

DRAFTS

DRAFT REMARKS: HRC: ZURICH

Greetings/acknowledgments. Thank you to sponsors of this event, Swiss American Chamber of Commerce and Swiss National Council Women's Organization. Thank you for this warm welcome to this historic city and your beautiful country.

It's a particular honor to be here at the University of Zurich, a jewel in the crown of Switzerland's institutions of higher learning, and home to many of the country's leading teachers and intellectuals -- including a Nobel Prizewinner in Medicine in 1996, Professor Rolf M. Zinkerhagel. And I'm pleased to learn that the first woman in the German speaking world graduated from this University -- in 1867.

Universities such as this one are the real incubators for the democratic values we share and espouse: the practice fields for responsibilities and opportunities that come with living in a free society. They're havens of free speech and free thought, and a collective meeting point for men and women of different attitudes, interests, opinions, and aspirations. And it's our universities, here in Switzerland and around the globe, where many of us first learn to strike a balance between the rights and needs of individuals, and those of the larger community.

These institutions of democracy -- our schools, our places of worship, our community associations, as well as our daily actions -- hold us together as diverse people, and strengthen our efforts to work toward the common good. And it's these shared values, and this commitment to a vibrant civil society, that will be our bulwark in the new millennium, as we face this time of tremendous global change and opportunity.

As two of the world's oldest democracies, Switzerland and the U.S. understand well the challenges of building a democratic nation, and the struggles we continue to face in perfecting our democratic ideals. In fact, we've stood together as "Sister Republics" since our early moments as democratic nations, and have learned valuable lessons from each other over the years. We know, for example, that Thomas Jefferson had in his library the works of two Swiss authors who he greatly admired: Emmerich de Vattel and Jean Jacques Burlamaqui. Their work on the theory of natural law, and the principle of natural, inalienable rights of individuals, are thought to have inspired Jefferson as he was writing our founding document, the Declaration of Independence.

And in 1848 -- when Switzerland was establishing its modern federal state and drafting its Constitution -- you looked to the United States Constitution of 1787, and its system of checks and balances, as your model. And I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the historic occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Constitution that Switzerland is celebrating this year. I believe, as I hope you do, that our common love of freedom and democratic principles has cemented the friendship between our governments and our people over the years..

Today, I saw your longstanding commitment to democracy in action, when I had the privilege of visiting the Children's Parliament in Luzern. You've given some of your youngest citizens the opportunity to engage in and contribute to the important issues of the day. And that's an invaluable gift indeed.

These future leaders debated two budget issues: supplemental appropriations for a Dragon Maze, and the snack policy: cookies vs. The jelly doughnut. Another hot topic: quotas. Should there be 4 girls and 4 boys on each committee? We smile at these topics, yet the fact is, these young people are learning fundamental lessons about the value of open debate, and the challenges of such pressing problems as how we ensure equal opportunity at a time of scarce resources. There is no more important mission than instilling in our children a respect for democratic values, and teaching the new generation of leaders the skills they need to govern wisely. I commend Switzerland, and the people of Luzern, for this innovative project.

So yes, we share a strong -- and unique -- bond in our democratic heritage. But our ties bind us in other ways as well. You have been strong trade and investment partners, and as many as 200,000 American jobs have been created as a result of Swiss investment in the United States. We share a deep love of music and the arts, and have a long history of cultural exchange -- from a play about William Tell and his compatriots that was performed in New York City in 1796 -- to a visit last month from your Mayor, XXX, -- who has recently returned from Washington, D.C., accompanying the Zurich Symphony.

Our two nations are also committed to common efforts in confronting threats to international peace and stability, which include joint measures to combat money laundering and organized crime, and cooperation in preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

While our two countries are held up as models of pluralistic democracies, people often forget how long it took to shape our democratic institutions, and the ongoing challenges we face in continuing to forge a more just, and prosperous nation. In our country today, we are dealing with the difficult questions of how to continue to widen the circle of opportunity in an increasingly diverse country. We recognize the many gains that people of all races and backgrounds have made over the years in living the American dream. But we're also trying to face squarely the ongoing inequality and discrimination that continues as a consequence of America's history of slavery and racial division.

President Clinton's Initiative on Race seeks to educate all of us about the realities of race in America today, to encourage constructive dialogue to work through these issues, and to develop solutions in critical areas like education, economic opportunity, and crime that will help bridge racial division and inequality in our country. But we know we have a long way to go.

And here, I want to acknowledge that Switzerland shares this commitment to maintaining balance and cohesion in a multi-cultural society. Your system of small cantons (townships), drawn together in a united federation, reflects that universal aspiration of our two countries: out of many, one.

These issues of tolerance and inclusion are some of the toughest challenges we face. But we aren't alone in grappling with them. Across the globe, from Bosnia to South Africa, we are witnessing similar efforts to confront the pain and divisions in our societies, to seek answers that will help heal those wounds of the past, and to remind people of what they hold in common, not what keeps them apart.

And these same pursuits are driving Switzerland to take an honest look at its own history, and to address issues that arose in during World War II, and the terrible events of the Holocaust. In the audience here today there is a very special group of individuals, students from the Neufeld Gymnasium in Bern, who have worked together to raise money to aid survivors of the Holocaust; and who I will meet with later on. As individual citizens determined to making a difference, they embody the finest spirit of humanitarian assistance. They also reflect efforts that the Swiss government, as well as the private sector, are making to seek answers to the past, and to aid the survivors of the Holocaust.

Switzerland is to be applauded for its willingness to face these issues. You have taken major strides to uncover the truth and serve the cause of justice, through historical commissions, through mechanisms to return dormant accounts/ reform of banking procedures, and through the establishment of funds that are already helping needy Holocaust victims -- many of whom are the double victims of the Holocaust and later of the communist repression in central and Eastern Europe.

These are difficult steps, and you have faced them courageously. Today, I want to encourage you to stay on the constructive path you have chosen. We all have much to do to bring this tragic chapter of modern European history to a just end. But we owe it the victims of the Holocaust -- and to ourselves -- to complete that task. The spotlight of history can be harsh, but it strengthens our commitment to democratic ideals, and keeps us working together to fulfill those ideals.

Today, as we continue to learn the lessons of the past, we also look to future, and to powerful forces that are reshaping our world -- both for good and for ill. Even as more and more countries embrace democracy and free markets, the rapid pace of change, global competition, and the information revolution are creating new pressures on every institution in society, from governments down to families. Our two countries have stood together as we formed our democratic nations, and we've worked as partners to support fledgling democracies around the world. And today, we need to join other freedom loving nations around the world in common efforts to withstand these extraordinary forces of change and transition swirling around us..

Today, the greatest threat to democracy is no longer a communist monolith with imperial designs, but the volatile economic, political and social conditions that have emerged in the aftermath of the cold war. And here, our most powerful tool to ensure balance in these volatile times will be our re-commitment to democratic values, and our expanded investments in strong and vibrant civil societies.

While the superficial homogenization of the world means that people on every continent

wear the same jeans, eat the same fast food, and listen to the same music, these surface similarities do not override a longing for identity and meaning in our lives. Despite improving material conditions in advanced economies such as ours, families seem under greater stress. The gap between rich and poor in many countries grows wide. The social safety net -- health care, education, pensions, decent wages and good jobs -- is in danger of fraying for those less able to navigate this new world. And the very concept of nation states is being challenged, as global markets and huge multi-national corporations threaten to unbalance our world.

These pressures pose unavoidable questions for us as we approach the 21st century:

Questions about how to balance individual and community rights and responsibilities; about how families will raise children in the face of pressures from the mass media and consumer culture; about personal identity and work in an age of globalization, information overload and high technology; about the role of women in society; about how people will be able to preserve their ethnic pride and value their national citizenship; about how nations will protect their sovereignty while cooperating regionally and globally with others; about how or whether multinational corporations will be regulated within and across borders; and about how government will combat threats from international cartels and terrorists.

As my husband often says, our challenge as democratic nations is to balance the competing and often contradictory pressures of global integration and disintegration.

In the United States and across Europe, there is a serious debate underway about how to achieve that balance, particularly how to sustain economic growth without tearing at the social fabric of our communities. I believe that balance comes only when what I call the three legs of the stool are in place: a free market economy, democratic institutions, and a strong and vibrant civil society.

My husband is determined to provide citizens with the tools of opportunity they need to fully participate in the life of their communities and their nation. And that means encouraging all sectors of society -- public, private, and non profits -- to contribute toward that mission. We in the U.S. are working to promote disciplined economic policies while still ensuring that our people are equipped with the education, health and jobs they need to succeed in a highly competitive world. We're investing in child care, expanding health coverage to more of our nation's children, and helping some of our poorest citizens to exchange welfare checks for paychecks. And we're preparing our citizens for the challenges of the next century -- by investing in our schools and universities.

And I know here in Switzerland, you share that same commitment to nurture children, promote education, and help families in transition. I've heard about Swiss programs, for example, that are geared toward helping families through community-based efforts, and I applaud your country-wide post natal services which provide new mothers and fathers with guidance on child care and health care. And I've heard about programs which offers sex education, family services planning services, marital counseling -- all under one roof. These programs serve as important models for how communities can effectively support families -- and

we must continue to learn from each other how best to encourage these partnerships in the years ahead.

Yet I believe that the future of democracy, in our own countries and in nations around the world, demands that we go beyond even these crucial social investments in our people and communities, and beyond even the concerns of trade, diplomacy, and defense. Building and sustaining democracy is more than allowing free elections, creating free markets, and protecting people's rights. It's also about the internalization of democratic values in people's hearts, minds, and everyday lives. And it's about developing what I call an "alliance of values" based on a shared belief in freedom, opportunity, responsibility, community, and respect for human rights.

In many ways, Switzerland has always recognized the importance of such an "alliance," through its commitment to providing humanitarian support around the world. I applaud this nation's commitment of nearly a billion dollars a year in public assistance to developing countries, international institutions, and non governmental organizations (NGOs). From helping to eliminate toxic waste in Hungary; to improving milk production in Poland; to reducing pollution in Slovakia; to assisting the world's earthquake victims, to the legendary work of the international Red Cross, Swiss foreign and humanitarian aid supports countries to meet the difficult challenges of tomorrow.

The nations of the world have also benefitted from Switzerland's commitment to lend your "good offices" to help mediate conflicts and establish international norms.

Individuals, NGOs, and governments working together can make a difference. And we must ensure these public/private partnerships -- drawing from all sectors of our societies -- are strengthened and expanded in the years ahead.

So as we think of ways to protect our most vulnerable citizens at a time of increased global competition ... as we consider the best strategies for creating conditions that can encourage individual initiative and a vibrant civic life ... as we seek to ensure human rights, especially for women and children ... we must recognize that solutions cannot all be government driven or market driven. They must reflect this balance of public, private, and individual power.

From the great capitals of Central Europe to villages in Africa, I have seen how social investments are giving more people, especially women, the chance to participate fully in the political, economic, social and civil lives of their countries. And more often than not, I have seen that such investments are the result of innovative public/private partnerships sponsored by non governmental organizations, international groups like UNICEF, corporations, foundations -- as well as governments.

When I was in Central Europe last summer, I saw how the development of NGOs was becoming synonymous with the burgeoning of civil society. Grass roots organizations were building the pillars of democracy to by helping to strengthen the free press, create an independent judiciary, establish a civics pedagogy for teachers, steward the environment, and honor the rights

of all citizens, including minorities.

We struggle every day to make our democracies work better. We know there are no easy answers. And we know we must work every day, year after year, to ensure that the bounty of our nations are shared among all of our people, and the people of the world. Those of us who hold the torch of democracy have a fundamental obligation to help people rebuild their lives when history and circumstances have conspired against them. We can't possibly accomplish this alone -- either as individual nations, or as individual citizens.

Acknowledging this interdependence is crucial if we are to successfully meet the political, social, and economic challenges of a new century. I often talk about the themes found in the African proverb that it takes a village to raise a child. It can also be said that it takes a community of nations to build a global society. The engagement of both is essential if we are to offer future generations the opportunity to live without fear of war, poverty, disease, or social disintegration.

Today, listening to those children debate their cookies and peanut butter issues, I saw the great promise of our next generation of leaders. And I understood, once again, how what we do today, as individuals, as nations, and as a global community, will shape their lives and define their future. They are the guardians of our democratic principles. And we must do everything we can to ensure they inherit a stronger, more generous, and more democratic world.

Tomorrow, I will be visiting Davos to attend the World Economic Forum. Leaders there from around the world will also be discussing how best to confront the challenges of the 21st century, and how, at a time of dramatic change and global upheaval, we can continue to invest in our democratic institutions, and strengthen our civil societies. And as I participate in those discussions, I will be thinking in particular about how to ensure a better future for our young people -- here in Zurich, across Switzerland, and throughout the world. And I will be thinking about how we, as "Sister Republics" and as members of a community of nations, can build an alliance of values for this next generation that is based on our shared belief in freedom, opportunity, community, and respect for human rights.

If our shared experience of working to meet the challenges of democracy is any indication, I'm convinced that we have the tools to create that alliance of values in this new millennium, and that we can fulfill for our children and for our children's children -- the dream of democracy and freedom that our two countries embarked on so many years ago.