

new powers. All powers given to the European Union have been given it by the member states and they must have unanimously agreed. The European Union is not something that expands into a super state. It can't, because every one of the existing members must agree to any addition, even the minutest addition, to the powers of the Union. And that's underpinned by the fact that, unlike this Union, as people of North Carolina discovered to their consternation in 1861, a country may withdraw from the European Union. If a country really doesn't like what the European Union is doing, it can leave. It is quite free to leave. So those are the important things to stress as against the powers we have there are very strict limits on how we may use those powers.

What does the European Union offer U.S. business? Well, the European Union offers U.S. businesses one of the biggest, most prosperous, most mature markets in the world—450 million consumers—soon, perhaps to become 600 million consumers. Six hundred million consumers who mostly live in accordance with the rule of law because a country cannot be in the European Union unless it applies the rule of law. Countries can be thrown out if they cease to be democratic and cease to respect the rule of law. A lot of investors or businesses in this country are concerned with intellectual property—the right that you have some share in the profits made by the movie that you paid for, for example, or the rights to get royalties for the patents or goods that you are selling. You can send those goods to some parts of the world, which shall remain nameless, and you cannot be entirely sure that the courts in that country would enforce your rights. Well, in the case of the European Union you can be absolutely sure, not only that the

courts in Europe will enforce your rights but also that the courts in each of the countries that are members of the

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European Union will do so as well because we would not allow any country to stay in the European Union if it didn't enforce rights such as intellectual property rights. That's one of the guarantees we give you.

The bigger the European Union becomes the bigger the area becomes where the rule of law and the respect for property and the respect for individual rights is guaranteed by very strong economic incentives and potential candidacy. So, those are some of the things that the European Union offers to the U.S. It also offers, I think, to the United States what I would describe as the global gold standard as far as democracy is concerned. There's no other entity in the world, which offers immense economic advantages to people if they promise to be democratic and to have the rule of law.

You might ask yourselves, why does a country like Croatia, or a country like Turkey, or a country like the Ukraine, for that matter, want to join the European Union? These are countries which in some cases obtained their independence

relatively recently and with considerable difficulties. Why would they want to join a big union like this, where decisions are going to be made in Strasbourg or in Brussels by a majority where they only have a small say? Is it just for the money? No. These countries want to join the European Union because they can say that if you invest in their country, by virtue of their being members of the European Union, or even a candidate to join the European Union, that in itself gives the guarantee that this is a country that is a genuine democracy with a genuine application of the rule of law. It is that gold standard, that industrious standard for democracy, that the European Union offers that is one of the most powerful things that it has for the world and going forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The last point I would like to make is this: It's important to realize that the European Union is probably the biggest achievement of political statesmanship of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the sense that it is an entirely voluntary union of people that had an experience of fighting with one another over centuries and then turning around and coming together of 25 countries. Any one of them can leave at any time, and yet, voluntarily, they have stayed together to build a zone of peace in a part of the world that has been the cause of more suffering to the rest of the world than any other part of the world has ever been. This is a marvelous, ambitious, and fragile construction. We Europeans must be proud of it but we must also work at it. Like any other relationship the European Union is no more than a relationship, and a relationship, if it is not tended will tend to fall apart. The European Union needs constant love and attention from its members, and I hope that that's what it continues to get.

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