

U.S. AIR FORCE

**ANNUAL AIR & SPACE CONFERENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
EXPOSITION**

**SPEAKER:
GEN. ROGER A. BRADY,
COMMANDER,
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MODERATOR: (In progress) – and on behalf of all of us in the association, welcome once again to the Air and Space Conference for 2010. Our forum speaker is the commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe; commander, Air Component Command, Ramstein; and director, Joint Air Power Competency Center, Ramstein Air Base, Germany. He has the responsibility for Air Force activities in a theater spanning three continents, covering more than 20 million square miles, 92 countries and territories, and possessing one-fourth of the world's population.

The rules of engagement are: Gen. Brady will speak an allotted time, and then, time permitting, we will entertain questions. And if you would please fill out the question cards that are available and pass them to the people coming down the aisles, and we will proceed with the question and answer – (inaudible).

I will now turn the podium over to Gen. Roger Brady. (Applause.)

GEN. ROGER A. BRADY: Thank you very much.

Would someone please tell the people over there at the door that if anybody comes in I think there's a couple of seats still available – (laughter) – right over here. This is like church. Nobody wants to sit on the front row. (Laughter.) If you wanted to come down, it would help me tell if you're asleep or not, sometime during the presentation. But that's okay. You can do what feels good – within reason.

Thank you for – to the Air Force Association for the support of our Air Force and, most specifically, our airmen. Thank you for this opportunity to be a part of what I believe is an important national dialogue. And that's what I want to be part of today – a dialogue on the nation's defense today and going forward.

Now, I know why – I am delighted that you folks are here, and I know why there aren't more people here, and that's because this conference is about selling things, and people know that I don't buy anything. So this is about – this, though, I think is about policy issues and strategy that are important to our nation and to our allies.

As – (inaudible) – commanders, we are – (inaudible) – to provide in a public forum like this one today that most do not have. This is a unique privilege and carries with it unique responsibilities. This is a unique privilege. We are obliged, as senior military leaders, to give unfettered military advice to our superiors, both military and civilian. While we are in this period of discussion about the future and what it holds for us, we should be a part of that discussion.

As I prepared these remarks, it occurred to me that this experience is somewhat analogous to one I had much earlier, when I was a T-38 – (inaudible). When I had the privilege of flying that wonderful airplane as a captain, there was something that could happen – it would

happen probably only rarely, but when it did, you were in for a wild ride and perhaps a “nylon let-down.” It was called the flab-slab interconnect failure, and all of us who were instructor pilots spent a lot of time thinking about that because it could be very disastrous when it happened. Today, as a general officer speaking before public audiences, I’m much more concerned about the possibility of a mouth-brain interconnect – (laughter) – failure, which can be just as disastrous, or so I’ve read.

In recent weeks, in the context of budget pressures and competing priorities for the nation’s financial resources, articles and statements by individuals in and out of government have taken varying views on how the U.S. should relate to and involve itself with our European allies and partners. Some have taken the position that we should significantly reduce our presence in Europe, citing that there is no remaining existential threat requiring our presence, lamenting the perceived lack of interest by the Europeans in providing for their own defense, and asserting the added expense to taxpayers levied by forward-stationed forces rather than U.S.-based forces. Others bemoan the failure to realize the importance of Europe as a trade partner and an ally in a whole range of global and regional issues, and even go so far as to say our approach to Europe has been one of benign neglect.

For senior military leaders, these views are interesting, but we get paid to give military advice regarding how best to implement the National Strategy that we are given in the environment that we find ourselves. My remarks today are about what I see in Europe, what I believe the National Strategy requires us to do, and decisions we must make to prepare ourselves for an uncertain future.

You may have noted that the world has changed significantly in the last 20 years. The Soviet Union collapsed, Germany reunited, Eastern Europe blossomed. We conducted air operations over Bosnia, then Serbia. Terrorists flew airliners into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field. We ousted the Taliban and then Saddam Hussein while the world’s economies boomed and then busted. Billy Joel could turn that into a Grammy-winning lyric.

As this was going on, the U.S. withdrew forces from Europe from a high of over 300,000 to approximately 100,000, and NATO changed its mission set, nearly doubled its membership and committed to engagement in operations with us in Afghanistan, and some in Iraq. We are now at the confluence of several events. Some would say a perfect storm. We are trying to conclude two significant combat operations in Southwest Asia. At home, the nation is in epic debate over health care costs, unemployment, the national debt, immigration and the environment in the worst economy since the Great Depression.

At this crossroads, looking forward, one would expect that all of us in government would be assessing where we are and where we’re going, including the nature of our engagement around the world. Let’s take a closer look at Europe. This is my third tour in Europe – eight years total. I’ve also had eight years working in Washington, D.C. When people in Oklahoma ask me how many years I’ve been in a foreign country, I say eight, and I’m not talking about Europe. Actually, there are two Europes. When most of us think of Europe, we think of Cinderella’s castle, the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, wine and beer, vacations and a 35-hour work

week – wine, beer and a modern society. From an air power perspective, we see capable allies whose air forces fly modern, often American-made aircraft.

We see a successful and stable Europe, in no small part, due to our longstanding cultural, economic and military ties. Essentially, the commitment our nation made to Europe after World War II, in the form of the Marshall Plan, and NATO, and almost seven decades of assurance and deterrence in the form of permanent forward-based forces is why we have this image of Europe today. We see a prosperous Europe with whom we share a common heritage and common values. Interestingly, it is our great success in Europe that suggests to some that we can and should reduce our level of engagement there. Yet less acknowledged is the other Europe, the Europe that is less obvious and less idyllic. First, it is not a single picture but a mosaic of many sovereign countries with much in common but with significant differences as well.

There is a demographic shift occurring in many nations in Europe. This is not bad in itself; we are experiencing a demographic shift in the U.S. also. Unfortunately, some of this shift in Europe is forming enclaves that are fertile soil for radicalization of unassimilated groups of people. Europe is a staging ground for terror attacks throughout the world and home to an internal terror threat.

According to a 2009 assessment by the Director of the National Intelligence, “The primary threat from Europe-based extremists stems from al-Qaida and Sunni-affiliates who return from training in Pakistan to conduct attacks in Europe or the United States. Al Qaida has used Europe as a launching point for external operations against the homeland on several occasions since 9/11, and we believe that the group continues to view Europe as a viable launching point,” unquote.

Europol concurs and acknowledges that Europe is being used as a platform to prepare and initiate terrorists elsewhere in the world. Not only is Europe a base for activity against the U.S., it is also home to large-scale terrorist attacks. Since 9/11 there have been 31 terrorist attacks in Europe. On a per capita scale, three of these have been “9/11” events – Istanbul 2003, Madrid 2004, and London 2005.

Despite these tragedies, there have also been successes. Just this last January Turkey detained 120 people throughout the country; and in July three people were arrested in Norway, and one in Germany, for bomb plots against Norway, the U.K. and the U.S. Closer to us, Ramstein, Germany last fall convicted four terrorists linked to the Islamic Jihad Union for a 2007 planned attack against U.S. forces in Ramstein and the German government.

While some air forces in Europe are very modern, several have less capability than the air force of Afghanistan. Europe lacks diverse energy sources, creating tensions between nations and limiting their political autonomy. As of 2006, the EU received 30 percent of its oil and 50 percent of its gas from Russia. By 2030, Europe will need to import 93 percent of its oil, 84 percent of its gas, and Russia will contribute 45 percent and 60 percent respectively. These facts highlight a very important fact regarding energy in Europe: a lack of energy diversity. This fosters reliance on a single source and limits a state’s sovereign flexibility. I would refer to you

to the 2009 National Intelligence Report for a discussion of how a nation can use energy as political and economic leverage over others.

Finally, the High North: The Arctic region, containing what some believe contains 25 percent of the world's energy resources, can easily become an area of intense competition among the five nations who can plausibly make a claim to the seabed. This highlights the need for international cooperation regarding securing energy access and transit, and developing credible sources of alternative energy. Access to energy in Europe is more than an economic issue and one that should be important in the U.S. as well.

Europe is the home of what are called "frozen conflicts." Some are less frozen than others: South Ossetia and Abkhazia and Georgia, the Nagorno-Karabakh, Moldova Trans-Dniester, and the still-festering animosities that seem to persist – that persist in some parts of the Balkan states. History suggests that seemingly remote and isolated conflicts like these can unexpectedly become rather significant challenges for not just Europe but the rest of the world.

We are making a very significant effort to reset relationships between the United States and Russia. Within the last few weeks, USAFE flew 12 C-130J missions carrying firefighting capability provided by EUCOM components to assist the Russians in combating wildfires in their country. That's the sort of thing that Americans do, and we are looking for other opportunities to pursue areas of cooperation to our mutual benefit.

Still, perceptions of Russia vary across Europe, largely based on proximity and history. Clearly, those nations located closer have a long history of dealing with Russia, then the Soviet Union, and now Russia again. Those memories are rather fresh. Others seem to be less wary of Russia and somewhat less questioning of its motives and its objectives. I think it goes without saying that a Russia that contributes to solving regional and global challenges is in all our best interests.

Okay, I guess you'd call that some of the facts on the ground as they relate to Europe. Now let's look briefly at the National Strategy, a very good document signed off by the president in May of 2010. I plan on providing a copy to the programmers and budgeteers in the Air staff. Significantly, I believe, it states, "Our relationship with our European allies" – listen to this, this is kind of important – "our relationship with our European allies remains the cornerstone for U.S. engagement with the world and a catalyst for international action."

U.S. and European nations lead many of the most influential international organizations. Major efforts against terrorism and crime, to include trafficking in human beings, smuggling of migrants, drugs, illicit goods, financial corruption, and Internet crime can only occur if the U.S. and its European partners work together. Other efforts, such as energy security and climate change, require collective action if we are to be truly successful. Our collective action sets the example and the standard for the rest of the world.

We are also economically influential and independent. Six of the G-7 nations are European, to include – (inaudible) – Russia. Europe is also the world's largest and most important trading partner, with two billion (dollars) in daily bilateral trade, and almost 25 percent

of U.S.-EU trade is transactions between firms that are based on both sides of the Atlantic, to include 12 to 14 million people in what we call the Trans-Atlantic workforce. Together, the EU and U.S. have a combined 60 percent of the global GDP. That is a tremendous amount of economic clout and clearly a major part of our cornerstone engagement with the world.

A truism in U.S. global operations in the recent past, present, and undoubtedly the future is that when we go to war, we go with our European allies. The National Security Strategy clearly says, quote, “helping our allies and partners build capacity to fulfill their responsibilities to contribute to regional and global security, playing a major role in going forward. Our military will continue strengthening its capacity to partner with foreign counterparts; train and assist security forces; and pursue military-to-military ties with a broad range of governments.

As I mentioned earlier, there is also a broad range of capabilities within NATO. Not all NATO air forces require, or are even capable receiving, the same level of partnership. It must be and is tailored. But there is no better way to build partnership than to work with these nations on a daily basis. And USAFE is not new to this mission or skill set. We’ve had 65 years of practice. Permanently forward-based forces, general purpose forces are the fuel that makes building partnership capacity work, and our day-to-day interaction and knowledge of Europe allow us to tailor engagement to each nation appropriately.

Additionally, the National Security Strategy says, “We will be steadfast in strengthening those old alliances that have served us so well, while modernizing them to meet the challenges of a new century. As influence extends to more countries and capitals, we will need new and deeper relationships in every region, and strengthen international standards and institutions,” unquote.

The only effective way to strengthen those old alliances, modernize them and create deeper relationships, is to be present. Deepening relationships is dependent on demonstrations of mutual trust, solidarity and commitment. Similarly, the new – the renewed commitment to deterrence and prevention called for in the National Strategy can only be effectively accomplished with a continued U.S. presence. The stationing of American service families and their – and members of their families signifies a vested interest and shared interest with the host nation. If that nation is attacked, Americans could be vulnerable as well and the U.S. is committed, a situation which our host nations recognize and clearly understand the significance of. Daily interaction with host-nation forces builds relationships and interoperability that are key to quick responses in crises.

Finally, the National Strategy says, “We will strengthen our regional deterrent postures, for example, through phased, adaptive missile defense architectures in order to make certain that regional adversaries gain no advantage from their acquisition of new offensive military capabilities,” unquote. We are actively engaged today in building the relationship between U.S. capability and the Alliance’s contribution to that mission. It is essential that BMD capability be as unified as possible to enhance the effectiveness of the system for both Europe and North America. The Bucharest summit in April, 2008 and the Strasbourg-Kehl summit in 2009 affirmed and reaffirmed that ballistic missile proliferation poses an increasing threat to allies, their forces, territory and populations.

Missile defense forms part of a broader response to counter this threat. Importantly, BMD offers an opportunity to work with Russia and lessen their concerns about a NATO threat to Russia. The Strasbourg-Kehl summit declaration called for working with Russia, and called on Russia to take advantage of United States missile defense cooperation proposals. These two actions will defend the allies' and U.S. homeland, and provide Europe more sovereign options when dealing with a nation like Iran, that will certainly leverage its capability to threaten nations.

Permanently-stationed forces of all services play a very significant role in our National Strategy and there is no better example of the impact of these forces than NATO. NATO is America's and history's most successful and, arguably, most significant alliance. From its inception in 1949, NATO has been our most important multilateral alliance. Now, 61 years later, despite conducting operations much different from its original intent, it is still an extremely successful alliance.

NATO's relevance is due to its past successes; shared common interests and heritage between its members; its ability to grow and successfully include post-communist or European nations; perhaps most importantly in today's political landscape, its ability to exert a unified effort outside of NATO's borders. While NATO's history began as a counter to the Soviet Union and its ideology in Europe, it has evolved into much more since achieving success in that original endeavor.

NATO has been credible – it has been critical to the successful building of tolerant, democratic societies in Europe, and played a role in nations renouncing historical animosities and working toward a common peaceful purpose. Without a doubt, NATO's success over the last 60 years has added stability to Europe and served as a goal for many European nations, especially Eastern European nations, to improve their military capability and political structures.

The U.S. is now reaping the benefits of these improved capabilities. Our nation and many non-U.S., non-NATO partners are critical to our success in Afghanistan. As of August – and please listen to this, because I don't think people realize this – as of August, over 39,000 of the 119,000 troops in Afghanistan are from NATO and our European partners. Not only does it bring credibility to our actions there, it also means 39,000 fewer Americans in harm's way. Now, we may complain about how many – how much Europeans contribute or the caveats of some of those nations, but the bottom line is they are still providing 33 percent of the forces in Afghanistan.

You know, I like to say that NATO is like Thanksgiving dinner with your relatives. It's your family. There's a couple of weird son-in-laws there, but they're family. And at the end of the day they're there because you share values with them, and what you have in common is more important than your differences. Their involvement in Afghanistan over the last nine years is a direct result of our relationship with our European allies both in and outside of NATO.

Maintaining forward troops in Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union was critical to maintaining and building these essential relationships and is still important today. I repeat, without the continual presence of U.S. forces in-theatre, conducting

day-to-day operations deterring, assuring and building capacity, the U.S. would not be able to exert the influence in Europe, Africa and South Asian to the degree that it does today. Permanent forward-based forces are critical to our national security strategy. Not only has our presence in Europe, without a doubt, been the source of stability since the end of World War II, our presence assures allies and deters anyone who would do us harm.

Europe's geographic location alone makes it important, providing access to other areas of the world. Several USAFE bases are located at the circumference of what the mobility guys call "the lens," located approximately 3,500 nautical miles from the East Coast, the Middle East and East Asia – Central Asia. USAFE bases allow us to project power much more rapidly than if forces were to come solely from the U.S. USAFE forces save critical time reacting to threats to Europe, or to America and allied interests in Europe, Africa, Southwest and Central Asia, and are a vital part of our efforts in Southwest Asia.

Last week I had a discussion. We were getting ready to go to a conference and were all supposed to talk about what we've done in terms of energy. So my guys talked about, well, we're buying fewer energy – and, you know, we're buying more energy-efficient vehicles, and we're doing this and that, we're turning off the lights, and we've got a system that shuts down computers at night and (wakes us ?) up in the morning. And I said, yeah but you're missing the most important part. And they said, what's that? And I said, well, we need to tell the Air Staff that we had the good judgment to station ourselves halfway to the fight, so we burn half as much gas and spend half as much money when we deploy. We're the most efficient forces the Air Force has.

For the past few months half – one half – of the U.S. fighter aircraft in Southwest Asia were from USAFE. Fifty of my total of 148 A-10s, F-16s and F-15Bs have been downrange. Forces in Europe provided critical operating bases and staging locations for operations in Libya in '86, Desert Storm/Desert Shield in '90-'91, Allied Forces in '99, and Southwest Asia operations today. Reduced access to, or operations from, European bases would make such future operations much more difficult, if not impossible. I must (reiterate ?) that NATO is as good as it is, not in small measure because we have been engaged continuously. This long-term presence has built trust and commitment from our partners, and it is a relationship we must nurture and sustain.

Okay, I titled this – I didn't tell you this up front, but I entitled this "Europe, the National Strategy and Black Swans." Okay, what about black swans? Prior to their discovery in Australia in the 17th century, any ornithologist would have told you that black swans do not exist. In fact, black swans were for many years a metaphor in literature for someone – for something that did not exist or could not happen.

When black swans were discovered, it came as a shock to scientists and those familiar with the literary metaphor. In his 2007 best-selling book of the same name, Nassim Taleb asserts that all significant events in history – major scientific events and artistic achievements, are "black swan events." He defines these events as those that: One, lie outside the realm of regular expectation – they are outliers; second, they carry an extreme impact; and third, in spite of their

outlier status, human nature makes us concoct explanations for their occurrence after the fact, making them explainable and predictable.

So they have rarity, extreme impact and retrospective predictability. With this concept in mind, how good have we been at productive – at predicting black swans? I would suggest, not so good. World War I, the rise of the Third Reich, Pearl Harbor, the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, air wars over Bosnia and Serbia, terrorist attacks of 9/11, Russia-Georgia – or Georgia-Russia, take your pick, each of these events was outside the realm of expectations, had high impact, and the Monday-morning quarterbacks at the corner drug store are all saying that they were predictable. Let's face it, we may have three computers on our desk, an iPod – (inaudible) – (of each ear ?) and an iPhone in our briefcase, but we shouldn't get too cocky about our ability to predict the future.

So how do we deal with an uncertain future? Mr. Taleb suggests we need to have systems that are robust if we are to deter or be resilient in the face of inevitable black-swan events. I believe our National Strategy makes a lot of sense, and to deter folks – foes and make ourselves resilient in an uncertain future, we must nurture and strengthen the viability of those relationships that have yielded success in the past, and continue to develop those capabilities that would allow us to not just survive but win in those scenarios that we are now calling the most dangerous but least likely – high-end events.

Michael Howard, the renowned British strategist, once stated that the purpose of gazing into the future about war is not to get it right, but to avoid getting it terribly wrong. As senior civilian and military leaders of this nation, we must avoid such a tragic error. Bold, innovative leaders should not operate by only playing defense, or trying to cover our backsides, or constantly to be looking back over our shoulders. But if and when cataclysmic events occur in the next decade or so, it would be tragic if the generations we are privileged to lead looked at us and said, those guys got it terribly wrong.

Let me again thank the Association for your unflinching support of our Air Force. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share some thoughts on what I believe is an important subject.

And thank you to the airmen who will come behind guys like me and assume the leadership of our great Air Force. The nation will be in good hands. Fly safe. (Applause.)

MODERATOR: (Inaudible, off mike) – a number of questions. Let me start off with a general – (inaudible) – once again regarding Europe.

In the press you see a lot of things written about Europe and what's going on, could you give us your assessment of those things that you see in the media that are sort of dead-on correct and those that might not be 100 percent accurate?

GEN. BRADY: Well, in the last month I've seen three or four articles and they tend to span the extreme, as I suggested at the beginning.

Some of them, there's a tendency to focus on – when you mentioned Europe, there was, there was a little bit of a gut reaction to some within the Beltway to say, oh, those are the guys that aren't doing enough in Afghanistan; therefore they are ungrateful for what we've done for them in the past, and we should come home and save money, okay. That's one kind of extreme view. I may have overstated it slightly, but not by much – (chuckles).

On the other side there are people who say, you know, this is a relationship that we've had for a long time. (We no kidding ?) – we think that we're going to have to fight with allies, going forward, and let's look around and see who the allies are the most likely to go with us; they just happen to live in Europe.

MODERATOR: Okay.

Sir, you mentioned you had three tours in Europe –

GEN. BRADY: Yes.

MODERATOR: You've seen a number of changes over the years, and you touched on some of those in your remarks. Do you see the trend that our European nations are increasingly more inclined to provide support through the European Union as opposed through perhaps the NATO Alliance; and what impact and what implications do you see of that?

GEN. BRADY: Well, EU's an interesting organization, and of course it's largely built around economies in an attempt to get their act together economically. But from the beginning it was believed that they would not – that NATO would be the – would continue to be the military apparatus in Europe.

You continue to hear more and more of the Europe wanting to do things militarily. And they do something militarily, and they do some things well. They tend to be humanitarian things in Africa and places like that, and they're, – and they are effective, quite frankly. But there's only so many dollars in the budget. I mean, you can't have – they're the same forces. You can't have EU forces and NATO forces realistically.

The biggest challenge is the NATO – the budgets, the defense budgets of the European nations are in free-fall, and that's very concerning because even our nations – even the nations that are politically the closest to us, and most likely to sign up to operations with us the earliest, are becoming very small. Significant cuts are being discussed in the U.K. and in France and in Germany. And as an airman, as the Air Component Commander in Europe, that's very concerning for me. They have a significant capability, but their capacity is diminishing.

MODERATOR: Sir, you touched on economics and the impact of that. With the recent economic downturn and the effects, what impact – could you expand on what impact that might have on our partners' ability to continue to support a strategy in Europe?

GEN. BRADY: Well, I think they're – that's a – that's a huge challenge. And people could make the case, I think, that – you know, I just bragged on our European allies for 30

minutes or so, and then you say, yeah, but they don't want to put any money in their budgets for defense, and to share the burden.

That is a – that is a bit of a challenge. But it's a mirror image of what I think we're going to see in the U.S. too, because I think it's a reality that we're going to have flatter, declining budgets here as well. And so we're going to have to more often talk about not just how, but how much things cost.

So I think that – I think that the nations understand that they all, at a certain level – and it depends on where you talk to them in the governments, they are trying to upgrade their capabilities. They understand that there is an important relationship with the United States and that NATO is an important arm.

But these things – as I was reminded yesterday, there are ministers of defense and heads of state that understand this. But things like deciding whether or not to buy the F-35 have to go through committees in their ministries, and people vote. And so sometimes bad strategic decisions can be made at those levels and have strategic consequences.

MODERATOR: Maybe taking that one level further down, with regard to Turkey: There seems to be some trend towards more regional interests with regard to Turkey, as opposed to those that support the United States or NATO. Would you comment on the impact that might have on our ability to achieve our strategy in Europe?

GEN. BRADY: Well, I think we continue to have a very strong relationship with Turkey, and certainly with the Turkish air force. But I think it's clear that Turkey is having its challenges right now. They are an important – they're an important entity in that part of the world. They are able to talk to Islamic nations and Western nations in a way that almost no other nation can, which makes them an important leverage point.

But I think they're going through their own internal challenges. But, longer term, I think there's a clear understanding that their future is with the West and with us. And I think those – they are solid partners, for example, as just a tactical example, they're solid partners in (the 35 program ?), and will continue to be. So it'll be – it'll be a bumpy road. But again it's like Thanksgiving lunch, you know, there's some awkward conversations occasionally.

MODERATOR: Now, with regard to partnerships, one specific question regarding the C-17, and how is that consortium working, and do you see additional –

GEN. BRADY: I'm so glad you asked.

Most of you have never, in your travels, – Papa, Hungary is probably not on your route, but Papa, Hungary is a small town of 35,000 next to a former Soviet fighter base. We have three C-17s there, flown by 12 NATO nations and two very significant partners – Finland and Sweden. Sweden is actually the second-largest contributor to that operation, and it is an overwhelming success.

It's got 3,165 hours that people buy into. The U.S. is the largest contributor. The next, second-largest contributor is Sweden. The unit is commanded by a U.S. guy; the vice commander is a Swedish Gripen pilot. We forgive him that, and I told him that we put a stick in the airplane just for him so he wouldn't get confused.

But great partners. And this has allowed countries – small countries that couldn't even get a whiff of flying, whose entire defense budget couldn't fly a C-17, couldn't buy a C-17, but they are buying hours on the C-17. And these nations have contributed in important ways, by putting their money against SAC C-17 and flying missions into Afghanistan, and they flew three sorties into Haiti.

This is a huge example of the capability of European partners to get together and really get some stuff done. And they set it up in about one year. That is light-speed.

MODERATOR: Among the challenges you outlined, you mentioned energy and the dependence on outside sources. And as the Air Force has been a leader in, really – it's an energy plan. Could you describe a little bit about what USAFE is doing to help implement that energy plan, and how that might reduce the reliance that we have on outside sources of energy?

GEN. BRADY: Well, we're – in USAFE we've had some ideas, and we've been willing to steal others. There are people across the command – Don Hoffman, who's sitting down here, his command has been very aggressive in energy development.

You know, in our operations and aircraft operations, which is the hardest place – the hardest place for us to save money is where we spend most of the money, and that's in fuel. You know, I don't want to – I don't want to be the guy that tells everybody to set the throttle at 87 percent on initial, okay. So we've got some challenge.

I think the biggest challenge is probably the operational challenge of – because we are the Air Force, we burn a lot of gas, and so we need to do that intelligently. We've done it pretty well in the mobility world, in some cases, because we're not carrying as much extra gas as we used to. We're not carrying 15 pallets of, you know, plywood in the back like we used to when I flew tankers years ago.

And so we're doing some smart things. As I said, energy vehicles; better lighting – the lighting that adjusts itself for ambient light in the new buildings that we're building; things like much more efficient hybrid vehicles. So all the things you'll see across the rest of the Air Force, we're engaging in.

MODERATOR: Shifting gears just a bit, yesterday you participated in a nuclear enterprise panel –

GEN. BRADY: Yes.

MODERATOR: – with other leaders of the Air Force nuclear enterprise. And I asked you the question about how our European allies and our partners view decisions we make in the

United States with regard to our nuclear force structure, and things like the Nuclear Posture Review and the Arms Reduction treaty. Would you comment on that?

GEN. BRADY: Yes.

Although, you know, each nation is different and an entity in and of itself, there are some things that are kind of – seem to be truisms. And that is, you know, there are political statements that are made, high-minded thinking that is – that is, represents good thought and is a good thing to do, and a nuclear world – nuclear-free world is an important aspiration.

There's also a reality about what nuclear weapons have done for us, and do for us today, in terms of deterrence and stability. I think there is that understanding in Europe as well as there is here. So while we would like to, as our strategy indicates, make them less prominent in what we're relying on, there is still a belief that there is – that they provide assurance to the allies and a deterrent factor.

And I think the U.S. government has taken exactly the right stance on that. And we said as it relates to weapons in Europe, this is a NATO decision. The U.S. is not going to make a preemptive decision about that capability. The NATO nations will have to agree to what it is. And my take is that there's more NATO nations that are going to say, yeah, this is kind of an important thing to have, than there are that will say, get those things out of here.

MODERATOR: Sir, one final question with regard to the National Security Strategy and your ability to support that with your forces. Do you believe that USAFE has the composition, in terms of people and aircraft, to effectively implement the National Security Strategy, and also to deal with potential black swans that may be coming down the road?

GEN. BRADY: Our capability to respond to catastrophic events is very small, quite frankly. We are on the ragged edge, I would say, of what it takes to do partnering. And it's a matter of math: If you take a squadron away, that's – you know, that's several hundred partnering events I will not do in the next year. So if I lose force structure, I do less partnering.

So the question is: How important do you think partnering is? As I said, I think – I think we have the most efficient forces in the Air Force because they go down-range at the rate that everybody else goes down-range, and when they're home, they fly with the Romanians, the Bulgarians; they train JTACs with the Brits, and do all of those things that we – that we talk about.

So I think that – I think that we are at the point where we absolutely cannot reduce any further. We probably need one or two more squadrons than we have now. I think if Carter Ham, my Army counterpart, were here, he could give the same speech, and would. So this is not a parochial view of an airman. I think this is a very much a joint view in EUCOM and I appreciate very much the opportunity to spend some time with you.

MODERATOR: Well, sir, we thank you for being with us. Thank you for your leadership in our Air Force and thank you for your support of AFA. (Applause.)

GEN. BRADY: Thank you.

(END)