

I was also very pleased to hear—and that was why I said that to the President as well—that it was so helpful that he said he very much would hope to see a strong, united Europe.

Well, as you can see, we have covered a range of international topics here together. I have very much pointed out to the President what Germany does do around the world, what Germany does do in Afghanistan, for example, what Germany does contribute towards the stabilization of the situation in Iraq. I have mentioned our training schemes in the Emirates, et cetera, et cetera. I've talked about the work, the stabilizing work that Germany is doing in the Balkans, for example. And I have mentioned that since we're doing all these things internationally, we would very much hope that at some point in time, we could also have a right to representation on the Security Council if there were the space. So I said very much we're doing lots of things, so hopefully, we'll be involved with deciding things as well.

President Bush. We'll answer some questions here. First, starting with the American side. Excuse me for a minute. Nedra [Nedra Pickler, Associated Press], there you are, hiding in there. Nedra, excuse me, I mispronounced pronounced her name.

*U.N. Security Council Seat for Germany/
U.N. Reform*

Q. Hi. Thank you, Mr. President. Do you oppose Germany's bid for a Security Council seat?

President Bush. We oppose no country's bid for the Security Council. We agree that there needs to be U.N. Security Council reform. The U.N. also needs broader reform than just the Security Council. There needs to be management reform; there needs to be reform of the Human Rights Commission; there needs to be broad reform. And part of that reform is the U.N. Security Council, and I want to thank Gerhard's frank discussion about Security Council reform. But we oppose no country.

Do you want to call on somebody?

Chancellor Schroeder. We are very much in agreement that this reform is duly and urgently needed, and it's always been clear that it is first the reform and then the candidacies to potential seats. And, obviously, then the process will have to continue.

And if you ask me about whether I see differences, then I'd possibly say there are differences in the timing. We were pushing to have things happening very quickly. But I was very pleased, indeed, to hear that there was no opposition vis-a-vis Germany, as such, from the President.

German Elections

Q. Mr. President, Chancellor Schroeder is seeking for early elections in Germany. And what is your position? Have you wished him luck for this election? [*Laughter*]

President Bush. He's lucky he's got short elections. [*Laughter*] I still remember my election—month after month after month of campaigning.

We haven't talked about the elections yet. The Chancellor is—you know, he's a seasoned political campaigner, and if there's elections, I'm confident he knows what he's going to do out there. But we have not talked about the elections yet. As we say in Texas, this won't be his first rodeo. [*Laughter*]

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Chancellor Schroeder. We just have to add at this point, it is important that our national German President hasn't even yet decided whether we are going to have these elections. So by that very rule, we shouldn't be discussing them here as a topic.

But when it comes to elections, I think there's this wonderful saying from back home in Lower Saxony where I come from, which says, "Ducks are fat at the bottom end." [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Steve.