

September 14, 2001
Speech at the Brandenburg Gate
Berlin

Dear Mr. President, Chancellor Schröder, heads of the political parties, dear friends of the United States of America, ladies and gentlemen,

The horrible images of last Tuesday's barbarous attacks have been indelibly burned into our collective consciousness and collective memory, and nothing can ever be done to erase them. But over the last few days, alongside those images of horror, other, very different images have etched themselves in the hearts of Americans.

The images of President Rau, Chancellor Schröder, Foreign Minister Fischer, the leaders of all political parties, and many other prominent Germans offering their firm and unwavering support to the United States of America. The images of throngs of Germans lining the streets around our embassy and consulates and Amerika Häuser, to leave flowers, to leave messages of condolence, or simply to stand silently and share in our grief and our sorrow. The images of Germans filling their churches to pray for the victims, both American and German. And the image of thousands of you who have come here today, to this symbol of unity and freedom, to show by your presence solidarity with America.

It is at tragic and difficult hours like these that the true meaning of friendship is understood. I have seen the depth and sincerity of your sorrow in the tears in your eyes, I have heard it in the trembling of your voices. And I can say that Germany has shown once again over the last few days that America could not wish for a more reliable friend. On behalf of all Americans, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kindness and your support. America will never forget this.

Liebe Berliner, dear Germans, dear friends:

For half a century, we stood together again and again to defend this city, our freedom and our civilization against attack. When the wall that divided this city finally fell, and Berlin and Germany were once again united, many of us hoped and believed that we had finally put such challenges behind us.

Now a new and fateful struggle stands before us: a struggle with a new kind of enemy, one who is nearly invisible, one who hates our civilization - your civilization and my civilization - ; hates it so much that he is prepared to die himself in order to destroy it.

The struggle against this enemy will not be brief; it will not be easy; and it will not be painless. This struggle will demand from all of us courage, patience and fortitude. But these are qualities which you, over the past half century, have displayed in abundance; and I am firmly convinced that, as we stand shoulder to shoulder once again to defend our common values and our common civilization, we will prevail in this struggle as well.

Thank you. May God bless us all.