

September 11, Europe, and the Current Challenges for Transatlantic Relations

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Dear Students, Faculty and Friends! It is a great pleasure for me to return to Juniata after 22 years. And it's a great honor for me to speak to you together with my old professor and friend, Buff Vocke.

The academic year of 1979/1980, when I was a senior here at Juniata, appears to be a totally different time, one would think. The Cold War was still the organizing principle of international relations. We were living in a bipolar world. At the end of 1979 the Soviets invaded Afghanistan — an event which had been almost forgotten before September 11.

The second top story of that time was the American Hostage Crisis in Iran, when American Diplomats of the US Embassy in Teheran were taken hostage. I remember well when my professor Buff Vocke took us one day to a room with a TV set to watch the news, when the attempt had failed to get the hostages out of Teheran via a military commando raid.

In his recent State of the Union Address President Bush named the very same country, Iran, as part of the axis of evil, as a threat to humanity because of its support of terrorism and its development of weapons of mass destruction. Now Afghanistan is in the news

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again, also. Apparently not everything has changed during the last 20 years.

September 11 was nearly as much a shock for most Germans and Europeans, as it was for Americans. On November 9, 1989, the Cold War ended when the Berlin Wall fell. But it was only on September 11 that the Cold War perceptions ended as the World Trade Center fell. Ten years after the international structure for which it was designed collapsed, NATO invoked its Article 5 for the first time. In the Cold War NATO had to be so strong to effectively dissuade the invocation of Article 5 — and it was successful. But the US and NATO were not able to dissuade the attacks of September 11.

Why not?

Because the terrorists did not have to care — like the Soviets — for a country and its people and therefore did not have to be afraid of a counterattack. The counterattack is probably exactly what the terrorists wanted to provoke.

Before the Gulf War, former President Bush talked about the need for a new world order. This world order — with the minimum requirement to create at least the same stability as the old bipolar world — is still not in place.

The 11th of September has reminded us painfully of that.

America has responded to the attacks with the war in Afghanistan, the biggest increase in the military budget for decades and the build-up of homeland defense. The key question for Europe is: what should be its role?

What are the European choices?

The immediate expressions of support that came from all European governments reflected heartfelt feelings of solidarity on the part of a vast majority of Europeans. Terrorism experts often stress that religious and other forms of fanaticism are fuelled by, and in turn exacerbate, underlying issues of alienation, poverty, and ignorance. The western world has to tackle these underlying problems in order to make the campaign against terrorism effective.

Europe knows the Arab and Muslim world. With its wide-ranging “tool box” of policies and instruments, the EU is well-placed to integrate countries with strong anti-Western feelings into the global system. Already the EU is the most important trading partner for most Middle Eastern states, and by far the greatest source of financial assistance.

The EU, in my eyes, should not hesitate to use this economic leverage for political purposes. There is room for improvement. Concretely, the EU must make clear that its help is conditional upon respect for international rules, including an end to terrorism.

Europeans would like the US government to play a more active role in the Middle East peace process. Israelis and Palestinians alike seem to be unable to break the deadlock in their relations. Peace will not be possible without negotiations aiming at a lasting settlement. It is clear that unless both the EU and the US are involved, there will be insufficient pressure on both sides to make the necessary concessions.

In my eyes there is sufficient evidence that today's terrorism has grown out of regions which are characterized by weak, failed, or failing states with economies which are only marginally integrated in the global economy. Our struggle against international terrorism ultimately has to address these underlying trends.

Poverty does not lead directly to terrorism as it does not lead automatically to organized crime or drug production and trafficking, but all those problems are the result of the impotence of many states to deal with them effectively. Therefore in my eyes it would be worthwhile to consider putting more emphasis on empowering those weak states and giving them the tools to deal with these challenges.

And along with the empowerment of weak nation states it is necessary to empower the United Nations. This is the responsibility of the allied democracies within the United Nations to form the core group and the heart of a new world order. The United States had a key role during the foundation of the UN. And the United States is again the crucial player to ensure that the struggle against international terrorism leads to a more stable world. Europeans hope that President Bush will take a fresh look at the need of nation building and the role of the UN.

Let me turn briefly to Europe and transatlantic relations. Transatlantic relations have deteriorated in the recent weeks — unfortunately. Being right now at a conservative think tank I know what I am talking about. An article in the *Washington Times* which was widely circulated at the Heritage Foundation ridiculed the Europeans as the “Axis of Cheese.” Europe sees itself confronted with quite a few challenges. I agree with those in Washington who say that Europe has to become stronger. Only a strong Europe that

is capable to act can make a credible and substantial contribution to a transatlantic relationship facing global challenges.

With the introduction of the Euro, Europe has just taken a historic step on its way to this goal. For the first time since the Roman Empire and after countless wars, 12 European nations have merged their sovereignty in the field of monetary policy. There's no doubt that the other EU member states will follow sooner or later.

There is no doubt that the introduction of the Euro will have far-reaching consequences. It will enhance Europe's position as a major global economic player, with the Euro as the world's second reserve currency after the dollar. It will strengthen solidarity among Europeans as well as enhance their sense of identity as Europeans. And it will certainly give a new impulse to two other major European projects: EU enlargement and constitutional reform.

The accession of new members to the EU in 2004 will change the face of Europe in a fundamental way. EU enlargement is the biggest political and economic effort to stabilize an entire region since the Marshall Plan. It will not only create an economic region of almost half a billion consumers — a wealthy market and a bigger one than that of the US. It will also strengthen democracy and market economy in the whole of Europe. Thus, EU enlargement serves America's interest in a stable Europe and vibrant markets. If we get it right, EU enlargement will make possible what Europeans have been dreaming of for centuries: the creation of an undivided Europe based on shared values, on respect for cultural diversity, on joint responsibility, and on the absence of a hegemonic power.

However, EU enlargement will not be feasible without major institutional reforms. In March, a committee of wise men under the chairmanship of former French President Valéry Giscard D'Estaing will take up its work to map out the institutional reforms needed to make an enlarged European Union functional. Our aim is a better distribution of competencies between the European Union and the member states, more transparency, and more legitimacy and democracy within the EU.

I also expect the next intergovernmental conference to bring us closer to a common European foreign and defense policy that really deserves that name. Now that a single currency has been introduced and the political and economic fates of the member states have been linked, the EU needs a real common security strategy.

Do we Europeans need 15 military commands, 13 naval academies, and 15 air forces in the EU? Hasn't the time come for a European army?

Only an EU with effective political and military instruments will make possible the balanced burden-sharing within the Alliance that has been called for by the US. A united, democratic Europe has been a major goal of America's Europe policy for 50 years.

Unfortunately we are not there yet. It is true that Europe would not have been able to run the Afghanistan campaign the way the US did. It is also true that European defense budgets are not what many in Washington believe they should be.

I know there are quite a few people inside the beltway who have little confidence in the EU or in the prospects for an evolving and ever more powerful EU. Our answer to them is, don't underestimate the EU. If you look at long-term trends and developments, the EU has made tremendous progress:

- In 1957, six European countries established the European Communities with the aim of creating a common market. In 1992, the single market, consisting at that time of 12 member states, was complete.
- In 1989, the EU decided to establish a European Monetary Union — only 10 years later this revolutionary step was accomplished.
- In the early 90s, the EU was unable to prevent mass murder and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. Today, the EU not only is the major donor to civilian reconstruction in the Balkans but also provides most of the troops stabilizing Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia. In Macedonia, European countries for the first time in the history of NATO are running a military operation on their own — with the US providing only logistical support. Germany is the lead nation of operation Amber Fox.

Clearly, Europe is moving in the right direction. We are carrying a bigger, a fairer share of the burden.

I would like to end with a quote from Jessica Matthews, the President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, who wrote recently in the periodical *Foreign Policy*: "When the U.S. and

Europe see eye to eye, there is little they cannot accomplish. When they do not agree, however, there is little they can achieve.” I could not agree more.

Thank you!