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Nach dem Wehrdienst Jurastudium an der Indiana University mit Promotion zum J.D. im Jahr 1971. Im Folgejahr Zulassung als Anwalt in Indiana und Tätigkeit in der Versicherungsbranche. 1976–1980 Leiter des Wahlkreisbüros des republikanischen Abgeordneten Dan Quayle. 1981–1989 Mitglied des Repräsentantenhauses. 1989–1999 als Vertreter Indianas Mitglied des US-Senats. 1999 kuzzeitig Lobbyist einer Anwaltskanzlei in Washington. Obwohl nicht Berufsdiplomat, 2001 als US-Botschafter in Deutschland entsandt.

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„The German-American Partnership in the 21st Century“

I am very pleased to have received this generous invitation to come and speak to you this evening. I am also pleased that my wife, Marsha Coats, could accompany me here. We spent some time in your beautiful city this afternoon under the direction of our very able Consul General Susan Elbow, and we enjoyed once again re-acquainting and meeting people from this remarkable city with all of its remarkable attractions, one of which is the Übersee Club.

It is indeed a privilege as the United States Ambassador to Germany to receive an invitation to speak to your group. I know I follow many distinguished individuals who have occupied this podium. So I thank you for that this evening. It is a wonderful tradition and one that I have been looking forward to. At the beginning of a new century, and indeed even a new millennium, I think back to some of my predecessors and what they had to say about German-American relations.

Twenty years ago, in the spring of 1983, Ambassador Arthur Burns stood here to speak to this club. He spoke at a time when the debate regarding the placement of Pershing missiles on German soil had nearly reached its peak. Ambassador Burns talked about the importance of making sure that the common values that bind the Atlantic alliance were understood and appreciated.

Just three years ago, my immediate predecessor, Ambassador John Kornblum, spoke to you. He congratulated Germany for its role as a model for democratic stability for countries around the world and for taking on the challenge of mending the East-West divide that once ran through the country and the continent. Germany, he said, like all members of the transatlantic community, is a keeper of the democratic ideals we cherish.

The reconstruction of the transatlantic relationship in the late 40s and 50s was a unique and extraordinary accomplishment. At the core of that accomplishment, perhaps one of the greatest success stories in modern history, was the German-American relationship. The Marshall Plan was a vital element in rebuilding West Germany's war-torn economy. The North Atlantic Treaty was a guarantee of security against aggression. The Berlin Airlift demonstrated the commitment of the United States to share in the protection of the country that had risen from the ashes of World War II. And American support for reunification, despite significant opposition from some European nations, was essential in uniting a country once divided.

During the Cold War we shared a common goal and we faced a common adversary. In the end, we realized that goal, and the wall that divided the free world from the totalitarian regime came tumbling down in a remarkable triumph of those democratic ideals that John Kornblum had spoken about.

Century-old enemies were now bound together building the future of Europe. As we look to the new challenges before us, no other experience is more relevant. Despite the clear and unitary purpose presented by the Cold War, through those long years, there were frictions and differences of opinion – varying perceptions of tactics and solutions, of motives and goals. But despite those differences there were bonds of unity and strength that united us as two countries, the United States and Germany. We faced these challenges together, probably in one of the most unique if not the most unique nation-to-nation relationship that the world has ever seen.

For it was out of the ashes of World War II that the United States and Germany forged a very special bond. One that was, yes, government-to-government, business-to-business but, most importantly, people-to-people. Since the end of the war, more than 13 million American soldiers and their dependants have lived in Germany, often on a first tour, accompanied by a young bride, maybe a young German bride, and frequently with young children. They have fond memories of their time in Germany and of the relationships

and friendships they found here. Some of those young soldiers have gone on to a much higher calling. Just last week, I was in Washington with Secretary of State Colin Powell, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the German-American Fulbright scholarship program. While Secretary Powell said he could not list himself as a Fulbright scholar, he did have a unique and special place in his heart for Germany because of his service here as a young Second Lieutenant, just out of school and infantry training at Fort Benning. Later, he returned to Germany as Commander of the 5th Corps in Frankfurt. And now as Secretary of State he emphasized the relationship he enjoys with this remarkable country. It is these ties, the people-to-people ties that will see us through difficult times and through differences of opinion. The people-to-people ties will stand – well into the new century and beyond – for a relationship that is important to both countries.

Now when Ambassador Burns spoke here twenty years ago, he talked about the importance of the world of international politics and diplomacy, describing it as “a world in which perception of facts often obscures the facts themselves.” He was concerned that the realities – the hard facts – of history were often forgotten, and that only perceptions remained. He was concerned, for example, that during the Pershing missile debate, young people seemed unable to differentiate between the moral and political order of the West and the totalitarianism of the Soviet Union. He was also concerned about respecting what he called the boundary line between “sheer opinion and true knowledge” and the value of historical perspective.

Today, the United States and Germany, indeed the United States and Europe and nations beyond, once again face overarching new challenges – the frightening explosion of world-wide terrorism, the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the need to deal with states that act in defiance of international norms.

In Germany, the emotional and heartfelt expressions of solidarity in the immediate response to the events of 9/11 were followed by concrete and positive examples of effective action – in some cases, representing major new policy directions. Despite the challenges posed by differing legal systems, together we made crucial advances in cooperation that now make it much harder for terrorists to operate. As in the United States, measures designed to strengthen internal security passed a concerned and watchful German Parliament. German military forces now are an important part of Operation Enduring Freedom and the Stability Force in Afghanistan. Previously, the German response to military operations had been colored, understandably, by a “never again” reaction. And so the decision to deploy troops out of area was thus as politically difficult as it was historically significant.

These decisions and these actions have been acknowledged and appreciated by a grateful America. President Bush personally expressed the gratitude of the American people on his visit to Berlin last May. But as we have tragically learned, despite our success in routing out the al-Qaeda terrorists in Afghanistan, winning the war on terrorism will be a long struggle, requiring patience, perseverance and resolve. As the President said in his speech to the Bundestag, in addition to the terrorist threat, we are now threatened by states and terrorist networks that actively pursue and in some cases may have already obtained weapons of mass destruction. Containment and deterrence may not be able to thwart the new enemies that have attacked us.

And so, in recognition of this, we must define anew how we deal with those states that produce weapons of mass destruction, how we combat terrorism, and how we measure the efficacy of international organizations. We must look at new and better solutions to further the growth of democracy, prosperity and justice around the globe, to defend human rights and to bring war criminals to justice. Nations that share these goals must stand together – even if we don’t always agree on the best way to achieve them. For we share a common cultural and intellectual history, a commitment to common values, ideals and interests, and a common understanding of representative democracy, of human rights, the rule of law and of economic liberty. Because, as we are learning, only by standing together in firm support of each other can we be

successful in dealing with these new challenges.

Marsha and I just returned from two weeks in Washington and we were reminded once again of how much America has changed since that defining moment when the reality of terrorism shattered misperceptions that Americans held. Americans thought that terrorism was something that happened somewhere else, that terrorism was another event in another place, with, yes, disastrous consequences and tragic loss of life. But it hadn't come to our shore, it hadn't impacted us where we live and where we work. 9/11 shattered that misperception. As Arthur Burns said, "Sometimes perceptions have to be met with hard facts."

In the 90s, we watched with horror the bombing of two of our embassies, in Kenya and in Tanzania, taking the lives of over 200 Americans and local citizens. We saw the bombing of the USS Cole in the port in Yemen and sadly watched as the caskets of the sailors that died were brought home. But these were terrorist attacks over there, not on our homeland. And so when 9/11 confronted the American people, where we worked and where we lived, we had to confront the reality of terrorism on our own shores. We also learned of the proliferation of ballistic missile technology and weapons of mass destruction that had taken place throughout the late 80s. We learned of Soviet scientists being lured away after the fall of the Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union to countries that were intent on using their talents and experience to produce nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We learned that missiles and other means of destruction, sold by nations that were producing these weapons, had fallen into the wrong hands.

Captured documents and interrogations of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan clearly demonstrated al-Qaeda's attempt to obtain chemical, biological and even nuclear weapon capability. The radiological dirty bombs these documents described were packed explosives around low-grade radiological material, designed to detonate in cities and spread radioactive contamination. That was a possibility that we had to acknowledge. And we had to begin to think about what we would be facing had the airplanes that smashed into the World Trade Towers, contained weapons of mass destruction. We would be talking about casualties of not 3,000 but of perhaps 300,000 or even 3 million.

As the President faced these hard facts, he had to make some very hard decisions, because, as he said, we cannot afford to wait for the next attack – a next attack that might be a marriage of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. Doctrines like containment and deterrence were suddenly obsolete in the face of the new reality of an amorphous world network of terrorist cells funded and sponsored by states providing them with equipment and sanctuary.

These are the new threats of the 21st century.

When the President came to Germany in May, I met him at the airport and we rode to the center of Berlin together. He asked whether the Europeans, and in this particular case the Germans, fully understood the reaction of America to the events of 9/11. I told him that I didn't think they did because the terrorist attacks had not been brought to their soil. I said it's almost as if people, after the enormous difficulties of the past century, have taken a collective sigh of relief and said, "Can't we just enjoy peace and prosperity without having to think about and deal with the realities of this new threat?"

When you consider World War I, World War II, the Nazi Era, the terrible destruction of Europe, the Cold War, the threat to Germans symbolized by a Wall that was just kilometers from where we drove, it seems that they are saying that they need some time for peace. The President pondered this, and then said, "I wish that were the case. I hope that they have that luxury. I hope and pray that they will not learn about the reality of this threat firsthand, the hard way, the way we had to learn about it. But I also hope that they will stand with us as we face up to the very hard, cold facts of this new 21st century threat."

Despite our success in Afghanistan, we read almost weekly about terrorist acts. German tourists losing their lives in Tunisia, a French Oil tanker being blown up in the Gulf near Yemen, Richard Reed attempting to detonate a shoe bomb to bring an airliner down over the Atlantic, and the tragic attack in Bali.

Then we turned on the TV last evening to learn about Chechen rebels holding Russian, German, British and others hostage at a theater in Moscow. And we realize that terrorism is not directed against a military, it is not just directed at America. It is directed against innocent people where they gather – in theaters, in vacation resorts like Bali, in nightclubs, on city buses and on airplanes. It is directed against innocent people in a way that undermines people's security and destroys their confidence in the economy. It puts all of us at risk.

I started out my remarks this evening talking about the many ways, historic ways, in which Germany has responded to the events of 9/11 and cooperated with us on the war on terrorism. But there is a substantial difference on the question of how we deal with Iraq. In the President's State of the Union speech in January, he named Iraq as one of a trio of nations that possess or are attempting to possess the capability for weapons of mass destruction. Particularly in Iraq, we know that those weapons have already been used – chemical against Iranians and Kurds (their own people). We know that there have been invasions of two neighboring countries and defiance of the world community and the resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council. So we believe that we are dealing with a situation in which we cannot afford to wait for the next Iraqi violation. In the face of the Iraqi defiance, we believe we have to take action now.

At stake, as the President has said in his speech to the United Nations, is the credibility of the United Nations and its ability to enforce its resolutions. If the United Nations cannot take steps to enforce its resolutions, then it is simply a debating society issuing meaningless pieces of paper at which leaders in rogue nations thumb their noses. And so the challenge before the United Nations, as the President laid out, is whether or not it is going to enforce the resolutions which it passed following the Gulf War in 1991.

All of you know that this became an issue in the recent German election campaign. I don't know if you've had the chance to read a piece which Henry Kissinger, a native German and former Secretary of State, wrote that was published in the United States on October 18. He starts out by saying that German-American relations have been thrown into crisis by the way Germany's election was conducted by its governing party. Other allies have had reservations about American policy on Iraq, but only Germany has chosen the road of confrontation. This is especially painful, he said, for those who actively nurtured one of the proudest achievements of American post-war foreign policy – the return of Germany to the community of nations as an equal, respected and indispensable member. It was a journey marked by the Berlin airlift, the Marshall plan, support for Germany's membership in NATO and the European Community, close cooperation in two further Berlin crises, American support for German reconciliation with the East, American leadership in negotiating a final agreement on access to Berlin, and finally unconditional American support for reunification despite the hesitation of our allies.

This explains the shock, Kissinger went on to say, when suddenly, without warning or consultation, an election issue was made of American policy on Iraq – despite the fact that no request for a German military contribution had been made or was likely to be made. This was accompanied by sharp criticism of alleged unilateral tactics of President George W. Bush.

Dr. Kissinger has made an important and relevant observation. Germany should not underestimate the damage to the relationship that existed between the President and the Chancellor and between our government and your government. Significant steps need to be undertaken to repair this damage.

In closing, let me state that I am confident that we will maintain our overall relationship and again stand together. It is crucial, at this particular time in history, that, once again, in the face of a common enemy, we speak with a united voice in dealing with this threat, a threat to our very way of life. The adversary we face today has no respect for boundaries, does not separate militants from innocents, seeks to undermine the world order, the rule of law, and our democratic ideals. Even if we do not agree on methods, we share a common goal and a common purpose – and that must be made very clear.

Americans join President Bush in hoping and praying that it will not take a European 9/11 to awaken Germany and Europe to the hard facts of our present age. We trust that we will be able to work together to find ways to successfully deal with this threat and to provide our people with security, peace and prosperity.

Thank you for allowing me to share these thoughts with you this evening. I appreciate your invitation and your attention. It is a great honor to serve as American Ambassador to Germany, a country that Marsha and I, in a short amount of time, have come to truly love and truly appreciate. We have been warmly welcomed and received by people throughout this country. What started out to be an uncertain journey has turned into an absolute certain conviction that we are here for a purpose. We are here at a momentous time and there is no other place that we would rather be. Thank you. ■