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The following is a speech by the Federal President Walter Scheel on the occasion of a dinner given in honor of the President of the United States of America and Mrs. Ford, on July 27, 1975, aboard the Rhine cruiser "Drachenfels." (Transcribed and translated by the U. S. I. S.)

Mr. President, Mrs. Ford, Ladies and Gentlemen:

A few weeks ago, during the splendid reception in front of the White House, I expressed the desire to be able to welcome you soon here in Germany. The international conference schedule fortunately facilitated the quick fulfillment of this wish. Today, you are here! I welcome you, Mrs. Ford and those accompanying you very heartily. You know that you are highly esteemed, highly welcome guests in this country.

We know that wherever the President of the United States happens to be in the world he is accompanied by the concept of his office: The White House! My house and yours have the same color - white. But it (my house) is too small to host a festive gathering in your honor. Therefore I have invited you aboard this white ship.

The banks of the river are passing by outside. Things are "in flux." We are sailing against the tide - but the farther we sail on this truly European river the better the outlook becomes. This corresponds to a political hope, a political goal. It is our hope and our goal to create a solidly founded, strong Europe, that, jointly with the United States of America, assures a future of peace and freedom.

The closer we get to Europe, the better the outlook becomes. Much has already been accomplished. The people of Britain have unequivocally and ultimately opted for Europe. European political cooperation has shown new possibilities to build up Europe institutionally. Much still remains to be done. All countries of the Western world have to struggle with economic problems. But to an ever increasing extent the view prevails that individual countries alone cannot master these difficulties. The talks that the Federal Government conducted during these days make it clear that the will for common effort is gaining ground. Europe is heading for a coordination of its various economic policies. This is further important progress. From the difficulties themselves we gain insights and power to overcome them. Europe alone will not be able to master present-day economic problems. Only if we coordinate our efforts with those of the United States will we be successful. And this will strengthen the consciousness of the benefits and meaning of Atlantic Partnership on both sides of the Atlantic. Atlantic cooperation has from the beginning been a necessity from the point of view of security. Today it is also an economic necessity.

Mr. President, you are coming to our country at a very significant time. In a few days the final phase of the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe starts in Helsinki. The negotiations in Geneva have become exemplary of the possibilities for constructive Western cooperation.

These negotiations have also shown - and your personal attendance in Helsinki, Mr. President, will impressively demonstrate this before the entire world - that American and Europe are inseparably united, that one cannot discuss security and cooperation in Europe without the participation of the United States. The Atlantic Alliance belongs to Western Europe.

(MCRE)

This conference in Helsinki should be a further step toward detente. The documents to be signed form a framework which in the future must be filled in by agreements and by concrete acts. Each signatory State will then be able to demonstrate its understanding of detente. In this manner it will be judged. No one can hope more than the Germans that the hopes connected with the Conference will be fulfilled. But we are aware that no conference can guarantee our security. The Atlantic Alliance remains the basis of our security.

You, Mr. President, have already visited your countrymen in the Federal Republic. The presence of American soldiers in the Federal Republic and in Berlin is the most obvious and the most important expression of the fact that the security of the United States and of Europe are inseparable. For the West there is but one security. The Federal Republic contributes to guaranteeing this joint security in accordance with the limits of its strength.

However, the American contribution is and will remain irreplaceable. Even a comprehensive European union, of the kind which the states of the European community have set as a goal, can not renounce the Atlantic bond. Thanks are due to the American Government for having held unwaveringly to this policy. This is why more than 400,000 American citizens live with us, as soldiers, civilian officials, dependents. You can take it for granted, Mr. President, that we, private citizens and government officials, will strive to ensure that your countrymen feel at home among us. They are our friends and guests and the good comrades of German soldiers: At the same time, they live in a different country with a different language and different habits. That, when it lasts a long time, is not easy. Therefore, Mr. President, as the highest representative of the American people and of all Americans in Germany, who are here for reasons of our common security, I would like to say very simply and sincerely, "Thank you."

You see, Mr. President, we have many reasons to be happy about your visit. We are happy. Once again: A hearty welcome aboard the "White Ship."

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