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**German Reunification –  
Achievements and Challenges Ahead:  
An Inside View of the Minister for Science, Research  
and the Arts of the Freistaat Thuringen (in German)**

Opening words,

Just one month ago on the 3rd October Germany celebrated its 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of reunification. George Bush senior, Michail Gorbachev and Helmut Kohl, the three leading statesmen at that time met here in the USA in order to work together towards bringing about German unity.

I am delighted to be invited here today so that in my dual capacity as a minister and a citizen of an eastern German state I can present my own perspective on German reunification. It is of particular importance to me personally to keep the historical events of the years 1989/90 alive in our memories. In addition, however, I should also like to mention the challenges facing the new united Germany.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The starting point for the reunification of Germany began with the peaceful revolution of the German people in the GDR. The people's courageous and determined call for freedom and democracy, expressed in their own words, "We are the people" culminated in the events that lead to the tearing down of the wall on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 1989.

The many small remnants of the wall that have since been collected throughout the whole world do not derive their profound value as mere souvenirs, but rather they testify to the power of freedom. In the final analysis, freedom will tear down all the walls used by dictatorships to imprison the people.

Anyone who experienced the events during the fall of 1989 at first hand will never forget them. The prevalent mood at that time was one of open co-operation together with a sense of common humanity, in other words, of true solidarity. Without having to make our feelings explicit, it was clear that we Germans were united in one profound joy. The call to political unity expressed in the words "We are **one** people" came relatively quickly after we had regained our freedom. This call to freedom emphasises the fact that unity and freedom both were and still are two elements that complement each other.

After forty years of painful separation, the peaceful revolution in East Germany opened up a new chapter, not only in German history, but also in the history of the world. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1990, East and West Germany re-united to become one single state. This division that not only split Germany, but also Europe and the whole world into two opposing blocs has now been healed.

My home state of Thuringia, which had been liberated by the Americans at the end of the Second World War, but which had, prior to these events, already been assigned to the Soviet zone at the Yalta conference – now no longer lies under the shadow cast by the boundaries of East and West Germany, but is securely situated at the center of the new united Germany within a Europe that is coming constantly closer together by peaceful means.

A symbol for both the division and the regained unity can be found in the little village of Möllartreuth, nicknamed Little Berlin by the Americans because this village was also divided by a wall. At the beginning of the 1980's, George Bush senior paid a visit to this village when he was vice-president of the USA and saw for himself how painful the division was. During the October Revolution of 1989, George Bush senior said that he would return to Little Berlin in order to see for himself the re-united families and neighbours.

To quote his own words, he said “How wonderful that would be!”.

I would also be delighted one day to be able to welcome both George Bush senior and all you people gathered here today - to greet you in Little Berlin.

The wonderful outcome of all these events would not have happened without the solid support of the USA. After the Second World War, you also helped to re-build both West Germany and Western Europe – whereas the Soviet Union had rejected the Marshall Plan for both East Germany and eastern Europe. Throughout the forty-year division in Germany and Europe, the USA remained constant in its commitment to freedom. Together with NATO, the USA created a protective shield behind which life could be lived in peace, liberty and prosperity.

Peace, liberty and prosperity now have spread their benign influence over East Germany and the whole of the former Eastern Bloc. Michail Gorbachev was the first president of the Soviet Union and chairman of the Communist Party to understand the power of freedom, whilst at the same time not trying to restrain this force.

This enabled the Wind of Change to blow across the whole of Eastern Europe. We Germans are grateful to the American people and we will never forget that America stood at our side during our times of greatest need.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You may well ask yourself the following question: After 13 years of political unity, have the Germans really healed their inner divisions? In my speech, I would like to consider from my own very personal point of view, the various aspects of this process involving the gradual merging of the two Germanys at both a political and cultural level.

I have always described the unification of Germany as the miracle of my life. It may well seem strange for someone trained both as a scientist and theoretical engineer to choose the word miracle. This is probably on account of the widespread notion that scientific researchers have no feeling for processes that take place in a realm beyond our reasoning.

For me, German unity was a miracle because it was a completely unexpected event. It was an event that had no reference to reality with regard to my limited life that was confined by the ideology and the restrictions caused by the political power of the socialist one- party state.

The 9<sup>th</sup> November 1989 took both German states completely by surprise. There were many people who had hoped for this moment, but very few who thought it would really happen.

The main effect of German unity for me personally was that it was the liberation from a state of isolation. Even now, this gives me a feeling of great and unexpected happiness. Not to be able to travel wherever you want, not to be able to say whatever you want nor even to be able to read whatever you want is both a profound and painful intrusion into the personal liberty of any human being.

Furthermore, for a scientific researcher this state of affairs caused restriction in one's own sphere of work. Scientific insights no longer take place in isolation inside a scholar's study, but they emerge as a result of animated discourse in which experiences, ideas and hypotheses are exchanged with other like-minded people. Research requires intellectual dialogue because, only from this can the individual intellect can overcome its inherent limitations. Limitations caused by the following restrictions:

- Our pre-conceived notions,
- Our limited scientific knowledge,
- The parochialism of individual languages and cultures,
- The generation gap and our failure to understand other epochs

And this is still true today that from the very outset discussion, listening and speaking to others are absolutely essential with regard to people from both east and west, north and south, across different generations, and also between people coming from very different circumstances.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The German constitution has commissioned its political decision makers with the task of working towards alignment of general living standards throughout the whole of Germany – a country that has experienced a forty-year history of division and that since 1990 has been able to shape both present and future as one united country.

The years going back to that time have shown us, the German people, that the annual celebration of our German unity does not imply that we have already attained German unity in every aspect. On 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1990, the political unity of the two states was finalised. In other areas, however, the reunification is still an ongoing process and every German citizen is expected to contribute to this process in unison.

First we must answer the question: what do we mean by the alignment of general living standards?

This kind of unity by no means implies uniformity. Germany's greatest asset is based on its regional and cultural diversity which should not and must not be ironed out into uniformity.

Alignment of general living standards applies to the following aspects:

- the setting-up of a unified legal system and the implementation of equal citizens' rights and responsibilities,
- the setting-up of a unified structure of institutions, functioning both at the state and intrastate levels,
- the setting-up of a common community united in solidarity with regard to both the institutions for social security and to the consciousness of individual citizens,
- the formation of a society composed of citizens with the freedom to come together in assemblies, associations or interest groups,
- a more or less proportional contribution of east Germans in positions of power and influence, both at the state and intrastate level,
- the formation of a common core of basic values and a common political culture,
- comparable development with regard to the physical infrastructure,
- the setting-up of a comparable structure for equal opportunities in education and employment,



- the setting-up of comparable levels of ownership and alignment of general living standards,
- the formation of like-minded attitudes and social awareness.

Only after all these criteria have been fulfilled, can we speak of unity in the sociological sense of this word so that reunification would then be finalised, both with regard to the integration of the two systems and the integration of society as a whole. I should now like to focus on a few aspects regarding these multifarious facets.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Unfortunately, too many people in Germany have let the euphoria of the first few years after unity wear off and now have accustomed themselves to a feeling of frustration – as in the words of Goethe, the great German poet: “rejoicing in bliss, whilst being as weary as death“. Instead of rising to the challenge with new courage, hope and energy, these people face the challenges with incomprehension, lethargy, annoyance and nostalgia.

I vehemently oppose this attitude because I know that only by working together positively and changing old attitudes creatively can the creation of equality with regard to living standards be accelerated and only by close analysis of the past can we promote the future trends. This was one of my motives for leaving academia to move into politics.

I have spent most of my life in micro-electronic research. This kind of work demands an analytical approach together with a systematic methodology, both of which I try to apply to my ministerial duties. However, I have noticed that generally the approach used in politics is in fact quite different.

Please allow me now to conduct a few analyses: let us first take a look at the **legal and administrative system**. An important element in the unification process proved to be the fact that the Federal Republic of Germany never gave any official recognition for a separate East German citizenship. Instead, the Federal Republic of Germany had always recognized the people in East Germany as full German citizens. This enabled the mass emigration during the fall of 1989 to take place – no doubt you will remember watching the scenes of overcrowded embassies in Budapest, Prague and Warsaw.

After the signing of the treaty of unity in August 1990, the West German legal system was simply extended to apply to East Germany. This was not merely a question of mutual adaptation or common alignment, but instead it really was a case of expansion.

With regard to personnel within the legal system, the gradual depletion of East German judges together with the migration of judges and legal executives coming from the west has led to an alignment of the legal system. However, it will take some time before the former East German judiciary staff are fully replaced for this process to be finally completed.

This transformation of the legal system was perceived as an extremely painful process by many people in the new federal states. The ordinary citizen felt that the notion of “justice“ was not always an integral part of the new legal system: for example, the fact that political prisoners had to go to court to obtain their rehabilitation created a feeling of helplessness and incomprehension.

It is difficult for people in West Germany to sympathise with this attitude because they did not have to experience what it means to have to come to terms with the past.

In normal political life, this is not an issue, but it has had an enormous effect on many East Germans concerned as to how they should relate to the new legal system for the whole of Germany. At this point it is still relevant to clear up misunderstandings by dialogue. In addition, the legal system has only a limited capacity to deal with revolutionary situations such as the breakdown of communism.

Nevertheless, the restructuring of state institutions and the transformation of the administration of the socialist 'cadre' caste into a classical European model took place very quickly and effectively with the help of top civil servants and clerical workers coming from West Germany. This administrative transformation is one of the success stories of the unification process, which can also be described as 'state-centred'.

However, the bureaucratic tangle of rules and regulations in the newly-adopted West German administrative system can hinder creativity at times and blur the vision for unconventional and future-oriented solutions, but these are the very solutions that we need in East Germany! We must not accept slogans such as "Experiments are out". German unity itself is nothing but a huge experiment.

I shall now deal with the **economic system**: during the years after reunification the East German economy collapsed. The economy adopted by socialism was no longer competitive firstly, because of an artificial full-employment situation and, secondly because of a technological level that was still stuck in the 1960's.

COMECON then also collapsed and after adopting the German Mark as a common currency, the trading partners in the former Eastern Bloc suddenly had to pay hard currency for East German goods. An additional factor was the fact that the East German wages had been hyped up way above their productivity level because of pressures from West German unions.

In short, markets in the east had practically disappeared overnight. This resulted in the collapse of industry and agriculture – in 1993 East Germany had been de facto de-industrialised This was and still is one of the hardest lessons to be learned from the unification process which entailed the loss of more than one half of all the jobs in the whole of East Germany.

Nevertheless, currency union was the only feasible route to German reunification. Without a strong currency, the decline of East Germany would have been even more dramatic.

This could be seen to be the case in the other states of Eastern Europe and I am particularly pleased that the expansion of the European Union has opened up new opportunities for these states!

I have already warned you that there will be an analysis of causes. So, ladies and gentlemen, please allow me to take a look at society in the GDR. What was the East German state from a **sociological point of view**? It was essentially a work-based society with both the right and the obligation to go to work, which included very long working-hours together with additional duties involving various campaigns. The factory was not merely a place where production targets had to be met and where incomes were earned, it was also a centre for social institutions, commercial exchange, allocation of accommodation, supervision of children, medical care – in short the factory was the focal point of people's lives.

GDR social policy was characterised by a comprehensive range of guaranteed rights: the right for accommodation, for subsidised rents, low-set prices for basic foodstuffs and transport, highly subsidised medical care – in short an extensive welfare system which at the same time involved very low pensions and wages.

Alongside the GDR's anti-fascist stance, the highly successful welfare policy formed one of the most important pillars to justify this system. However, these policies proved to be a huge burden on the budget. This applied equally to the comprehensive secret service structure which was necessary to secure power within society and to the army which performed the same function but with regard to external security.

Both the economic crisis and the insurmountable technological inferiority to western European countries was caused by the irreconcilable contradiction between (inadequate) economic performance on the one hand and political and ideological demands on the other, together with the welfare state. The GDR had simply lived beyond its means, and this is what brought about its downfall. This is obvious to anyone who has inflated expectations beyond what they can afford.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The reconstruction policies of the last few years in East Germany have lead to a new infrastructure . All the gaps dividing east from west have now been closed. New roads have been built – four months ago, in my home state of Thuringia, we opened a new five-mile long tunnel which makes it now the longest highway tunnel in Germany.

New rail tracks have been laid for our high-speed ICE [Inter-City Express] trains. A recently laid glass-fibre grid has created a boom in telecommunications.

Towns and villages have had a facelift and have now become bright and colourful places. Old town centres have been meticulously restored and modern architecture has been designed to blend in. The old heating supply system has been converted from coal to gas resulting in cleaner air. We are now making use of the latest waste disposal plants. The soil has been decontaminated. New residential and industrial estates have been springing up all over East Germany.

The seeds sown by the reconstruction programme for industrial production have now blossomed into healthy plants. In this context, I would like to express my thanks to American investors. I shall now quote two examples:

When the General Motors subsidiary firm Opel in 1992 invested over 500 million Euros to set up a new automobile factory, they had in effect laid the foundation stone for a completely new beginning in automobile engineering for the whole region of Eisenach.



Incidentally, Martin Luther translated the Bible into German from 1521 to 1522 in this town. Two thousand new jobs in the Opel factory itself and another three thousand as a result of the supply industry have since been created. By now Opel has invested a sum total of one and a half billion Euros in both optimising and stabilising production. This has led to Opel in Eisenach being known as one of the most efficient automobile works in Europe and the production processes have served as a model for the rest of the world for numerous other new production plants belonging to General Motors.

Dow Chemical, Midland (Michigan) has invested more than 2.7 billion Euros into eastern Germany since 1995, creating another 2,300 jobs. Further investments, roughly totalling 2 billion Euros have been allocated to be used up by 2012 for the expansion of the plastic manufacturing industry. This will create another 1,000 jobs in the Dow concern itself and in other plastic enterprises. The first step to this expansion was taken this summer in setting up a 120-million-Euro plant for the manufacture of plastics based on polyethylenterephthalates (PET).

These are just a few of the success stories of German unity which have led to the overwhelming majority in our country giving a positive assessment to their personal circumstances.

Together with this expression of gratitude to the American investors I would like to offer an invitation to you all to come to East Germany and to see with your own eyes what has been achieved in the reconstruction programme.

Nevertheless, despite these most encouraging developments, we still have not had a self-fuelled economic boom in eastern Germany. Firstly financial funding from the west has been necessary. 40 years of completely separate development cannot be overcome a mere 13 years later. It will take another few years for both the physical and economic alignment of general living standards.

The economic boom can only take place when there is innovation in both the production and service sectors. We are also grateful for the input of American firms in this area. In Dresden, Advanced Micro Devices (AMD), an American firm is producing microprocessors and is regarded as one of the most modern semi-conductor manufacturers in the whole world. This firm employs 1,300 workers.

In conjunction with Du Pont Photomasks, another American firm and with Infineon, a German enterprise, AMD has set up a technology centre for the production of photomasks for semi-conductors which are a very important component in the pre-production stage of silicon chips.

The official opening of the 360 million Euro project for the development and production pilot schemes was formally celebrated three weeks ago. The final expansion stage should employ 130 workers. These investments are creating the future for Germany.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Science and research form the foundation for product innovation. In the final analysis, they are the key to growth and full employment. This is the only way that new jobs can be created, which now leads me to the transformation of the **science and research system**, an area which is of particular importance to me as a scientist, and, now even more, so as the minister responsible for science in Thuringia.

In East Germany, there were 6 universities offering the usual range of courses within the German tradition. No new universities were founded. Instead, they set up special institutes of higher education offering a limited curriculum. Engineering sciences proved to be one of the main subjects in higher education, whereas there were relatively few scientists being trained. Arts and humanities had been placed under the control of the prevailing political ideology.

In addition to the universities, there were four scientific academies based on a centralised Soviet model. Access to all academic institutions was under the control of the state.

After 1990, the main concern for East German universities was to reform them on democratic lines and to increase the efficiency of the university structures. Universities and other institutes of higher education underwent an evaluation process. Recommendations were made as to their future development. In the wake of this transformation process, the main aim was to optimise the academic system in the whole of Germany. In the end, however, time pressure meant that generally the western structures, even in science and research, were simply imposed on the east.

This was a painful process involving the dislocation of personnel. Every professor and every researcher or lecturer was put to the test with regard to their competence in their chosen field and to their personal integrity. The old structures were “dismantled”, to use the phrase coined at that time, and new structures were set up. The whole process went smoothly without either interrupting or cutting down the curriculum in any way. This is a unique achievement.

In the east we have kept everything that was worth keeping. We were very careful to ensure that the content of the curriculum continued to be well-structured and that the new regulations for examinations would be as clearly formulated as they had been in the past, so that courses could be completed quickly and efficiently, but without any loss of quality. National higher education rankings in Germany constantly confirm the rightness of our policies in this direction.

At the same time, from the very outset, we have placed great importance on academic profiling of universities so that a full picture of provision will emerge. So as the minister of science in my relatively small state of Thuringia, I feel justified in using the expression "The Thuringian Campus". This campus as a whole has an influence that stretches far beyond its regional borders and has a unique contribution to give to German higher education in general.

Let us now continue to follow this path of argumentation. In the whole of Germany we are confronted with the task of modernising higher education in order to make it competitive on a worldwide basis. This also involves freeing universities and research institutes from too much bureaucracy. In addition, it is important to strengthen international compatibility in the higher education sector.

In these two areas, eastern Germany has proved itself to be the trendsetter. In my state, we have just finalised a higher education pact that has given greater autonomy to the universities. The University of Erfurt was re-founded in 1994. (Incidentally, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century this was the university where Martin Luther studied.) From the very beginning, Erfurt University was set up as a reform or 'new model' university, which, amongst other things, involves its structure and curriculum being oriented towards global compatibility. The university has fulfilled this task magnificently.

The clear aims of these academic and economic policies, together with co-operation of small and medium-sized enterprises with universities and research institutes have led to location conditions in some regions of eastern Germany of such quality that they need not fear any comparison with the high-tech regions in the west.

For example in Jena, the city famous for its optic and glass industry and for its luminaries such as Carl Zeiss, Ernst Abbe and Otto Schott has combined the skills they had already acquired in the various technological fields with the latest scientific ideas. This has resulted in new and highly effective institutes.

Working within the interdisciplinary slogan “Life Science meets Physics“ we have created the pre-conditions for close and fruitful cooperation between high-tech companies and between both theoretical and applied scientific research.

After 13 years of German unity, I can now claim that the newly created research infrastructure involving universities and other institutes of higher education can increasingly hold its own, not only in the whole of Germany, but also within worldwide competition. The transformation of academe in eastern Germany is a success story. In this area, German unity was achieved comparatively quickly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In order to advance the unification process at all levels, much more is needed than the mere solution of the economic and physical problems confronting us. We must also work on building up a common core of basic values and a common political culture that carries with it obligations that are binding on all of us. This is a task and a challenge that demand commitment from all the German people.

Basic values provide the indispensable direction which every society needs and guidelines for our behaviour in life, together with their concomitant obligations. If we are to accept liberty, equality, solidarity and tolerance as these kinds of values, then we must spend some time in analysing these concepts:

We must be clear as to what we mean by equality. Many people equate this with uniformity as propagated by the socialist system, which was, however, not practised by those in positions of power. Equality implies the equal worth of all human beings, irrespective of age, sex, colour, class, skill and talent. Equality implies both the right to equality of opportunity and the necessity for working towards social justice. Equality, however, does not mean the abolition of difference. We human beings are all of equal worth, even though we have very different talents. It is our task in life to make use of these gifts. Let us think of the parable of the talents and the drastic consequences for those who do not use their talents. [*Matthew 25, 14-30; Luke 19, 11-27*].

These values, from which we derive our rights are intimately connected with those from which we derive our obligations. Rights and obligations are closely bound by the principle of reciprocity. Thus by liberty we do not mean merely the number of options an individual may have, nor those options which can be chosen for an egoistic journey of self-discovery.



The obligation of having to take responsibility is inherent to the very notion of liberty. Thus liberty means taking responsibility for one's own life and making use of one's own talents.

With regard to those people who are not capable of controlling their lives by themselves, the notions of liberty and equality obligate others to help people help themselves. The values of fraternity, love of your neighbour and solidarity are given expression in this form. It would not be compatible with regard to respect of another person's dignity and liberty, not to give people who are suffering from an exaggerated form of obedience an opportunity to self-help.

We also need to be clear as to what we mean by tolerance. Is it a conscious acceptance and inner openness to that which is alien to others or is it merely a licence to indifference? In order to be able to put tolerance into practise, a clear view is needed an inner commitment to human dignity and autonomy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We need to be in one accord concerning these basic values, as in every society and we must intensively teach these values to our young people. The PISA study, which also tested American children proved to us Germans that our children's education must be improved.

After the PISA investigation, President Bush also promised a wide-ranging education reform. Abilities, skills and even more importantly, children's awareness of values will decide whether a nation has a viable future or not. With reference to the inner unity of Germany, this is what I would call the **cultural/spiritual dimension**. When we Germans are in dialogue together on this common basis, only then can we really explain to one another the significance of our different backgrounds and different types of experience.

There is no doubt that forty years of political division have left their scars. This period was far more than a mere episode in our history, but for millions of people these years comprised the greatest part of their lives. During these last four decades almost two new generations have grown up, but at least we now have thirteen years of common memories, common history and common experience. And this common ground increases everyday in a united Germany. We must treat this area with great care and accept this as the starting point for our joint road into the future.

Perhaps we Germans should more often try to see ourselves as others see us. Outside our borders, people no longer make the distinction between East and West Germans. If we looked at ourselves with the same eyes as others, then we would see far more clearly what has been accomplished since reunification.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Throughout the whole of Germany, we have been living since 1990 in an open society in which there have been no collective goals stipulated from above. This is something I feel grateful for every day! And this is why we need the widest possible consensus as to the direction in which our country will be taking in the near future.

A consensus of this kind can only be established by travelling along the route of free and frank discussion. In these discussions we should neither sweep our differences under the carpet, nor should we exaggerate them for ideological reasons or transfigure them into a vague nostalgia for the past.

In shaping our common future, we Germans have many problems which we'll have to solve together. These include both the opportunities and risks involved in globalisation which effect both east and west equally. Then there is also the transformation towards a knowledge-based society, which we should gladly accept and see as a new opportunity for our country. Then there are the demographic shifts caused by the age structure of our population. And finally there is unemployment - a German problem affecting the whole of Germany, but which has, however, hit the east far harder than the west.

I am also convinced that, in our shaping of the future, we have by no means exhausted our abundant resources of creativity and citizenship to be found in the whole of Germany.

Citizenship and creativity – these are the elixirs of a free democracy. In the context of the basic values I have listed a new balance between the state and society and between personal responsibility and social care has to be found.

Germany's system of social provision and care has reached a level that can hardly be found anywhere else. This system plays its part in the justification of our state and society. However, it also conceals the danger of making background figures of those who are committed, caring people. To quote a critic who might be accused of overstating the issue, in place of the committed citizen we merely have two groups, one paying into the system and one taking out of the system.

Too little mention has been made of the fact that the renewal of our democracy is still on the agenda. If we wish to make democracy viable for the future in the whole of Germany, then we must rid ourselves of the notion that anonymous public macro-structures are capable of creating a feeling of security. Many people in eastern Germany miss this feeling.

But feeling secure and comfortable in a free democracy, coupled with a social market economy can only mean that people should not feel excluded, that they can be involved in a great variety of ways and play an active role in achieving this involvement. Let me emphasise this point: they must become actively involved! The fact is that passivity has to be overcome.

And what is more, this kind of security cannot merely be handed down from above. It can only take place by participation within easily comprehensible surroundings, such as the family, the local community, the clubs and church community. This is what politics are about. The job of politics is to promote and secure the viability of these small units by providing the appropriate framework in which the individual units can thrive. However, this framework can only be filled in by the people themselves and by their active participation. This applies equally to both the east and the west.

I know many people who have made use of this new opportunity to be able to act in an autonomous and independent way. There is, for example, the engineer who sets up his own business, thus creating new jobs or the computer programmer who gives free computer courses to pensioners. Then there are some parents who organise full day care for children, but take full responsibility for this activity.

Another example is a citizens' initiative group that commits itself to the preservation of an historical building. Politicians must both encourage and support all these kinds of activities so that people can experience what can be achieved both individually and collectively as citizens.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This phrase 'civic commitment' rounds off my speech: **German unity would never have come about, were it not for the many brave and committed people who took to the streets in the fall of 89 to demand freedom and democracy!** In doing this, they risked their lives. Nobody could have known in advance how the state would react to these events.

What now remains is the obligation for us Germans **to keep constantly in mind, this miracle of reunification!** It will always be an incentive to us, never to lessen our efforts in bringing German unity to completion in all areas of life. We should always be grateful for the fact that this step has had such a fortunate outcome for us Germans. We are also grateful for the loyal support of the USA. **Together with you, we Germans want to stand up for a world and a society in which human beings can live together with dignity, liberty, equality, fraternity and a sense of responsibility.**

I thank you for your kind attention.