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ADDRESS BY ELEANOR DULLES
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF GERMAN AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AT HUNTER COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES
NEW YORK, N.Y.
THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 1956

THE IMPACT OF THE UNITED STATES ON EUROPE

Two centuries ago there was transplanted to this land a society and a culture which continued to be nourished and enriched from abroad. We, the heirs of this society, have always been ready to acknowledge our debt. We are grateful for our heritage. We have received so much in value over the years that we have been preoccupied with our youth as a nation. We have not recognized the full significance of the changes that have taken place in recent times. The fact is that for more than a decade of war and reconstruction this country has been giving substantial and critically important support to those lands from which we came.

Thus, the passage of time and the change in our destinies has brought to you and to me new opportunities and new tasks. We are so accustomed to thinking of ourselves as the junior partners in efforts to maintain the values of civilization that we hesitate to acknowledge the new role we have assumed.

It is important now, at this stage of international recovery, and also in this phase of your personal lives, to turn our attention to some of these facts. Consideration is worthwhile since, in a very deep sense, this new situation will affect the world you live in and will determine the claims which will be made upon you. It is important, therefore, that you now take stock of where you stand and what your country has done in relation to Europe. Such an appraisal as you may make will almost certainly give you a sense of the scope of the problem and a new excitement over the part you will be asked to play.

The best way in which I can acknowledge the privilege of being here is to give you a summary of what I have seen and what I believe.

When I

When I look at the past and the future, I am impressed with the cause for pride in what we have accomplished in war and peace.

In the period of armed conflict and years of reconstruction, we have as a nation gained new stature. Thus, during a brief span of 15 or 20 years, this country has made good a considerable portion of its obligation to the civilizations to which it has been so deeply in debt. It has assumed a large share of the burden of leadership in renewing and expanding our human heritage.

Of course, this giving back of resources, material and spiritual, has not been without a strong motive of self interest. In the past few years it has become widely realized that the success of efforts to preserve those influences and values which can make possible a richer and more secure life, requires a broader partnership between nations. Thus the contributions we have been able to make to restore the economic and spiritual life has been with a clear purpose. They have been designed to save the cultures and peoples of those countries so important to all of us.

The new element in our relations with Europe over the past fifteen years has been the energy with which they have been conducted, the scope of the imagination, and the extent of material support. Moreover, without the elements of common origin in our political and economic institutions, in tradition and custom, the success achieved would have been less impressive. These common origins have made possible a working together in relief and reconstruction, a shared effort to win financial stability by using familiar techniques, well-tried and well known methods because of our common understanding of law and of literature, of education and industry, we have been able to work together.

Thus, the Atlantic community is a real community. In contributing to it in this time of need, we have indeed been supporting those institutions and those cultures which we so long have prized.

One of the difficulties which surrounds any attempt to appraise the influence of this country on Europe is that such an appraisal raises in many people's minds questions of modesty on our part and pride on their part. If one looks at the facts objectively, there is no serious doubt that this country has made an enormous contribution. Because the United States has been able to offer aid of various sorts to European nations, there is a better chance for the survival of the world as we know it.

Whether in

Whether in fact this world can continue to grow in strength and in richness of expression is not a matter which can be demonstrated now. The main point which I wish to make as I review the question is that Europe and the world have been given a new chance. The importance of this new chance for peace and security can scarcely be exaggerated. We have gained years in which our principles can be further applied, in which young men and women can be educated to new horizons and broader concepts.

My analysis of the impact of the United States on Europe leads me to emphasize four main aspects. These are all closely related and have complemented each other. The first to command attention is the material support through relief and reconstruction which this country was able to render Europe.

The second was the new organizations--the structures of working cooperation whose development we have done so much to assist -- organizations designed to serve new communities of nations not only in Europe, but also in the Middle East and Asia.

The third aspect is the series of alliances and commitments which bind us together with the future of Europe.

The fourth, our role in developing new aspects of personal liberty and individual freedom to enrich the heritage of the past.

I have seen the workings of all these four categories of influence in France, England, Austria, Germany and elsewhere, and it is from these personal observations that I want to speak today. For instance, I went into Austria in the early summer of 1945 and shared the difficult struggles for recovery in Austria and in Germany. I had a small part in the efforts of the Western Allies to maintain the security and welfare of the city of Berlin, hard pressed by the Communist tyranny. I have been close to the formulation of early plans for a number of European organizations.

In the course of this work, I have talked with hundreds of students and exchangees and have sat in many meetings where the values of a good society have been discussed and where the efforts for true international understanding have been frankly and fully debated.

Perhaps this intimate experience which has been my privilege leads to a special point of view, but in any case, it forms the basis for strong convictions. As the result of participating in the struggles and seeing the results, I am convinced that our influence has been to make possible, and even probable, a close and enduring cooperation for freedom.

The time which has been won was first at the cost of human lives during the war, then by virtue of a great financial expenditure in the post-war period.

This phase of history and the revival in Western Europe has been one in which we as Americans can be proud, since it justifies our early traditions and our inheritance from the great men of Europe.

There is a tendency now to underestimate and even to forget the material importance of the early aid to Europe and the later more integrated accomplishments of the European recovery plan. Americans at times feel almost apologetic about grants and loans, but if they had not been extended, the chaos of much of Europe might have prevented the recovery of the world from the second World War.

When I went into Austria in 1945, I lived in a hotel which had been torn wide open by bombs. There was virtually no light in the city at night. Frequently we saw persons drop from hunger in the streets. We saw professors and bankers, as well as workers and the unemployed, picking up cigarette butts from the gutters. We saw misery and fear, weakness and disease, confusion and despair.

Conditions in France and England were slightly better. In Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, they were worse.

The first task facing the United States, consistent with our aims to bring a real recovery was obviously to bring in food, clothes, medicines and fuel. This alone, however, would have been of little worth. The basic job was to put the people to work, to give them tools, to restore light, fuel, machinery, transport, and the financial systems. It is easy now to forget the complexity of the task. Many do not even remember how great the need, how long the road to recovery was.

In the case of Austria there was, in 1945 and 1946, virtually no coal. Fuel had to be shipped in from outside. There was need for passenger transport, trucks, and rolling stock. These were loaned from the army, later bought and finally rebuilt.

The electric power systems had great potential, and in the short space of five years, a large part of the plant had been put back into operation. In the next ten years the capacity has been expanded way beyond pre-war levels.

One of the most vital of the economic contributions to Austria was, however, the measures taken jointly with the other western occupying powers to accomplish the stabilization of the currency. This was done not on the basis of financial

reserves,

reserves, which were non-existent, but on the basis of techniques and confidence. Austria after the war was a poor country. The capital position destroyed by the Anschluss with Germany was at the lowest possible level. There was little basis for stabilization except the firmness of the Austrian political and financial leaders and the help of the American Government. In spite of obstacles raised by the Communists who also occupied Austria, the monetary reform was carried through and, since 1947, the cigarette money characteristic of the post-war years ceased to function. National bank money became the general standard and the accepted means of payment. Sooner than anyone expected, the exports climbed to a point where they virtually balanced imports.

The United States influence in Austria, as in other Western European countries, was also notable in the restoration of the democratic machinery and the strengthening of the institutions of freedom. The Americans, first in Austria, and working often closely with their English and French allies, helped plan the first informal meeting of political leaders. They stood back of the Austrian elections which were held a few weeks after the shooting stopped. They safeguarded the principles and assisted in the process of free, secret and orderly choosing the first government since the Anschluss in 1938.

I have taken Austria as a typical example of the economic impact of the United States on Europe. The cases of Belgium and France, of Germany and Italy and the other countries receiving US aid could perhaps have been used with equal validity.

The methods used and the institutions created in recent years were of more than short-run accomplishments. They transcend in time and scope the initial purpose for which they were formed. They succeeded in bringing together sixteen nations in a continuing association for mutual support. The cooperating agencies in Europe, the OEEC and the EPU, have not only been vehicles for increasing the effectiveness of U.S. aid, but also for bringing together the economists and statesmen of Europe in a long-range endeavor. In particular, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation and the European Payments Union were trail blazers in the world of ever closer contacts and cooperation may well constitute a turning point in moving from European conflict to sound and lasting community of interests. They may be counted among the major contributions of the United States to growing world prosperity.

Both institutions, centered on Paris, were simple in structure and relatively free of red tape. Both tended to act to smooth the relations and increase the commerce between European nations. The participation of the United States has been close and intimate through its continuing advice and efforts to bring about cooperative understanding on trade liberalization, financial adjustments, and effective use of material resources.

Thus,

Thus, in a non-controversial manner, these 16 countries, some of them recently engaged in mortal combat, worked in a joint endeavor to raise the standard of living of their people and to remove causes of economic friction.

In 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization followed soon on the first phase of recovery to provide urgently needed security measures. The Coal and Steel Community was developed to make possible a rational production and marketing of coal and steel as a basis for coordinating the heavy industries.

It is not possible to describe the various organizations that have been set up at the instigation and under the inspiration of United States leadership and with the cooperation of this country's allies in the Western world. They all, whatever their character, have merit in that they develop the skills required for working together and develop the habit of cooperation. They break down the barriers of unfamiliarity and cross over the gaps which have formerly been raised by national differences of language and custom.

Europe, thus, has had not only a time span in which to develop economic and political strength, but also new tools and a new knowledge that the United States is working alongside with shared aims, trying to make these tools effective.

If one were to select an institution which, though still in the making, may have the most critical importance on the fate of Europe, and of mankind, that institution would be EURATOM. This organization is designed to bring within the cooperative framework of joint control the uses and further exploration of the development of atomic power for peace. It is designed to bring under joint control, for mutual benefit, almost unimaginable developments in that area.

All must recognize how important it is that no nation goes its way completely alone. If, for instance, in the field of atomic power, nations were to act separately, the whole world could be the victim of the least responsible and the least disciplined of such nations. It is perhaps in this area that our deepest concern and our greatest hope for essential integration will lie. This agency could be the major instrument for fulfilling the hopes and plans sketched out by President Eisenhower in his speech on the atom for peace.

Of major importance as a cornerstone of the contribution of the United States to the hope of the peace for the future of Europe, has been the series of alliances designed to safeguard the security of Europe and the peace of the world. The organizations already mentioned have been the outward expression of these alliances, but they are not as yet fully representative of the intentions and the meaning of strength which come with the joining together for security and against aggression.

The full meaning of this new form of America's participation in the fate of Europe and its readiness to stand with other free nations against aggression is best understood when one considers the pleas for a similar kind of security effort after the first World War. It was not possible for the United States to make a commitment in Europe in the 1920's. Apparently with a few notable exceptions such as Woodrow Wilson, neither the people of the country nor the leadership were convinced of the necessity. Now almost everyone knows isolation is not possible. A significant share of this country's effort is devoted to making mutual security a reality.

These facts are known and appreciated in Europe. Those who talk about whether we are liked or disliked abroad are looking at superficial aspects of the situation and ignoring the basic facts. The United States shouldered many responsibilities and made serious commitments. There is no European leader who does not know that in this situation there is great strength. There is no leader in the Kremlin who does not recognize that these facts are of major importance.

Because of this notable extension of our influence and of our activities, policy in every European country has changed in significant ways in recent years. The policy in Russia has changed. One of the aspects of the present situation which is being watched most carefully in Moscow is undoubtedly the new, unpredicted, and to a large extent, unexpected willingness of the Germans and the French to work together. Such a situation could not have been anticipated fifty years ago. These are major developments not only for Europe, but for the world in general. These are results of patient, continuous and imaginative efforts on the part of the United States.

The Berlin story is the prime illustration of the execution of a joint effort to protect an area to which we are committed. It was a practical realization of our will to support those who stand for democratic principles.

The action of this country together with its Western allies in mounting the airlift and thus standing with Berlin in time of trial and to frustrate the Communist blockade, is evidence of our new participation in the affairs and destinies of Europe and our new ability to assist our friends. The United States was and is committed to Berlin along with the other occupying powers. Immediately upon the imposition of the blockade, it acted to supply the city. It showed by word and deed that it would stand with the free Berlin population.

The Berliners, for their part, made their memorable decision to reject the lures of the East, to refuse the bribes of dictatorships and to assume the risks of maintaining their freedoms. They did not know when they made their choice, whether or not the trickle of food and fuel coming into the city would ever increase

to sufficient

to sufficient volume to maintain their life. They knew the risks which they were taking, but they also knew that they had support from outside. If the United States and the Allies had not mounted an airlift in Berlin, the Communist dictatorship would probably have reached the Rhine. There would be now no shining light, no freedom bell in this city in the center of Europe, far behind the Iron Curtain. Perhaps the newly won sovereignty of Germany would have been impossible. The strategic potential of NATO might not exist. Who knows whether France and Italy could have held firm? The dramatic circle and descent of planes over the apartment houses of Berlin, the thousands of tons of fuel and food unloaded at Tempelhof made possible the strength to refuse the lures of the Communists. They made possible the choice of Berliners to stand with the West and to make their stand unmistakably clear to the East. Now, as a result of this choice, a short distance from Warsaw, 150 miles East of the Rhine, the Berliners maintain an island of democracy. Thus, the United States reached out with aid, with planes, with courage and foresight to hold this outpost of freedom. All Europe must acknowledge the deep significance of these policies and the foundations they laid for dependable alliance.

The concepts of freedom and the urge to let thought and speech range over wider and wider spaces, the attempts to reconcile the stability that comes with tradition with the sense of opportunity which nourish our society date back beyond to the beginning of recorded time. The United States in this generation, in our relation to Europe, has added more than a footnote to this long history, however. We have written the beginning of a new chapter. The form which our influence has taken is in line with our early philosophy and our more recent technical development. It is the almost limitless mobility of the individual between places, between classes, between professions. He can choose his way of life. If necessary, he can change it. This new extension of the choice of the individual is typical of this country. In our relations with Europe it has been revealed in our breaking down of cartels and professional monopolies. It has been of revolutionary importance in introducing a new type of partnership between management and labor. Europe has recently been turning its attention to our education and culture in relation to the opportunity of the individual.

Like all new liberties and all modifications in the established order, these changes have not been fully understood and have been overlooked completely by some observers. There is little doubt that they are altering the nature of European society.

Since

Since the aims of this country in its efforts to reconstruct the best in the old system and build new structures on the foundations of the past, was to make other countries strong, its influence in this field is in fact self-limiting. Those elements in Europe to which we gave the most aid are now most independent. Thus, the success of the program to increase democracy, to widen the areas of free choice and cooperation was, by its very nature, a transitional phase in world progress.

Some wonder at the meaning of the expressions of initiative or even of disagreement that now occur more frequently as sovereign nations express their increasing independence and their national will. This development is in the truest sense a sign of success and not of failure. Healthy nations do not want to be led. They wish to exert leadership. As long as they are acting for the peace and security of the group, they are, by showing initiative, carrying forward the new concepts and increasing the strength of the mutual enterprise.

In every foreign post and in the work at home for these ends, the work of this country has been accomplished by people like you. From our great colleges they and you have gained a clear view of the importance of these tasks. They and you have gained pride in a willingness to accept responsibility, a respect for the high standards of workmanship. In sharing in the education of our great institutions, the lessons have been clear. You have learned to fear the disaster which might overtake us all if you fail. You have known the hope for a world of peace. Above all, you have become aware of the great opportunities which you have in science, education, art and business.

The impact of the United States on Europe has been crucial to the future of mankind. The reconstruction of these countries has saved some of the world's most precious values. Such reconstruction would not have been possible if there had not been a resurgence of the political vitality of the countries which created most of the democratic institutions governing mankind. The new institutions for working together have opened up possibilities for a widening and ever more significant cooperation. The Alliance in compacts and treaties has given substance to the will for peace. And finally, the expanding of the borders of personal freedom and opportunity has added to our heritage of freedom and dignity.

This work has been carried on in large measure by the men and women who graduated from college in the last 30 years. A not inconsiderable part has been the work of those who graduated in the last ten years. As the task increases in variety and urgency, the need for you is greater.

You can

You can take pride in the accomplishments of your country, its work, and its ideals. You can resolve to seize the present opportunity and continue the work already begun.

As Carl Schurz said, in April, 1859:

"... ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands. But like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them you will reach your destiny."

* * *

State--FD, Wash., D.C.

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