The Trilateral Commission at 25
BETWEEN PAST...AND FUTURE

Speeches and Toasts

Anniversary Evening
sponsored by U.S. Group
December 1, 1998
New York Historical Society
This informal booklet, a companion to the program booklet prepared before the 25th Anniversary Evening, presents the speeches and toasts given in the course of a wonderful evening. The program is reprinted below.

**Refreshments**
Great Hall
6:00

**Program**
Auditorium
6:30–7:30

**Paul Volcker**, presiding, will introduce David Rockefeller and the David Rockefeller International Leadership Award.

**David Rockefeller** will speak.

Paul Volcker will present the award to

**Zbigniew Brzezinski, Sadako Ogata, and Peter Sutherland,**
who will speak from their individual perspectives about the leadership challenges and responsibilities of the United States in the coming years.

**Cocktails**
Great Hall
7:30

**Dinner**
Dexter Room
8:00–10:00

At the conclusion of dinner, Paul Volcker will give the floor to four persons for brief tributes to David Rockefeller and the Trilateral Commission—

**Georges Berthoin** from Europe, **Shijuro Ogata** from Japan, **Mitchell Sharp** from Canada, and **Henry A. Kissinger** from the United States.

*Conrad Black spoke in place of Mitchell Sharp, unable to travel from Ottawa due to an injury. Mr. Black, a long-time Canadian Trilateral member, is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Hollinger, Inc., based in Toronto.*
David Rockefeller

Thank you very much, Paul; and thank you for your warm reception, dear friends. This is a rather emotional and happy occasion for me.

In preparing for tonight’s event, I did some research on our history that you might find of interest. In March of 1972, I made a series of speeches at Chase International Financial Forums in Montreal, London, Paris, and Brussels. The speech in Paris was reported in The Herald Tribune, and about a month after I made the speech, Henry Owen and Bob Bowie (who are both here this evening) came to see me at Chase. They had read the article and thought the recommendation I made in it was a good idea. They urged me to do something about it.

Out of curiosity I dug up the speech and I’m going to read to you several paragraphs, because this is the real origin of the Trilateral Commission:

A whole generation on both sides of the Atlantic and Pacific has grown up thinking internationally as no generation ever did before them. The future of the alliance rests on their giving voice to what they have learned.

In looking ahead I believe that a major challenge will be to reconcile domestic and international objectives in a manner which will lead to a new period of peace and prosperity. In my judgment, it is possible to effect such a reconciliation given continued cooperation among the leading nations. But I believe that a new mechanism would be helpful in enabling us to deal more effectively with the changes which lie ahead. We need a system which can mobilize the best available knowledge and focus it on the practical problems of our times.

I would propose the creation of an International Commission for Peace and Prosperity. What I have in mind is a private organization whose primary objective, as I see it, would be to bring the best brains in the world to bear on the problems of the future. This organization would examine the interrelationships between domestic and foreign concerns, study new approaches to the transfer of “social technologies,” and hopefully come up with fresh insights on how we deal with common problems.

There might be a governing board of, say, 30–40 leading private citizens drawn from the Atlantic Alliance nations and Japan. Sub-Commissions could be set up to cover such vital fields as reduction in world tensions; international trade and investment; environmental problems; control of crime and drugs; population control; and assistance to the developing nations. Government officials could certainly be invited to sit in as observers at the deliberations, as could representatives from the Communist countries.

Because I am strongly opposed to commissions that outlive their usefulness, I would put an arbitrary deadline of two years on this effort. I hope that such a span would be sufficient to collect and synthesize the knowledge that would enable a new generation to rebuild the conceptual framework of foreign and domestic policies.

It was that speech which got into The Herald Tribune and attracted the attention of Henry and Bob. I took them seriously, and just a few weeks later, Zbig Brzezinski
and I went to a Bilderberg Conference in Knokke, Belgium. I thought that the best thing to do, rather than start another organization, would be to persuade the members of Bilderberg to include Japan. I proposed this at the meeting, but was shot down in flames by Dennis Healey, then Britain’s Chancellor of the Exchequer and a very articulate person.

So, my tail between my legs, I left. Zbig and I flew back to the United States and talked about our options. We decided that if Bilderberg didn’t understand the importance of this idea, we’d have to start a new organization ourselves. We thought George Franklin, who had just retired as the Executive Director of the Council on Foreign Relations, would be the ideal person to work on it and Zbig said—he was then a professor at Columbia—he would take two years off to get it started. One key factor obviously was whether the Japanese government would look favorably on such an initiative. So George Franklin and I—I think it was in June of 1972—went to Japan to meet with Prime Minister Tanaka and Finance Minister Fukuda to see whether they would approve. They did.

We then convened a small group from Europe, Japan, and the United States at Pocantico Hills, our family estate, in August of 1972. The Americans consisted of Zbig, George Franklin, McGeorge Bundy, and two others here tonight, Fred Bergsten and Fred Starr. From Japan came Kiichi Miyazawa and Saburo Okita. Kiichi became Foreign Minister six months later, and Saburo served in the same position some years thereafter. Of course, Kiichi is now once again Finance Minister, having been Prime Minister as well. Tadashi Yamamoto was also there. I wish so much that he were here this evening because he has been the life of the organization in Japan from the very beginning and is such a marvelous person. From Europe Prince Colonna from Italy; Max Kohnstamm, who became the first European Co-Chairman; and Karl Carstens, who became President of Germany, all attended.

Everyone at the meeting felt that something should be done. They felt that we should start with three years and then assess the situation. I think that stipulation has worked quite well, because it forced us to reconsider our mission at the end of each triennium.

Zbig agreed to become the overall Director for the first triennium. George Franklin began as North American Secretary alongside Zbig and then, in the second and third triennia, was Coordinator for the three regions; after which, in 1982, Charles Heck took over as North American Director, and has done a really brilliant job since that time.

The first meeting of the Executive Committee was held in October of 1973—hence the 25 years—in Tokyo. The first plenary meeting was in May of 1975 in Kyoto. Early North American participants included Gerry Smith, who became the first North American Co-Chairman, and from Canada, Peter Dobell, whom I’m delighted to see here this evening. Sadly, Mitchell Sharp, Vice Chair for North America for many years, couldn’t come; but he sends you all his best.

As I look around this audience tonight I am convinced that the spirit is still here. I am delighted that Georges Berthoin, who was the European Co-Chairman for so many years and a great colleague, did come. I’m delighted that Paul Volcker, who has been such a wonderful successor as North American Co-Chairman ever since I retired in 1991, was willing to take it on. He’s been a great leader.

This being an American meeting we don’t have many members from Japan and
Europe. But it is most exciting to see you all, and to realize that for 25 years Trilateral has served a useful purpose in bringing together opinion leaders from the three most important democratic industrialized areas of the world. Our original vision has been validated, and I thank all of you for making it possible.
Zbigniew Brzezinski

A U.S.-LED DEMOCRATIC COALITION
FOR AN ERA OF GLOBAL TURBULENCE

It is especially meaningful to receive an award which is named after a friend, a friend who epitomizes what leadership is about—quiet determination and long-range vision. So I am particularly gratified that I am the recipient of an award that bears David Rockefeller’s name, and I want to say that to him very directly.

*     *     *

We’re all to speak for a few minutes about America’s leadership role. Let me concentrate on the security dimension and begin by reminding you that when the Commission was founded, the security condition of the world was defined largely in bipolar terms and the critical phrase which captured the essence of the security problem was, of course, the “Cold War.”

Not quite a decade ago, the Cold War came to an end and we all started searching for another formula which would capture the essence of the new situation in which we found ourselves. A phrase emerged which was meant to describe the fundamental character of the security condition of the world, and it was the “New World Order.” The New World Order was to imply accommodation, cooperation. Initially, implicit in it was the idea of a de facto American-Soviet condominium, because the Soviet Union was reforming—these were the late Gorbachev years—and the notion was that the two would cooperate. Subsequently, after the fall of the Soviet Union, “assertive multilateralism” emerged, with the implicit notion that the U.N. would help to shore up the New World Order. Of course, very quickly we discovered that assertive multilateralism was an oxymoron and that the New World Order wasn’t there.

We have come to recognize increasingly that global security rests very much on a central new fact of life, the new reality. Namely, for the first time in human affairs, there is a global superpower that stands alone. That has never happened before, and the United States, of course, is that only global superpower, the first global superpower in the history of mankind.

But it has also become evident to us, and increasingly so, that the United States cannot exercise that special security role, in spite of its status as a superpower, all by itself. First of all, preponderance, which the United States indeed does exercise, is not the same as omnipotence. We have found, over and over again, that preponderance is not omnipotence. And secondly, and perhaps even more importantly, the first global superpower, this “hegemon,” to use an old-fashioned word, is also uniquely a democracy. And there has never been a truly imperial power that was at the same time a populist democracy. And as a democracy, the United States is reluctant to undertake excessive burdens, to shed too much blood, to make the kind of sacrifices which are necessary in order to exercise a dominant, assertive security leadership role.

Occasionally, the problem has been compounded by manifestations of an absence of strategy, and occasionally by the tendency for policy to be driven by specific domestic impulses. I have particularly in mind the tendency of specific domes-
tic groups to dictate wide-ranging sanctions, adopted against some 30-40 countries—more than any other nation has ever attempted or any other nations combined have ever attempted to impose.

The problem is also compounded by the absence of vigorous partners who are interested in global security. Europe—an emerging Europe—is clearly a most important partner of the United States; but Europe is at best “unifying” (it certainly isn’t “united”), and its record on such issues as Bosnia has not been one of assertive security leadership. Japan, a most important partner of the United States, is going through a difficult phase in its domestic policy and it is still struggling to define its regional role, and indeed its global role, particularly in this very complicated and sensitive area of security. That compounds the dilemmas inherent in a democracy being the only global superpower.

Of course, all of the foregoing is made even more difficult by the reality of a series of international crises. In the Middle East, and in the Persian Gulf, American policy is not steady, it isn’t very clear. And there are serious gaps between the United States and some of its partners. Regarding North Korea, we have not been able to fashion a policy which addresses the progressive acquisition by North Korea of surreptitious nuclear weapons, and this is causing some problems in our relations with our Japanese partners. Russia, which we once viewed as a potential partner in the New World Order, is going through a deep crisis which is bound to last, in my view, for at least a decade or so, a crisis which is pregnant with potential risks to global peace, given the concentration of nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union. And, last but not least, China, despite the easy forecasts that it is going to be the next global power, is in fact likely in the course of the next two decades to emerge at most as a very significant regional power, and is also likely to experience growing internal difficulties.

* * *

All of that compounds the global security problem and leads in my mind to several conclusions. First of all, if we are to capture the essence of the present global security condition, clearly “Cold War” is no longer applicable, neither is “New World Order.” In my view, perhaps the simplest description is to speak of “global turbulence.” We are in a phase of global turbulence, in that there is likely to be no central war, no massive global catastrophe arising out of the security dimension, but in all probability percolating regional conflicts with which it will be difficult to cope, and with which the United States will be reluctant to cope on its own, and our partners even less so.

Secondly, we are likely to be living through a phase in which we will not be confronted by any grand ideological challenge of the sort that dominated much of this century, which posed philosophical, moral, and political issues in terms of black and white, of sharp dichotomy. But we are likely to be living in a phase of philosophical ambiguity and moral incertitude. We see some of that at home. We see it also on the global stage. And that’s going to contribute to a sense of uncertainty, of relativism, of, probably, a lack of direction.

The third conclusion which emerges from the foregoing is that, above all else, what we need on the global scene is an effective democratic coalition—a democratic coalition that is genuinely sensitive to the dilemmas of global security and tries to address them on a coalitional basis. The United States has to take the lead in shaping
that coalition, given its unique position. But we will not be able to succeed in doing so unless we have a more unified Europe, which means a progressive expansion of the European Union and the progressive expansion of NATO, so that there are no zones of insecurity in Europe. And it also means that Japan becomes more involved, gradually, in coordinated efforts to enhance global security and successful in reconciling itself with its neighbors (in that respect Japan has lagged behind what Germany has been able to accomplish in Europe). We do need an internationally involved, internationally engaged Japan.

In brief, what we need on the international scene is a combination of effective Trilateralism based on the primacy of the democratic principle, and these are the two assumptions which guided us in forming the Trilateral Commission 25 years ago.
Sadako Ogata

MAINTAINING THE COMMITMENT TO AN INCLUSIVE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

I am indeed pleased to celebrate with you such an important anniversary. And it is a great honor for me to receive the David Rockefeller International Leadership Award. I am very proud to share it with Zbigniew Brzezinski and Peter Sutherland, not only for myself, but also on behalf of millions of refugees and other people my Office cares for and works with.

The 1973 Tokyo Statement of Purposes of the Trilateral Commission declared that growing international interdependence "requires new and more intensive forms of international cooperation to realize its benefits and to counteract economic and political nationalism." This tenet of the Trilateral's philosophy is of great significance to me, as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as a professor of political science, and, last but not least, as a Japanese whose family traditions, personal involvement, and other circumstances have kept me for many years in the midst of international affairs.

Underpinning the Trilateral's original vision was an "internationalist" approach. It wished to promote the values of advanced industrialized democracies. It aimed at bridging the "communication" gap with Japan, bringing it more fully into the community of advanced industrialized democratic societies.

But the Trilateral's philosophy was not, as it has often been said, exclusive of other countries and societies. On the contrary, it had a strong element of inclusiveness and sought to assure that developing countries and countries from the Eastern Bloc could benefit from the values and resources of industrialized democracies.

This has been a very successful quarter of a century for the Trilateral Commission and I'd like to really congratulate you. Much of the success—and I know I am speaking for all of you—is owed to David Rockefeller. Allow me to pay him a very special personal tribute. It is most appropriate that the International Leadership Awards are being given in his name. David Rockefeller's leadership has been crucial in making the Trilateral play a meaningful role in the world. And I think David's strong vision of society and of the future and his profound sense of caring for others have been crucial elements of his leadership. He has taught us that no true leader can fail to possess these qualities. I'd like to really pay tribute to his vision and sense of caring.

* * *

Let me now say a few words about my country. When the Trilateral was established, anti-military, anti-war feelings still prevailed in Japan. Of course, there was the protective shield of the U.S. security umbrella. And although Japan's economy was soon to achieve world power status, it was a country and a society somehow lacking political goals. It was only later—during the '70s and '80s with the trade frictions—that Japan was subjected (once more, one could say) to external pressure to "internationalize." During the oil crisis, and then the Gulf War much later, Japan came under much criticism, sometimes unfairly, for not sharing enough of the world's burden.

Japan "internationalized," but—perhaps as an extreme reflection of the shock of
war—it did so by emphasizing its contribution to international public good. All this helped the formation of an international conscience in Japan. It translated not only into the deregulation and liberalization of markets and finance, but also into dramatic expansion of its overseas development budget, into some acceptance of refugees and migrants (Japan settled 10,000 Indo-Chinese, an historically unprecedented experience for the Japanese and Japanese society), and even into the use of its military for peacekeeping and humanitarian purposes.

It is therefore all the more worrying to observe that in the economic and political crisis which has recently affected the country, the impulse to be "international" seems to have waned somewhat. The current crisis is, of course, not just an economic one. It reflects a stagnant social and political system which takes one cautious step at a time, often too late and too little, and favors the reawakening of inward-looking attitudes.

Should this be confined to Japan it could simply signal a natural reaction to a difficult economic juncture. But I think the problem is broader. Japan's international commitments in the '70s and '80s never matured into clear policy directions. I am even more worried, taking up Paul's suggestion to be critical of the United States, that the public commitment of the United States to provide international leadership seems also to be receding. This is of serious concern to the world and to the Trilateral Commission in particular.

In societies which have become tremendously multi-ethnic and multi-cultural, internationalism means essentially a commitment to work towards an inclusive international community, prosperous, secure and based on democratic values. This commitment has two complementary facets. It must be turned externally towards less developed countries and internally towards the most vulnerable elements of society and especially minorities, migrants, and refugees.

I think it is true that internal politics in the United States and in Western Europe are still based on inclusive ideals. But there are numerous and very serious signs that international commitment is receding.

Look at the United States, for example. Look at its elected representatives, its administration, its media, its civil society associations. With many notable exceptions, their focus and attitudes are becoming inward-looking. They are often based on an internal political agenda, sometimes a purely electoral one, rather than on a broader commitment to international leadership.

Seen from the viewpoint of an organization dealing with terrible human suffering, it is morally difficult to justify the amount of time and energy devoted in American public life to domestic issues which not only appear to be of limited relevance—that's the impression of a foreigner—but also weaken the international leadership role that the United States could play to address some of the problems causing such suffering.

This trend has very tangible consequences, and from my point of observation they are very serious. The example of peacekeeping operations is very telling. Although the number and intensity of conflicts have not decreased—on the contrary, one could argue that localized, but very destructive conflicts have multiplied in the last few years—mobilizing human and material resources for peacekeeping has become more difficult. And the reason for this is clear, especially in the United States: decision-makers do not have the necessary conviction, energy, and political courage
to persuade voters that it is important and necessary to lead conflict resolution efforts by sending troops to remote countries, sometimes apparently far removed from direct national interest.

In the case of the Bosnian war, which for three years raged at the borders of Western Europe, the West eventually summoned sufficient political energy and allocated substantial resources to stop the fighting and try to build peace. The same may be happening in Kosovo. But this commitment must be compared to the much more hesitant efforts deployed to resolve other conflicts, for example, in Central Africa, where ethnic problems in two very small countries, Burundi and Rwanda, have caused in the past four years one of the largest genocides of the century and have triggered a spiral of war and violence threatening a vast swath of Africa—and all this with few and fragmented signs of clear, decisive international action.

Working with refugees and other displaced people places us in a crucial vantage point from which to observe the trends in internationalism. We deal with global problems that demand international commitment to be resolved. And we are very concerned. True, there is still widespread support for the cause of refugees, particularly in immigration-based societies such as in North America; and my Office continues to benefit from substantial political, moral, and financial support from the United States, Japan, and some European countries, especially the Nordic countries. But except when large visible humanitarian emergencies compel governments to allocate resources, the overall trend is towards a decline in support to humanitarian work. We have had tremendous difficulties this year in raising the voluntary contributions necessary to carry out our basic activities. The contributions of many key donors, especially in Europe, have been sharply reduced.

Even more importantly, other essential tools of international cooperation are declining. Overseas development aid budgets are decreasing very rapidly not only in the United States, but also in Europe and in Japan. We all know the case of the United States' arrears in the payment of its assessed contribution to the United Nations. One wonders how long it will take for other countries to follow this example. One wonders whether multilateralism today is not at risk of disappearing, overwhelmed by particular narrow interests.

I fear that if there is a decline in commitment to leadership in international affairs, this will have a negative impact on the commitment of secure and prosperous societies and of their governments to ensure that the weakest among their components enjoy the benefits of security and prosperity. This will inevitably expose the latest arrivals, immigrants and refugees in particular. This trend is already very clear in Europe, where inward-looking attitudes are frequently whipped up by unscrupulous politicians into xenophobia and racism, and where very delicate immigration and refugee issues, instead of being addressed through an open, rational, internationally conscious approach, are politicized, distorted, blown out of proportion. Much in the same way as national interests are pitched against global responsibilities in international matters, the security and prosperity of some are thus presented as incompatible with those of all the others, and especially of "foreigners," in national contexts.

This is perhaps an inevitable paradox of democracy. Democracy enhances in the public the sense of ownership of common resources, which in turn can foster particularism and the prevalence of local or sectoral interests. This is beginning to happen also in developing countries. Former President Nyerere of Tanzania, explaining how
difficult it had become for the current president to promote the acceptance of refugees in his country, once told me that it had been relatively easy for himself in the '70s to grant asylum and give land to large numbers of refugees. No member of Parliament and little free press was then at hand to object to this decision, which, much as it was enlightened and humanitarian, was nevertheless one taken without democratic consensus.

Politicians are responsible not to turn ownership into defensiveness and eventually exclusion. Exclusion negates democracy—that's the way I look at it. Democracy is profoundly incomplete if it is not inclusive of all members of society, including, of course, the poorer strata, but also the "foreigners"—minorities, migrants, and refugees, in particular. Perceiving and presenting exclusion of some groups as an effective manner to preserve the security and prosperity of rich societies is not only morally wrong, it is also fundamentally misleading. As migratory and refugee flows demonstrate, security and prosperity are not just national issues. The larger the number of countries and people that enjoy them, the more prosperous and secure will all countries and all people be. In the short term this may require some efforts and even some sacrifices—supporting peacekeeping in faraway countries, putting money into multilateral cooperation—but it is going to pay off. Global solidarity is a worthy investment—not even a costly one, perhaps—in a future of global peace and security for all of us.

* * *

Dear friends, we are here tonight to commemorate the 25th anniversary of an important effort to promote internationalism. The Trilateral Commission's primary objective was to create non-exclusive international leadership. Much progress has been made, not least in Japan. Much remains to be done. The inward-looking trends I have spoken of are dangerous. Today the search for "new and more intensive forms of international cooperation" proposed by the 1973 Statement of Purposes to counter narrow national agendas should aim at developing a wider concept of "strategic interest."

The end of the Cold War has made immediate understanding of this concept much more difficult. Explaining it to the general public, let alone having it accepted by public opinion, has become a far less simple undertaking than when the world was divided into blocs and internationalism was easy to present as a necessity for survival. The challenge for the Trilateral Commission in the next twenty-five years will be to continue to stand for its ideals of shared international leadership and to promote, trilaterally, a multilateral approach to the world's problems. The challenge will also be to base this effort in the visionary and caring values of which David Rockefeller is such a vivid example.Attributing the award given in his name and in the name of international leadership to the head of an organization which promotes and implements global solidarity, not only is an honor to my Office and myself, but also tells the world that peace and prosperity are not selective goals, that they will not be enjoyed by some unless they are available to all.
Peter Sutherland

A EUROPEAN VIEW OF AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

It takes a peculiar arrogance to even attempt in fifteen minutes to give a European view of the United States, particularly when one is invited to be provocative in doing it. There was a king of Spain called Alfonso X in the 13th Century who once commented that had he been present at the creation he would have had some useful hints for the better organizing of the universe. I feel somewhat in that role today, particularly having regard to the audience that I'm addressing. When I'm asked to speak of European views of the United States, in reality this is a license which I intend to grasp with both hands to express my own personal views.

But let me also join in the comments that have already been expressed about David Rockefeller before I start. He does epitomize to me the very best of the United States. But more than that, the very best of humanity, because he is an idealist and an optimist. I think it is important to join both characteristics together. A French philosopher once made the comment that to be a prophet it is necessary to be a pessimist. But David has never believed that. I don't believe that the Trilateral Commission believes that to be true either. We have to look for the good in humanity. We have to look to the good that we can envisage coming in the future in order to help it to happen. And David has demonstrated throughout his life both the intellectual and practical contributions that can be made by people of good will with a view of humanity which is positive and constructive. History may sometimes allocate credit for events to those who do not deserve that credit. I certainly am a beneficiary of that. But there are too many witnesses, many of them present here today, who can testify to David's personal contribution to permit any denial of it.

Europe's views on the United States can be described as somewhat ambivalent. They've always been ambivalent, not merely because of American contradictions in policy and the implementation of policy. There is also, in some instances, an element of European pique at the diminished status of once great powers in their relationship with a somewhat turbulent offspring, as Europeans like, occasionally, to look on the United States as being.

Let me say a word about American contradictions. The undeniable contribution of the United States to the post-World War II international order is not merely a historic memory. This contribution continues; the positive and constructive role of the United States in the ordering of global affairs has not ended. For example, we would have no World Trade Organization today (an advance on the failed ITO which had perished on the rocks of Congress at an earlier time) without U.S. leadership—and courageous leadership at that. In the time leading up to the ultimate adoption of the text of the Uruguay Round there were considerable doubts about how the United States Congress would vote. The Administration drove not merely NAFTA, but also GATT through Congress, and did so with fortitude. That seemed to demonstrate a position in regard to international affairs which was consistent with the leadership role played during the period since the last war. One need hardly mention in the political sphere the role that the United States has played in contributing to peace in the Middle East, in the former Yugoslavia,
and Northern Ireland, to name but a few cases.

So, we Europeans don't believe that the United States is essentially isolationist. We believe that the basic thrust of U.S. policy, and the basic feelings of the United States' people, are positive and internationalist. Robert Keohane's "autonomy illusion" remains prevalent in the United States (as Fred Bergsten has pointed out in his Trilateral essay on America's unilateralism), but it is a myth. The United States is more and more engaged, in the economic area in particular, in an international society. In the end of the day, positive engagement by the United States is demanded by the realities of the current global economy. And most of us feel that positive engagement is ultimately there and will be sustained.

Of course, there are contradictions—and legitimate concerns. U.S. internationalism is denied by attitudes to a whole range of subjects. We are concerned by the failure to extend fast-track trade negotiating authority. We are concerned by a certain isolationism in regard to the United Nations and international organizations. We are concerned that internationalism is denied in the area of official development assistance, where the United States position is lamentable, particularly as a society which should be providing leadership.

We all live in a world where the gap between the rich and the poor is expanding rather than contracting. Since 1960, for example, real per capita income in sub-Saharan Africa has fallen. The UNDP reported a couple of months ago that the world's richest 20 percent account for 86 percent of total private consumption, and the poorest 20 percent consume only 1.3 percent. This is, I think, the major moral challenge of our time. And it is the major moral challenge for the United States. If United States leadership is demanded, as clearly is the case in the global economy, the first focus of that leadership has to be on the growing divide between rich and poor in the world.

There is a problem here. The arguments for markets (which we all believe lead to growth and added prosperity) seem to have totally submerged, particularly in areas of U.S. society, the commitment to positive help for global society. It's a problem, of course, which we in Europe share. There is a lack of clear strategy in regard to this moral commitment, which is deeply worrying and ultimately will be the cause of great difficulty in the early part of the coming millennium.

With real political leadership, U.S. domestic constituencies and the community of rich nations surely can be led to a more positive engagement in the global economy, and particularly in the difficulties of the poorer parts of the world. There is a lack of balance in the policies of the United States and the European Union countries in terms of their commitment to this issue of marginalization, marginalization in particular in Africa. Not only is it being ignored, but the limited levels of support that have been available in the past are being reduced.

In the area of foreign policy, security, and defense, let me make one or two comments about Europe. Europe has made, as we all know, enormous strides in economic integration. The forthcoming single currency is something which even ten years ago would have been considered inconceivable by many observers. In the United States even two years ago, it was not believed generally that it would happen. But it is happening. We have had an incremental integration in Europe which is the most noble political process which has happened anywhere in the world, I believe, ever. It is ultimately a willingness on the part of old nations to share sovereignty, and that sharing of sovereignty has been promoted consistently by the United States from the earliest days. The United States stood by the
development of a more integrated and therefore more competitive Europe at a time when others would have been less far-sighted. Its consistent support for the development of an integrated Europe is something for which we must be enormously grateful.

We now need the added stimulus of the United States' support for the development of a separate pillar in foreign policy and defense. It is vitally important for Europe, and for the United States, that the current situation of total dependence on the United States should not persist. It cannot be good for the world that it should persist. It will ultimately lead to arguments of a very serious kind between Europe and the United States. Even friends like the United States need those who can enter into dialogue with them as equals, rather than as supplicants or dependents, and who can forcefully argue the merits of alternative approaches to vital issues. Zbig Brzezinski's point about a coalition has to be meaningful in the sense of requiring the United States to take into account the views of Europe before taking decisions on foreign policy and defense issues. The reality is that in international trouble spots, only the United States, as we have heard, has the capacity to lead. When it wishes to exercise its capacity to the full, it is able to dictate the terms on which solutions can be found. An enlightened U.S. policy will be to push the Europeans to get their house in order, something which Dick Holbrooke has underlined in To End a War. This should be a fundamental part of U.S. strategy with no concern for the fact that it will ultimately lead to an independent approach on foreign policy and defense issues by Europe. That should be seen as a positive and good thing. Obviously, the umbrella of NATO will remain.

So the development of a U.S. global strategy, rather than piecemeal responses, is the key to the future. And the key to that, in turn, is a more developed response in the United States to this issue of national sovereignty. The bugbear of diminished national sovereignty in the United States is really a serious difficulty in creating an international order. We must recognize the fact that sovereignty anxieties in these days of interdependence have to be treated in a different context, compared to the historic view of sovereignty.

One of the great lessons of the European Union for Europeans has been the fact that sharing sovereignty, paradoxically, enhances your capacity to influence events. Absolute sovereignty is not a viable option into the future, even for the most powerful state in the world. Going it alone will ultimately create conflict, not prevent or resolve it. The United States is going to have to have an informed debate about the importance of accepting, for example, adjudicating panels which can make objective decisions about disputes, whether they be in the area of criminal law or in the area of disputes relating to trade. It will be a slow process, but it's a necessary process. If the United States isn't in there supporting the rule of law at an international level, then it has no chance of developing as it surely must.

I'd conclude by saying that Europeans don't object to U.S. leadership. We want it and we need it. But we hope that it can be inspired by an inclusiveness and a recognition that we need to develop structures. Jean Monnet once commented that nothing is achievable without men, but nothing is durable without institutions. Institutions have to be supported by the United States. Multilateralism is the essential element that will bind our interdependence together. We must have the institutions and we must be prepared to give them the means to do their job. We have to give them the authority to make decisions and we have to give them the finance to enable them to provide what they need to provide, to have the real purpose and effect that is so necessary in the world in which we live today.
Georges Berthoin

So, happy birthday, Trilateral Commission! Thank you, David, for having been such a thoughtful and vigilant father. To both, I want to convey the good wishes, congratulations, and gratitude of your European colleagues.

Twenty-five years ago, David, you gathered around your avant-garde idea, with Zbig Brzezinski and George Franklin, a group of creative thinkers, open-minded business and trade-union leaders, and forward-looking politicians. Before it became, as it is today, an accepted, even if more and more complex, fact of international life, all of them—all of us—recognized the importance of creating between Japan, North America, and Europe a joint awareness of our responsibilities for the well-being of the world. This recognition went beyond mere statistics to the affirmation, illustration, and spreading of democratic principles.

We Europeans, in spite of our extreme internal diversities or, maybe, because of them, felt quite comfortable within this trilateral relationship.

- We found again, after so many tragic events, the way to renew our traditional contacts with Japan without weakening our respective bilateral relations with the United States of America.
- We learned how to place our historical and special links with Canada in the modern context of the North American concept while being made aware of the specificities of its components.
- As we enlarged our European Community, we were challenged and encouraged to find a new legitimacy in becoming, through our new common institutions, a responsible world actor, but this time, after the curse of two world wars, without nationalistic and imperial undertones.
- Finally, all of us found, in a practical way, how to create a partnership of equals between our different and respective strengths and weaknesses. In fact, we tried to create a trilateral harmony between the roots of our cultural identities, the dynamic creativity of the profit motive, and the democratic representation of the common good.

All of us, we made a difference, a huge difference. We did not look for the kind of glamour which excites television commentators. But, through our reports, discussions, and meetings and through our patient and constant recognition of what is desirable for all and possible for each, we were able to exert some influence without trespassing on the power of those duly elected to govern. So, in our own independent way, we, among others, made a contribution to the end of the Cold War, and to the preparation of the new world which is cracking its way through routines, conservatisms, and fears.

We know, for sure now, that the future will involve more than the three corners of our triangle. Technology has abolished time and space as the traditional basis of governance. A new form has to emerge and with more actors. The qualities of innovation we demonstrated for the last twenty-five years are challenged again. The moment is coming when it will be clear to all, in particular to us—friends and members of the Trilateral Commission—that the best, maybe the only, way to defend the interests, traditions, and hopes we cherish will be to place them resolutely within the context offered by the disciplines and opportunities of a genuine world order, genuine because created and recognized by all as fair and legitimate.
The first global history of mankind is about to start. A new window is opening. The challenge is clear.

In 1973, David, with your sense of vision, your determination and all your friends, the challenge was understood and met with success. Today, under the leadership of our successors as Co-Chairmen, Paul Volcker, Yotaro Kobayashi, and Otto Lambsdorff, the Trilateral Commission shows the will to play its usual role as reasonable and perspicacious avant-garde. So I would like to include in the toast I am about to propose to you, a toast to the Trilateral Commission's role for the next twenty-five years. In this spirit, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would be grateful if you would join me in raising your glass to the gentleman-pioneer of the trilateral world, David Rockefeller.

Shijuro Ogata

On behalf of the Japanese group of the Trilateral Commission I would like to express our sincere gratitude to David Rockefeller for his farsightedness and leadership without which Japan could not have been brought into the international community easily.

More than twenty-five years ago David had considered already Japan as a natural partner in the developed world with democracy and a market economy. As he mentioned earlier, after failing to expand the Bilderberg group to include Japan, he promptly took actions to create the Trilateral Commission with Japan as one of its three components, together with North America and Europe. Since then, we have been enormously benefited by the Trilateral exercise through the discussions, at plenaries, task force work, and dialogue with the other members on a wide range of topics from peace and security to economic development, and freedom and democracy.

In 1973, when the Trilateral Commission started, Japan was already an important economic power, but still isolated in many other respects. Now, however, we luckily have better, wider, closer intellectual contacts with North America and Europe, with a greater sense of sharing common values and common concerns.

We also truly appreciate David's special concern about Japanese participation....

This evening I'd like to close my tribute to David by pledging, on behalf of the Japanese group, to strengthen our participation in the Trilateral exercise not only in number, but also in quality, and also to expand, gradually, participation from our Asian neighbors who are increasingly more democratic, more industrialized despite the current crisis.

Among those Japanese who attended the meeting at Pocantico in July 1972, Saburo Okita passed away. Kiichi Miyazawa and Tadashi Yamamoto are not able to join us this evening. Nor is Yotaro Kobayashi, the current Chairman of the Japanese group. However, I'd like to reiterate how deeply grateful we are to David in his outstanding role in bringing Japan into the intellectual core of international community. Let me propose another toast to David and also to the future of the Trilateral Commission.
Conrad Black

David Rockefeller's generosity is, of course, extremely well-known. It goes far beyond his unvarying and exquisite courtesy and, of course, his great munificence financially and that of his family. There are many of us in the room who are beneficiaries, as I am, of his advice. He was always accessible, always thoughtful, always generous with his time, and always very reflective in the advice he gave when asked for it. I must say that in the more than twenty years that I've known him, from the start of that relationship he was, and for me he will always remain—and I mean this in the most complimentary way—the apogee, the ultimate American gentleman. If it is appropriate for me to propose yet another toast, that is what I would be honored to do.

Henry Kissinger

In 1973, when I served as Secretary of State, David Rockefeller showed up in my office one day to tell me that he thought I needed a little help. I must confess, the thought was not self-evident to me at the moment. He proposed to form a group of Americans, Europeans, and Japanese to look ahead into the future. And I asked him, "Who's going to run this for you, David?" He said, "Zbig Brzezinski." (I must ruin Zbig's reputation here by saying usually he and I agreed. We managed to hide it very well.) I had worked with Nelson for many years; I had first known David at the Council on Foreign Relations in the '50s, and I knew that Rockefeller meant it. He picked something that is important; and they got the best man to do it for them. When I thought about it, there actually was a need.

We were in the middle of the energy crisis, totally unforeseen by us. The last study that had been made in our government said the oil price might reach $5 by 1980; it had reached $12 at that point. All the industrialized democracies needed to find some method of concerted action, a common approach. And so, I encouraged David to go ahead, though I deserve no credit whatever for the consequences because David and Zbig and David's Co-Chairmen created what we have today. Any society needs some people who bridge the gap between where they are and where they should be going—people with vision and courage—and the Trilateral Commission fulfilled a crucial role in that respect...

David, he is now over 80, has done great things in his life, but he is a little bit naive. He believes that any good idea can be implemented. And, by God, you have to be a little bit innocent to do great things. Cynics don't build cathedrals. David's function in our society is to recognize great tasks, to overcome the obstacles, to help find and inspire the people to carry them out, and to do it with remarkable delicacy...

David, I respect you and admire you for what you have done with the Trilateral Commission. You and your family have represented what goes for an aristocracy in our country—a sense of obligation not only to make it materially possible, but to participate yourself in what you have made possible and to infuse it with the enthusiasm, the innocence, and the faith that I identify with you and, if I may say so, with your family. And so I would like to propose a toast that this be preserved to us for a long time.