

countries out of poverty and start them down the road to well-being. It is our moral duty, but it is also in our vital interest. This will only be possible if democracy is allowed to spread and strengthen. All of our efforts must therefore be directed at fostering the development of institutions that ensure good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and free market economies in those countries.

Only democracy can provide liberty, and only liberty can guarantee that individuals will be able to develop their talents, channel their energies, achieve their dreams, and conquer prosperity. The only possible road is to work together to spread democracy.

My government has relentlessly sought to forge a grand alliance of all of the world's democracies. It is for this reason that I lent my vigorous support to President Bush's initiative to establish a U.N. Democracy Fund.

It is for these reasons that I am convinced that the task that lies ahead of us is to promote a culture of respect for human rights and its fundamental freedoms in all countries.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to complete this mission successfully, it is essential that the bonds linking the United States and the European Union remain strong and sound.

It is this belief that prompted me to start a decisive, continuing diplomatic and political initiative with my European colleagues to ensure that the European Union did not weaken its ties to the United States in reaction to the events in Iraq.

For the same reason, we cannot ignore the danger that a united Europe might seek to define its identity in contrast to America. The necessary political and institutional integration of Europe must not mean the creation of a "Fortress Europe," closed to the rest of the world in the belief that in doing so it can preserve its prosperity and liberty.

A conception of European unity founded on a fanciful wish for self-sufficiency would be morally suspect and politically dangerous. Disagreement or, worse, opposition between the United States and Europe would be entirely unjustified and would jeopardize the security and prosperity of the entire world.

The West is and shall remain one. We cannot have two Wests. Europe needs America and America needs Europe. This holds equally true on the political, economic, and military planes.

It is therefore absolutely necessary, indeed fundamental, to sustain and reinvigorate the Atlantic Alliance, the alliance that for more than half a century has guaranteed peace in liberty.

From defense alliance, NATO is gradually becoming a security organization. While defensive alliances are exclusive, created to protect against the threat of other blocs, organizations

that protect security must be inclusive, because they become even more effective as the number of member countries increases.

This is why I strongly supported the establishment of the NATO-Russia Council, bringing the Russian Federation into the security architecture of the free world.

I am proud to have worked together with President Bush and President Putin to ensure that this came to pass, and that this momentous decision, which confirmed the Russian Federation's decision to join the West and embrace its values, would be consecrated in Italy, at the historic summit at Pratica di Mare, near Rome.

That day in 2002 marked the end of the nightmare of mutual annihilation by two blocs in arms against each other that had lasted for more than half a century.

NATO must remain the fundamental instrument to guarantee our security. The new European defense capability must therefore be complementary to NATO's. Together, NATO and the European Union shall be democracy's instruments for guaranteeing security in a globalizing world. I have always worked to achieve this objective, which I consider strategic, and will continue to do so.

In this context, the United Nations through a process of reform will have to recover their central role to become more efficient and to be able to tackle the challenges of the new millennium.

Mr. Speaker, our values of democracy and liberty allowed the West to ensure that their peoples enjoy a degree of prosperity unparalleled in the history of humankind. History has shown that only democracy permits a sound market economy to flourish, because political freedom and economic freedom are but two sides of the same coin.

Nonetheless, we are aware that there are countries that are opening to the market economy, but where authentic democracy does yet not reign and human rights are not adequately respected. The more developed and democratic countries must therefore work with determination to ensure that everywhere the opening to the free market is accompanied by the strengthening of democratic institutions and respect for human rights.

The market economy has always been a powerful drive for countries to transform from autocratic or authoritarian regimes into genuine democracies.

Action to expand the market economy in the world is therefore a key part of our efforts to affirm our values, to affirm liberty for a safer, more prosperous and secure world.

[Spoken in English:]

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, distinguished Members of Congress, the bonds between Americans and Italians are strong and enduring. I am con-

vinced that they will continue to strengthen and that the United States will always find in Italy a partner nation with which it can share the same vision of the world.

Allow me to conclude by sharing with you a brief story. It is the story of a young man, one who had just graduated from high school. His father took him to a cemetery that was the final resting place for brave young soldiers, young people who had crossed an ocean to restore dignity and liberty to an oppressed people. In showing him those crosses, that father made his son vow never to forget the ultimate sacrifice those young American soldiers had made for his freedom. That father made his son vow eternal gratitude to that country.

That father was my father, and that young man was me.

I have never forgotten that sacrifice and that vow, and I never will.

Thank you.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

At 11 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m., the Prime Minister of the Republic of Italy, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The Members of the President's Cabinet;

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

#### JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

**THE SPEAKER.** The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 11 o'clock and 38 minutes a.m., the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

**THE SPEAKER.** The House will continue in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1245

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO) at 12 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.

#### PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING RECESS

**Mrs. KELLY.** Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

**THE SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?