

Collège Interarmées de Défense

"U.S. Foreign Policy"

**Ecole Militaire
1, place Joffre, 75008 Paris
December 7, 2004 (10:45-11:45)**

Good morning. It is a pleasure to be with you to discuss American foreign policy. I would like to share my thoughts with you on the foreign policy of the United States and the likely approach the second Bush administration will take towards foreign affairs. I will be happy to take your questions after that.

I would first like to thank General Flichy, President of the Collège Interarmées de Défense, for his invitation and warm welcome, and to all of his colleagues who helped arrange this opportunity to speak to you.

President Bush approaches his second term with the support of a clear majority of Americans and with solid majorities in both houses of Congress. I think he will continue to take an active approach to foreign policy, as he has done during his first term. Our foreign policy will continue to be based on certain core values, which we share with our allies and friends, such as France. These values include a strong commitment to freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and free trade based on open-market principles.

Condoleeza Rice will soon become Secretary of State, which means there will be excellent policy coordination between the State Department and White House. She has an exceptionally good relationship with President Bush, and having led the National Security Council, she knows intimately how policy is made and coordinated in the White House and between the branches of the government. With Dr. Rice's former deputy, Stephen Hadley, following her as National Security Advisor, I think there will be a very effective and closely-knit foreign policy team in place at the State Department and the NSC. There will be other changes in personnel, but I think that identifying the Secretary of State and National Security Advisor at an early stage is an important step in setting the Administration's foreign policy course for the new term.

I can safely predict that the new administration's top priority will continue to be the war on terrorism. We will continue to assist the Interim Government of Iraq to achieve stability, provide security for its people, and complete the successful election of a national assembly. We will support the new national assembly as it drafts and seeks approval of a constitution and holds elections for a new Iraqi government.

In carrying out the broader war on terror, we will continue to emphasize self-defense, locating and neutralizing active terrorists and their supporters, depriving terrorists of financial resources, and continuing the longer-term objectives of promoting democracy and providing assistance to the developing nations of the world.

We have achieved significant results in the war on terrorism. The coalition that intervened in Afghanistan has deprived al-Qaida of its primary base. It forced from power the Taliban regime that sheltered and supported terrorism and denied its people a normal life. French forces, along with the forces of other allies and friends, are an important part of the coalition operating in Afghanistan, with some coalition elements now under French military

command through EUROCORPS. Afghanistan has held elections successfully, an important step in building democracy and the rule of law in a country where those concepts did not exist previously. The United States is part of an international effort to discourage the production of opium poppies in Afghanistan, by introducing alternative crops and assisting Afghan anti-narcotics enforcement efforts. All of these activities are part of the American commitment to bring stability, democracy, and social progress in Afghanistan.

It is worth remembering that even though many difficulties remain in Afghanistan and Iraq, 53 million people now have freedom that they did not have before, and they are without question on the way to a life better than they had under the despotic and violently repressive regimes that previously ruled those countries.

Achieving stability and democratization in Iraq is a significant challenge, but one that I am confident we can meet. A brutal and dangerous criminal regime has been removed and Iraqis are afforded their first real opportunity to live in freedom and democracy. Let us not forget that Saddam Hussein was not only a threat to his own people but also to the region and beyond.

We are encouraged by several recent developments concerning Iraq, the first the commitment by NATO members to provide training to Iraq's security forces. As you may know, NATO decisions require unanimous agreement among its members. NATO's support for this training is thus the result of multilateral consensus among all Alliance members.

The second positive development on Iraq was the recent decision by the members of the Paris Club to forgive 80 percent of the foreign debt Iraq inherited from Saddam Hussein. This debt relief will contribute significantly to financial stability in Iraq, and the United States commends France and other members of the Paris Club for agreeing not to saddle the current government with burdens that would make the successful reconstruction of Iraq more difficult.

A third encouraging development was Foreign Minister Barnier's statement at the recent international conference on Iraq in Sharm el-Sheikh. The Minister indicated a willingness to look to the future rather than dwell over past disagreements on Iraq, stating "*we all know what positions our different countries held in the period that led to the current situation developing. But today we must turn to the future. France, and Europe, are ready to do so. We have a collective duty to put an end to instability.*"

We hope that Minister Barnier's statement signals a willingness by France to become actively engaged in assisting Iraq on its path to stability and the establishment of a free democratic society. Clearly, a stable, independent, and prosperous Iraq would be in all of our interests.

We are also encouraged by Minister Barnier's indication that it is no longer productive to continue debating whether intervening in Iraq was or was not the proper thing to do. As you know, the United States and France had serious policy disagreements over Iraq, which created strains on our relationship. I agree with Minister Barnier that we are now beyond the point where it is useful to continue to debate the issue or to let disagreement over Iraq define our relations, as it has in the eyes of many. I further agree with him when he says "*we have a collective duty to put an end to instability*" there.

Another very major priority for President Bush's second term is peace in the Middle East. The election of a successor to Arafat on January 9th may provide a new opportunity to achieve that goal.

Secretary Powell's recent visit to the Middle East emphasizes the importance of a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem. As Secretary Powell stated during his visit, President Bush remains committed to the creation of a Palestinian state. This is a commitment he has expressed

on a number of occasions, and he is the first American President to make this commitment. The President believes that the Roadmap process, which is a multilateral proposal reached by the Quartet, that is the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, and Russia, is the best way to Middle East peace.

Also concerning that part of the world, we will continue to emphasize cooperation between the G-8 countries and the countries of the broader Middle East and North Africa. The G-8 and the countries in the region will have an opportunity to build cooperation under the Forum for the Future, which will hold its first meeting in Morocco in just four days, on December 11. We hope that this effort will encourage new projects and cooperative efforts in the region with G-8 countries, added to the many programs already under way with the region's governments and civil society. By contributing to progress on economic, political, and social issues in the Middle East and North African region, we can help to ensure regional and global stability.

Consistent with the President's policy to combat terrorism in any form and to foster peace will be concerted action to pursue the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction. Efforts will be directed towards nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, and missiles. We are part of a major effort, with Japan, South Korea, China, and Russia, to resolve issues relating to North Korea. We are also very concerned about Iran, and hope that the agreement France, Germany, and Great Britain have reached with Iran in conjunction with the I.A.E.A. will yield the results we all seek. The United States and its allies and friends must not relent in making all efforts to minimize the threat to civilization posed by weapons of mass destruction in the wrong hands. This is a critically important issue for the entire international community.

President Bush is also concerned about the environment and is committed to devoting resources to protecting it. The United States under President Clinton decided not to support the Kyoto Protocol, because the Protocol was considered a flawed approach, not because we disagree with the objective. President Bush has made it clear that he remains committed to addressing climate change, including the reduction of greenhouse gases domestically and internationally.

The United States is an active participant in the work taking place under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. A world leader in Climate Change Research, the U.S. continues to commit billions of dollars of resources to better understand the changes occurring in the polar regions, the oceans, and the atmosphere. The first Bush Administration provided the leadership behind the highly successful Global Earth Observation System, in which countries share research on climate science, seek to harmonize basic data about earth science, and better understand the gaps in our knowledge of the climate.

The Bush Administration is also devoting resources to intensify research into climate friendly energy technologies. These include not only the traditional renewable sources -- wind, solar, and geothermal -- but also the newer areas of carbon sequestration and hydrogen technologies. Other international environmental work with major support from the United States includes the Methane-for-Markets Partnership, the Generation IV International Forum, and the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership.

This past December 1 was World AIDS Day, and I expect that the United States will continue to play an active role in the fight against AIDS/HIV and other infectious diseases. President Bush's five-year, 15 billion dollar plan is now in operation, and we remain committed to its full implementation. The President's initiative is in addition to the continued U.S.

commitment and contributions to the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

Our trans-Atlantic security relationship with European allies and friends remains a key element of global stability, and the second Bush administration will continue to view NATO as our primary instrument for ensuring trans-Atlantic security. We believe it can and should play an expanded role in global security generally.

The United States favors political and military reform of NATO to increase its effectiveness. Part of the reform is to reorient NATO away from the Cold War posture where states were aligned against states, and instead make NATO better able to respond to the threats posed by failed states or non-state belligerents such as terrorists. Such threats may seek to target Europe but may originate elsewhere, requiring NATO to become more globally oriented in order to be effective.

Some specific American objectives regarding NATO include: reinforcing NATO's peacekeeping assignment in Afghanistan, in which the French military currently plays an important role; examining NATO's role in Iraq, where we have already seen progress with NATO's decision to help train Iraq's security forces; further defining relations between NATO and the EU to achieve maximum cooperation and effectiveness; and strengthening NATO's relations with Russia.

As I indicated previously, I hope that U.S. and French disagreement over Iraq will no longer be the primary issue used to evaluate the state of Franco-American relations. The Iraq issue has obscured the many other areas where the United States and France enjoy very close and cooperative relations. These include Haiti, the Balkans -- where the French military is playing a leading role in commanding KFOR in Kosovo -- Cote d'Ivoire and elsewhere in Africa, and our diplomatic coordination over Iran, North Korea, and Sudan.

The United States and France also cooperate very well in intelligence sharing, anti-terrorist law enforcement issues, transportation security matters, and international crime and narcotics trafficking, which are often linked closely with terrorism finance. The U.S. and French militaries work well together in many of these activities, including, as I've mentioned, in Afghanistan and Kosovo, where in both cases the French military is now involved in commanding multilateral operations, without any complications with coalition partners that I'm aware of.

My point here is to stress that the U.S. and France enjoy excellent cooperation in many areas, and that cooperation between our two countries is often almost automatic and should be considered the norm for countries that are old friends and long-time allies such as the United States and France. The United States and France agree with each other and work with each other far more often than not, with disagreements over issues such as Iraq relatively rare. I am not minimizing the degree to which we differed over Iraq, but it should not be the sole factor in evaluating Franco-American relations. That is why I stressed the encouraging nature of Foreign Minister Barnier's statement that it is time to move on from our period of disagreement.

President Bush has stated his intention to visit Europe early in his new term, and I expect he will use the occasion to reinforce the ties we share with our European allies and friends. Likewise, I think Europeans should use the opportunity to reaffirm the partnership and commonality linking the United States and Europe.

Trans-Atlantic relations function more effectively when both sides position themselves to work together to find solutions to the challenges we face. When he visits Europe, I think President Bush will do his best to make sure that relations between the United States and Europe

proceed in a positive and forward-looking manner. I am confident that his European counterparts will agree that it is in all our interests to take a similarly positive approach.

I have covered what I believe will be some of the key areas of American foreign policy as President Bush enters his second term. As I noted at the beginning of these remarks, the full shape of that policy will become clearer once the new foreign policy team is in place and functioning. I do believe that our policy will continue to have as a basis the values that have long determined United States policy -- freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, to name a few. These are values that we share with our allies, friends, and partners across the globe, and that we should all be working together to promote.

Thank you for your attention, and I welcome your questions.