the role of a stabilizing factor in Europe.

On my part, I said that so far there is no reason to "stimulate" the issue of NATO expansion, because Russia does not pose a real threat to the countries of Eastern Europe. I stressed that NATO's approach to Russia's borders has a negative symbolic significance. I drew the attention of my interlocutors to the need to maintain a "delicate" balance of power in Europe, and to carefully analyze the short-term and long-term consequences of increasing the number of NATO members.

I put forward the idea of holding an informal conference on the subject of "Alternatives to European Security," as well the possibility of establishing a tripartite commission on European security, with the participation of governmental and non-governmental organizations. I explained that we could consider both global and regional cooperation in this format, and the emphasis should not be on the timing parameters of NATO expansion, but on specific concerns of Eastern European countries in the sphere of security and ways to eliminate these concerns.

The conversation was attended by: Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Ms. Victoria Nuland, specialist-expert in international affairs from the Committee on International Affairs of the State Duma O.B. Perminova.

Chairman of the Committee

V.P. Lukin [signed]

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