



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENCY AND CONGRESS

STRENGTHENING MULTI-LATERAL LEADERSHIP: A EUROPEAN EXCHANGE PROGRAM
SPRING CONFERENCE – MARCH 30-APRIL 1, 2009

The spring conference of CSPC’s initiative on transatlantic relations, *Strengthening Multi-Lateral Leadership: A European Exchange Program* (EEP), took place from March 30 to April 1, 2009. The participants, all of whom are exceptional young leaders from positions of policy planning in European governments or in the policy-research community, included many who attended the November session, with the addition of a few new attendees from DC Embassies. During the conference, which occurred just prior to a NATO summit in Europe, the group met with experts involved in this and past Presidential transitions to analyze the progression of the transition and the first 100 days of the new Administration. They also discussed specific policy areas such as energy, the economy, and President Obama’s foreign policy toward China and the Middle East. Several speakers returned from the November session, which allowed participants to build on



previous discussions, follow-up on policy projections, and evaluate changing American political dynamics.

Participants gathered on Monday, March 30, at the German Marshall Fund (GMF) to begin the program with an orientation session.



Immediately following was an update on



the Center’s *Strengthening America’s Future Initiative* (SAFI), which provided a comprehensive net assessment of the ten overlapping challenges facing the nation and offered four recommendations to help the country face these crises. Center President David Abshire and former Colorado Governor and Democratic National Committee Chairman Roy Romer (a SAFI Co-chair) discussed the project and its conclusions with the EEP participants.



Following that, Bradley Belt of Palisades Capital Advisors, LLC led a conversation on the current global financial situation and the future of economic policy. At lunch, Karen Donfried, Vice



President of GMF, spoke on the state-of-play of the transition. Next, former Senator and Republican National Committee Chairman William Brock and Congressman Artur Davis (D-AL) chatted with participants about the developing relationship between the Obama White House and Capitol Hill. The first day concluded with a session on the progress of the transition at the civil servant level, which was presented by returning panelists Kevin Mahoney of the Office of Personnel Management, Katie Malague of the Partnership for Public Service, and James Pfiffner of George Mason University.

Tuesday began at the Center’s office with Congressional experts Thomas Mann of the Brookings Institution and Norman Ornstein of American Enterprise Institute, who spoke on the progression of the first 100 days of the Obama Administration. Lunch was held with Center Vice

President and CFO Thomas Kirlin and Cambridge Energy Research Associates' Susan Ruth, who spoke on the Administration's developing energy policies. In the afternoon, participants met with David Shambaugh of the George Washington University, who spent time discussing U.S. policy toward China. The afternoon concluded with a cocktail reception for program participants, speakers from both the fall and spring sessions, and Center staff.

On Wednesday, program participants assembled at the Atlantic Council for a session with James Dobbins of RAND and Patrick Mulloy of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation on the U.S.-European relationship, with a specific focus on financial aspects of the relationship and the alliance's work in Afghanistan. This session was followed by lunch with Judith Yaphe of the National Defense University, who focused on U.S. policy toward the Middle East. The last session of the spring conference was a meeting with former Director of National Intelligence and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Negroponte, who discussed the relationship between the Obama Administration and the UN.

European Exchange Program participants and speakers praised the program for being an excellent educational opportunity on the processes and challenges of the American Presidential transition, as well as an introduction to the American political landscape for European Foreign Service officers who have just arrived in Washington.

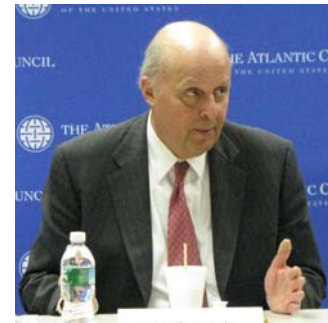
Furthermore, many participants noted the value of a program which brings together representatives from many Embassies to discuss the transatlantic relationship and current political issues. Even



within the international diplomatic community, segregation often occurs between Embassies when conscious effort is not made to create networks among foreign nationals. The EEP addressed this gap by

bringing together 17 representatives from 12 countries encompassing various forms of government.

Participants included representatives from their home countries' Embassies and Foreign Ministries as well as delegates to the EU and the UN.



Finally, the program forged vital ties between transition experts and participants and provided a path of communication to help foreign governments navigate the pitfalls of the transition period and better understand the development of U.S. policy.

The Center received funding for this initiative from the Luso-American Foundation, the Stuart Family Foundation, and the Tulsa Community Foundation, as well as several private donors. In addition, the Atlantic Council and German Marshall Fund donated space and food during the conferences.

For more information on this program, please contact Emily Shaftel, Coordinator of the European Exchange Program, at EShaftel@thePresidency.org or 202-872-9800.