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PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

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## **National Security Advisor Dr. Condoleezza Rice Discusses War on Terror at Reagan Library and Museum**

The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum  
Simi Valley, California  
As Delivered

DR. RICE: Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you very, very much for that wonderful introduction and that terrific introduction. In fact, I was supposed to be here a couple of months ago and it was because of one of those telephone calls in the middle of the night that I didn't make it. That was one that told us that, in fact, we had gotten Saddam Hussein. (Applause.)

And Mrs. Reagan and I agreed that the only reason that I wouldn't make it this time was if somehow we'd gotten Osama bin Laden. (Laughter.) Unfortunately, I'm here.

I am grateful to have been invited to deliver this lecture -- first, because it gives me a chance to come back to California, something I do all too rarely. But more importantly, I'm mindful of the tremendous honor of delivering only the eighth Ronald Reagan Lecture since this institution was founded. It is humbling to be asked to join a group that includes a senator, two governors, and a Supreme Court justice.

Four years ago, when then-Governor George W. Bush sought a venue to explain his foreign policy vision to America and to the world, he came here. I remember sitting in this very room as he delivered that vision for how he would lead America if he had an opportunity to become President. And of course, we didn't know the tremendous consequential times in which he would serve.

It is fitting then that I have a chance to come back here to discuss the foreign policy vision of President George W. Bush, in a world that has changed dramatically since in 1999.

Mrs. Reagan, thank you for this invitation. But I especially want to thank you all that you've done for this country. (Applause.) You have fought drug abuse. You've represented America to the world. You've supported your husband during pivotal periods in our history. And you've preserved his legacy for Americans and for all free men and women across the world. Thank you. (Applause.)

Thanks to Fred Ryan (ph), the chairman of the board of trustees of the Reagan Library Foundation, and to Duke Blackwood, the executive director of the presidential library and foundation, and to the distinguished trustees and guests, thank you for having me here.

Clare Boothe Luce famously said that every President will be remembered with a single sentence. My friend Peggy Noonan updated that maxim, and observed that Ronald Reagan was the one President who knew the sentence he wanted -- and he got it. President Reagan lifted America's spirits and led the free world to victory

in the Cold War.

Ronald Reagan was President during a pivotal period in the history of our country, and of our world. But unlike most Presidents who face great crises, Ronald Reagan, in some sense, chose his moment. He watched with alarm the rise of Soviet aggression and adventurism in the 1970s and the corresponding decline in American self-confidence and prestige. He saw clearly that if those trends continued, not just America's future, but the future of freedom itself, would be imperiled. Ronald Reagan had a vision for overcoming and reversing those trends. He would rebuild America's military strength, unleash the creativity of our economy, and tell the truth about the Soviet Union.

That vision and determination with which President Reagan pursued these goals sometimes roiled public opinion at the time. It certainly roiled the foreign policy establishment. And I know that because I came from the foreign policy establishment. (Laughter.) As an arms control and Soviet specialist just getting started, I remember those debates well. And I sometimes participated in them.

I remember one particular one when I served on a panel discussing the Zero Option -- the complete elimination of all U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range ballistic missiles. This was in San Francisco, in the early 1980s, at the height of the nuclear freeze movement. I was a young academic, just starting out. And I'd like to think that they invited because of my rising reputation. But it's entirely possible that I was the only person in the entire San Francisco Bay area who would actually support the Reagan policy. (Laughter and applause.) I defended that position as best I could, against an older gentleman who strenuously argued that President Reagan and his belligerent rhetoric were the real problems. Aggressive Soviet behavior was understandable, given the threat that Moscow perceived from Reagan. President Reagan's proposed response -- deploying American missiles to counter any increase in Soviet missiles -- would only make things worse, so on and so on. I'd like to think that I won the debate. But looking back, I have my doubts because afterwards, several women in the audience -- clearly Reagan opponents and Nuclear Freeze supporters -- approached me. They thanked me for doing so much for peace, and for standing up to that awful Reagan. (Laughter.) I think they looked at me, a young, black female and they just assumed that I was an opponent of President Reagan. After listening to me for an hour, clearly, they were unable to see past the surface of things.

But in truth, we arms controllers were having trouble seeing past the surface of things. We were fixated on a host of details: megatons, MIRVs, throw weights, and verification measures. We were absolutely determined to get the best possible deal with the Soviet Union and, in retrospect, we missed the big picture. Ronald Reagan the big picture. He challenged the whole premise of arms control and the whole premise of Soviet power. For him, arms control was a means, not an end. The end he sought were nothing less than the end of the Soviet Union, the liberation of Eastern Europe, and the victory of liberty over tyranny. To achieve these ends, he had to challenge most -- if not all -- the received wisdom of the time. That is what great leaders do -- and what only they can do.

Today, America is again fortunate enough to a leader who believes that you need to say what you mean, mean what you say, and then do it. President Bush's foreign policy is a bold new vision that draws inspiration from the ideas that have guided America's foreign policy at its best: that the spread of democracy leads to peace, that democracies must never lack the will, or the means to meet and defeat freedom's enemies, that America's power and purpose must be used to defend freedom.

These are principles that great leaders have put into practice during challenging times -- and these are challenging times. Thus, the President calls on America to use our unparalleled strength and influence to create a balance of power that favors freedom. His vision stands on three pillars. First, we will defend the peace by opposing and preventing violence by terrorists and outlaw regimes. Second, we will preserve the peace by fostering an era of good relations among the world's great powers. And third, we will extend the peace by seeking to extend the benefits of freedom and prosperity across the globe.

Yet in the final analysis, President Bush's vision begins from a single, simple premise: As the President

recently said, "Human beings are not made by the Almighty God to live in tyranny. When given a choice, people everywhere, from all walks of life, from all religions, prefer freedom to violence and terror."

This is a time when the defense of freedom has never been more necessary, and it is a time when the opportunity for the triumph of freedom has never been greater.

The attacks of September the 11th, 2001, were the greatest strategic shock that the United States has experienced since Pearl Harbor. These attacks crystallized our vulnerability to plots hatched in different lands, that come without warning, bringing tragedy to our shores. These attacks made clear that sweeping threats under the rug is simply not an option.

President Bush saw the implications of that immediately. The very day of the attacks -- as smoke still rose from the Pentagon, and the rubble of the Twin Towers, and that field in Pennsylvania -- he told us, his advisors, that the United States faced a new kind of war and that the strategy of our government would be to take the fight to the terrorists. That night, he announced to the world that the United States would make no distinction between the terrorists and the states that harbor them. He promised that America's words would be credible. And he has proved true to his word.

Since that day, over two-thirds of al-Qaeda's known leadership have been captured or killed. And the rest are permanently on the run. And we are working with governments around the world to bring to justice al-Qaeda associates -- from Jemya Islamiya, in Indonesia; to Abu Sayef, in the Philippines; to Ansar al-Islam, in Iraq. Under President Bush's leadership, the United States and our allies have ended terror regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our men and women in uniform have delivered freedom to more than 50 million people in the space of two-and-a-half years. All regimes are on notice -- supporting terror is not a viable strategy for the long term.

And of course, we also face every day the possibility of our worst nightmare: the possibility of sudden, secret attack by chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons, the coming together of the terrorist threat with the world's most dangerous weapons. September 11th made clear our enemies' goals and provided painful experience of how far they are willing to go. From the terrorist's own boasts, we know that they will not hesitate to use the world's most terrible weapons. In fact, they would welcome the chance to do it.

We can, therefore, not afford to allow the spread of weapons of mass destruction to continue. For so many years, the world pretended that important treaties like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty were keeping this problem in check. For many years, the world marked time while the proliferation threat gathered. For many years, the world refused to live up to the resolutions -- resolution after resolution -- which it had passed.

Now, the United States is confronting that threat posed by the spread of weapons of mass destruction with aggressive new policies from which we are already seeing results. President Bush has moved our Nation beyond antiquated theories like mutually assured destruction and moved forward with the development of ballistic missile defense. Deploying these defenses builds on the proud legacy of President Reagan, who first set forth a vision to protect our nation from missile attack in a famous speech twenty-one years ago next month.

The decision to hold the Iraqi regime accountable after twelve years of defiance is another part of an aggressive strategy to deal with the proliferation threat, because it has finally restored the credibility of the international community to do what it said. The former Iraqi regime was not just a state sponsor of terror. It was also for many years one of the world's premier weapons of mass destruction-producing states. For twelve years, Iraq's former dictator defied the international community, refusing to disarm or to even account for his illegal weapons and programs. We know he had both because he used chemical weapons against Iran and against his own people -- because, long after those attacks, he admitted having to stocks and programs to U.N. inspectors. The world gave Saddam Hussein one last chance to disarm. He did not and now he is out of power.

The President's strong policies are leading other regimes to turn from the path of seeking these terrible weapons of mass murder. Diplomacy succeeded in Libya, in part because no one can now doubt the resolve and purpose of the United States and our allies. The President's policy gives regimes a clear choice -- they can choose to pursue dangerous weapons at great peril or they can renounce such weapons and begin the process of rejoining the international community.

Libya's leader made the right choice, and other regimes should follow his example. We are working with the international community to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. And with our four partners in East Asia, we are insisting that North Korea completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear programs.

And as we advance a broad non-proliferation agenda, we also recognize that proliferators cannot always be stopped by diplomacy alone. But they can be stopped. Through the President's Proliferation Security Initiative, the United States and a growing number of global partners are searching ships carrying suspect cargo and, where necessary, seizing dangerous materials. The Proliferation Security Initiative has already proven its worth by stopping a shipment of centrifuge parts bound for Libya, just in time to reinforce the Libyan leader's decision to disarm. Earlier this month, the President also announced new proposals to close a loophole that undermines the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, to strengthen anti-proliferation laws and norms, and to tighten enforcement. The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, we must strengthen the world's ability to keep dangerous weapons out of the hands of the world's most dangerous regimes.

We now know, however, that there are actually two paths to weapons of mass destruction -- secretive and dangerous states that pursue them and shadowy, private networks and individuals who also traffic in these materials, motivated by greed or fanaticism or, perhaps, both. And often these paths meet. The world recently learned of the network headed by A.Q. Khan, the father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program. For years, Khan and his associates sold nuclear technology and know-how to some of the world's most dangerous regimes, including North Korea and Iran.

Working with intelligence officials from the United Kingdom and other nations, we unraveled the Khan network and we are putting an end to its criminal enterprise. Its key leaders -- including A.Q. Khan -- are no longer in business, and we are working to dismantle the entire network. Together, the civilized nations of the world will bring to justice those who traffic in deadly weapons, shut down their labs, seize their materials, and freeze their assets.

All of these efforts and many others require the close cooperation of many nations. Across a range of issues, we are seeing exactly that. Now, I will not deny that there is a lot of noise and chatter among the world's great powers. But this noise is obscuring one of the most striking facts of our time: the world's great powers have never had better relations with one another. And there has never been a lower likelihood of great power conflict -- with all the destruction and disaster that would entail -- since the birth of the nation state in the mid-17th Century.

In Europe, the threat of another catastrophic, continental war -- omnipresent through most of the last century -- has all but disappeared. Instead, the vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace -- the dream of centuries -- is closer to reality than at any time in history. NATO enlargement and EU enlargement are erasing the last lines of the Cold War and advancing freedom to all of Europe. In Russia, we are seeing that the path to democracy is uneven and that the nation's success not yet assured. Yet, we are working closer than ever with Russia on common problems. And our transatlantic alliance is no longer preoccupied with existential threats and massed armies poised to strike the Central European plain. In fact, the remarkable thing is that Central and East European countries -- once members of the Warsaw Pact -- have taken up their duties in the defense of freedom in places like Iraq and Afghanistan.

For many years, it was thought that it was not possible to have good relations with all of Asia's powers. It was thought that good relations with China came at the expense of good relations with our ally Japan -- that good relations with India came at the expense of constructive engagement with Pakistan. The President has changed

this paradigm. Our Asian alliances have never been stronger. Forces from Australia, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines are making important contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The United States has negotiated free trade agreements with Singapore and Australia. We are working with the 21 nations of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum on an ambitious agenda designed to bolster economic growth and promote common security. And at the same time, we are building a candid, cooperative, and constructive relationship with China that embraces our common interests but never loses sight of our considerable differences about values.

And President Bush has brought a new approach to American policy toward Africa and Latin America, as well. He sees these regions not as problems to be solved, but as opportunities to be embraced. The Millennium Challenge Account is revolutionizing the way America provides aid to developing countries by linking new assistance to good governance, investment in people, and economic freedom. And the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief -- a five-year, \$15 billion initiative -- will help to prevent seven million new infections, treat at least two million people with life-extending drugs, and provide care for ten million more people affected by the disease.

The administration's record of engagement with Africa is unprecedented for a first-term presidency. We are working with leaders throughout the continent to fight terror, advance democracy, spread prosperity, and solve regional conflicts. In Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan, there is hope of peace for the first time in many decades.

And in our own neighborhood, the Western hemisphere, President Bush is committed to a vision of a fully democratic Western hemisphere, bound by common values and freedom. When he goes to the Summit of the Americas, recognizing that there is an empty chair because Cuba cannot attend, since only democracies can attend, he remains committed to the day when there is a free Cuba. The commitment to freedom, the commitment to democracy, the commitment to prosperity is showing results. We have re-energized negotiations on the Free Trade of the Americas agreement, and completed free trade agreements with Chile and five other Central American democracies.

We've been busy over the last several years, but as we move forward with this ambitious agenda, day by day, we never lose site of a central truth: Lasting peace and long-term security are only possible through the advance of liberty and justice. Military power alone cannot protect us from the defining threats of our time. The War on Terror, like the Cold War, is as much a conflict of visions as a struggle of armed force. All of the early heroes of the Cold War -- Truman, and Churchill, and Adenauer -- understood this. Decades later, we seemed poised to forget it, viewing the Soviet Union as just another state with interests, and its continued existence -- even its permanence -- as inevitable. It was President Reagan who peeled back the layers of complacency surrounding detente and saw that underneath, the Soviet Union had not changed, that the moral element of the early Cold War was still relevant. President Reagan re-infused the Cold War with moral purpose. And that renewed sense of purpose allowed the free world to prevail.

The terrorist ideology is the direct heir to communism, and Nazism, and fascism -- the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. The struggle against terror is fundamentally a struggle of vision and values. The terrorists offer suicide, and death, and pseudo-religious tyranny. America and our allies seek to advance the cause of liberty and defend the dignity of every person. We seek, in President Bush's words, "the advance of freedom, and the peace that freedom brings."

That means, above all, addressing what leading Arab Intellectuals have called the freedom deficit in the Middle East. The stakes could not be higher. If the Middle East is to leave behind stagnation, and tyranny, and violence for export, then freedom must flourish in every corner of the region.

That is why the United States is pursuing a forward strategy of freedom for the Middle East. Freedom must be freely chosen -- and we will seek out and work with those in the Middle East who believe in the values, and habits, and institutions of liberty, and who desire to see the rule of law, and freedom of the press, and religious

liberty, and respect for women, and limits on the power of the state, and economic opportunity thrive. We reject the cultural condescension which alleges that Arabs or Muslims are somehow not interested in freedom, or aren't ready for freedom's responsibilities. We will refuse to excuse tyranny. We will insist on higher standards from our friends. And we will enlist support from our allies in the region, and beyond.

Iraq and Afghanistan are vanguards of this effort. Fifty million people have been liberated from two of the most brutal and dangerous tyrannies of our time. With the help of over 60 nations, the Iraqi and Afghan peoples are now struggling to build democracies, under difficult conditions, in the rocky soil of the Middle East. In January, Afghanistan approved a new and progressive constitution. And later this year, the Afghan people will hold elections. Every day Iraqis take more responsibility for their nation's security -- from guarding facilities, to policing streets, to rebuilding the infrastructure that Saddam Hussein neglected for decades. The Iraqi people are making daily progress toward democracy. We are working with the Iraqi Governing Council to draft a basic law, and a bill of rights. And we are working with Iraqis and the United Nations to prepare for a transition to full sovereignty for Iraq.

The work of building democracy in these places is opposed by hold-outs from the former oppressors and by foreign terrorists. These killers seek to advance their ideology of murder by halting all progress toward democracy and a better future. They are trying to shake our will -- that of our country, that of our friends. They are killing Iraqis who are innocent. They are sowing a reign of terror. But we and the people of Iraq will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins because America and her forces will stay the course until the job is done. (Applause.)

The world is watching. The failure of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan would condemn millions to misery and embolden terrorists around the world. The defeat of terror and the success of freedom in those nations will serve the interests of our nation because free nations do not sponsor terror and do not breed the ideologies of murder. And success will serve our ideals, as free and democratic governments in Iraq and Afghanistan inspire hope and encourage reform throughout the world.

These principles of freedom must also apply to the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis. President Bush, the first American president to issue a clear call for a Palestinian state, has stated plainly that there can be no peace for either side until there is freedom for both sides. The nature of the Palestinian state and the quality of its leadership is as important as its borders. Palestinian leaders need embrace democracy, eliminate corruption, and fight terrorism. For its part, Israel must help create conditions for a Palestinian state to emerge. It must do nothing to prejudge the outcome of a final status agreement. And, it must do more to improve the lives of the Palestinian people, removing the daily humiliations that harden the hearts of future generations.

The work of building democracy in these nations is hard -- the work of building democracy is always hard. Success will require the work of a generation. Winning the Cold War wasn't easy, either -- and it took 40 years -- but the free world's alliance of strength and conviction prevailed because we never abandoned our values or our responsibilities. As in the Cold War, progress may at times seem halting and uneven. Times of great strategic importance are also times of great turbulence. It is always easier for Presidents, no less than citizens, to do the expected thing -- to follow the accepted path. Boldness is always criticized, change is always suspect, and Presidents from Teddy and Franklin Roosevelt, to Harry Truman, to Ronald Reagan knew that history is, indeed, the final judge. I can tell you that, like those Presidents, this President knows that his obligation is not to the daily headlines but to securing the peace and that it is history that will be the final judge.

I had a great opportunity to serve on the National Security Council staff a dozen years ago, when the Berlin Wall fell, and the Warsaw Pact dissolved, and the Soviet Union gave way to a free Russia. It was, of course, exhilarating to be in government at such a time and a part of me felt some small measure of pride. But that pride quickly gave way to a humble awe for the giants who faced the challenges of the post-World War II moment -- the Trumans, the Marshalls, the Achesons, the Kennans -- and to those who reimagined and revitalized that struggle: Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl, and George Herbert Walker Bush.

These men and women -- in the most uncertain times, amidst often noisy acrimony -- made decisions that would bear fruit only years, in some cases decades, later. My colleagues and I were simply reaping the harvest of the good work that they had sown.

That harvest -- a safer, freer, better world -- is no less our hope for the decisions that the United States and our allies and friends are making today. Realizing this vision may take decades. It will certainly not happen on my watch. It will not happen on this President's watch. It will require a commitment of many years. But that is what Americans do when faced with great peril and great opportunity. We know that the effort and the wait will be worth it.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

All right, I'm happy to take a few questions, if you have them.

Q Thank you for your great speech. And my question is, is there any foreseeable time that our military from Iraq will come home, that we get our boys back and there will be an establishment of the self-government of the Iraqis?

DR. RICE: Absolutely, the United States will be able, at some point in time, to rely on the Iraqi people for the further development of their democracy.

I think that we need to think about our forces as being there until the job is done. We have not wanted to even try to speculate about time. The thing to recognize, though, is that the Iraqis are taking responsibility daily for more and more of their own security. They are patrolling their streets, they are breaking up terrorist ambitions and plots daily. We are training Iraqi policemen; we are training the Iraqi civil defense forces; we are training the Iraqi army. And we are training them in principles that they did not adhere to during Saddam Hussein's period, which is that they should be respectful of democratic values, respectful of the rights of their fellow citizens in Iraq, and that they should carry out their responsibilities with honor and with an eye to preserving Iraqi democracy.

They will be capable of doing this on their own, I am absolutely certain of it. They are a smart people, they are a sophisticated people. They come from a place of great cultural heritage and great cultural import. They need the support of the United States and the allies to get this work done.

Talking to many of the men and women in uniform who are there, they know why they are there, and they know what they are doing in support of this great cause. And so I think the best thing we can say to them as a country is, we support what you're doing; what you're doing is important to the future of the world, what you're doing is important to the security of the United States. And we will stay there to support the Iraqis in what they are doing until the job is done.

We will begin, by the way, a further move towards self-government when, at the end of June, the Iraqis -- we return sovereignty to an Iraqi transitional government arrangement of which will be able then to hold that sovereignty until a time at which they can have free and complete elections. (Applause.)

Q What are the specific diplomatic approaches towards the North Korean crisis?

DR. RICE: Thank you. Well, the most important achievement in dealing with the North Korean issue has been to mobilize a multilateral approach to the North Koreans so it's not just us and the North Koreans. The North Koreans would like nothing better than to go back to the time when the United States and North Korea were dealing bilaterally on their nuclear program.

In 1994, the Clinton administration signed an agreement with the North Koreans called the Agreed Framework. It was the right thing to do at the time. I don't think anybody can be critical of that. The problem

is that within just a couple of years, the North Koreans were cheating and finding another path to a nuclear weapon. And we're not going back down that road. When you've seen that happen, you think, okay, that's happened, you're not very smart to do it again.

So what we are doing this time is that any agreement is going to have to come in the context of what we're doing with China, what we're doing with Japan, what we're doing with South Korea, what we're doing with Russia. And the North Koreans are not going to be able to divide and conquer the international community on their nuclear program in the way that they had before. So the six-party talks are extremely important.

Now, the North Koreans should also recognize that, with the unraveling of these proliferation networks, the A.Q. Kahn network, what the Libyans are now freely admitting and talking about, that their admissions and what they say is not the only source of information about what's going on in North Korea. And it's probably a good time for the North Koreans to come clean about what's going on in North Korea.

What we will do is we will take this one step at a time. We understand this may take some time. But there can be nothing less than the verifiable, complete elimination of North Korea's nuclear programs. And it's going to take place in the context in which it's not just us that insists on that, because everybody in that region wants a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. (Applause.)

Q Dr. Rice, the press is implying there is not a lot of support, public opinion support, within Iraq for our efforts over there. If there are other reports indicating that there is significant support, could you address that, please?

DR. RICE: Absolutely. The Iraqi people are going through an awakening of their politics. They've never had in their lifetimes real politics, because Saddam Hussein crushed anybody who had any differing views. And it's wonderful to see them debating the future of Iraq.

How are they going to address the role of women in their documents?

How are they going to deal with federalism, with the separation of power between various elements of the government? They're really having a real political debate. And that's a really good thing.

What is very clear is that they're really glad to have been liberated and they appreciate the fact that the United States and the allies liberated them. I'll tell you one of the most stirring speeches that I've heard in a long time was given by the Iraqi Foreign Minister, a man named Zabari, when he was up at the United Nations. And he essentially said, how could the world have let this tyrant go on for so long? How could you have let him rape and torture our people for so long and not do something about it? So the Iraqi people know that they have been liberated from a great national nightmare. And they want to have this new start.

Now, there are people who don't want Iraq to have a new start. And they come essentially in two categories: Those who oppressed their fellow Iraqis before; that is, former loyalists of Saddam Hussein's regime, who had privileges that they are trying to preserve -- that's some of the problem in Iraq. The other is, foreign terrorists like this man Zarqawi who you probably read about, who is an Al Qaeda affiliate. We've seen him before. He was in Iraq before the war. He's back in Iraq now. He's determined to try to foment trouble. He says he's going to try to cause civil war in Iraq.

Because people like Zarqawi and their Al Qaeda affiliates and their Al Qaeda colleagues know that when Iraq is stable and peaceful and prosperous and democratic, that we will blow a huge hole in their sense of inevitability for this murderous jihad that they're trying to carry out. That's why Zarqawi and those people are in Iraq. And if you think for one minute that if we weren't in Iraq, they were just going to be someplace drinking tea? No. (Laughter.) They were going to be fighting the jihad somewhere. They decide that they're going to do it in Iraq because they know it's an extremely important battle in the central front.

I've been really kind of amused that when the President said Iraq was on the central front in the war on

terrorism, people said, oh, no, no, no, it doesn't have anything to do with the war on terrorism. What's Zarqawi doing in Iraq? He seems to know it has something to do with the war on terrorism. So we need to get very clear on what it is we're doing in Iraq.

Yes, we are giving the Iraqi people an opportunity for a free Iraq. After 12 years of not dealing with Saddam Hussein, the world really owes them that. But, as importantly, we are making ourselves more secure, because we cannot fight the terrorists in New York; we've got to fight them out there. We have to have an aggressive policy to go after them. We've got to change the nature of the Middle East so that you don't have ideologies of hatred that lead people to fly airplanes into buildings on a pleasant September morning. We are fighting the war in Iraq for our security, as well as for the benefit of the Iraqi people. (Applause.)

Q First, just the observation that there is a very special state-to-state relationship between California and Taiwan. And the question that I have is, we spoke about hate and we're going into this election campaign. Like with President Reagan when he brought in the cruise missile and the Pershing missile, there is a staggering amount of animosity amongst the Democratic left towards their neighbors, their coworkers, those of us who are the conservatives. And this goes back even to the time of Churchill and Chamberlain. Can you address this animosity that we're going to see in this campaign of the Democratic left, so adverse to having us take on the totalitarians of the world?

DR. RICE: Well, Americans just need to step back for a moment and ask themselves several questions about what has happened over the last two-and-a-half years. We were brutally attacked on September 11th on our own territory. We didn't know it was coming an hour before it happened. We didn't know it was coming minutes before it happened. How do you know when you have let a gathering threat go too long? You know when somebody attacks. That's not acceptable. And the President has said, he is going to do everything that he can not to put America in that position again. He tells everybody who comes into the Oval, my solemn duty is to protect the people of the United States of America. So one thing we can all agree on as Americans is we don't ever want to go through September 11th again if we can humanly avoid it.

That means that you don't get to go back to the days when we thought of terrorism as just some kind of law enforcement problem. Yes, there were people who were fighting to make us be more aggressive in Afghanistan and wipe out al Qaeda. There certainly were in the last administration and this administration. But we have not really mobilized our country for a war on terrorism. We had not mobilized the international community to recognize that, yes, you have to have broad sharing of intelligence, you have to have broad sharing of law enforcement. But you also have got to use when you must the military instrument to deprive them of sanctuary, which is what we did in Afghanistan, so that they don't have camps in Afghanistan anymore -- that you have to go after terrorist states that are a gathering threat like Saddam Hussein.

Who are we fooling? We went to war against them in 1991. I guess he was a threat; President Clinton bombed him in 1998. I guess he was a threat; he was shooting at our aircraft every day, practically, in the no-fly zones, as we flew military missions to try to keep him from harming his own people or from attacking his neighbors. He was shooting at our airplanes. He was defying the international community's calls and demands that he disarm. This was one of the most dangerous regimes of all time -- of recent times, sitting in the world's most dangerous region.

Now, are we better off that he's gone? Is the Middle East better off that he's gone? Is it worth the sacrifice to rid this region of one of the most dangerous regimes in modern times? Yes.

And so that's what we need to step back and look at. And if somebody has got a better idea of how to protect America, then I think they ought to put it forward. That's the debate that I think we will have. That's fine. That's what debate is all about. But I hope that as we have the debate, we will also try very hard to send a strong message that America is going to stay after the terrorists, that America is not going to abandon the Iraqi people, that we will be there with them through this struggle, that the United States of America finishes the jobs that it began.

That's a worthy debate for the United States of America, because the role of the United States is the major one in foreign policy. But at a time of consequence, you don't have a choice but to take the difficult and tough road sometimes, and that's what this President has done. (Applause.)

There was one -- all the way back, there's a lady, yes.

Q Dr. Rice, I have more than one question, if I may. Thank you. (Laughter.) I would like to know, how close in actuality are you in capturing Osama bin Laden? And if you could elaborate a little bit on the close ties of France and Germany with Iraq. And also, what is the agenda that the United States might have with Haiti besides sending in 50 military men to guard the embassy? That's not going to be enough.

DR. RICE: Thank you. Well, thank you. I'm glad that you particularly asked the last question about Haiti because I would like to have a chance to address that. But let me go -- look, I don't know, these people who report in papers were close to him, were just close -- I don't know what they're talking about. (Laughter.) You know, I assume that if we are so fortunate to bring -- to find Osama bin Laden, that is going to happen with one of those middle of the night phone calls like I got about Saddam Hussein, and I will be perfectly happy to take it.

But he's a very difficult target. We continue to work. It's basically a business of having people to help you to find him, and the good news is we have a lot of Afghans and others who work with us, and eventually, we will.

I just want to mention that there are others who are equally, if not more dangerous. His deputy, Zawahiri, if you see that name go down, that will be a tremendous -- of tremendous benefit. Zarqawi, who I mentioned, is somebody who is probably organizing a lot of the resistance -- a lot of the problem in Iraq. It is also the case that we have taken out much of their field-generalship. When you read names like Khalid Shaykh Muhammad or Abu Zabaydah or al Libi, you should know that what you're doing is you're taking out their field generals. And those are the people who really plan these operations.

And so it would be absolutely an important thing to get Osama bin Laden. But let's not lose sight of the fact that this is a big network that requires broad leadership and requires leadership at several levels, and taking out the leadership is important.

As to Haiti, this is an extremely difficult situation, and it is really time for all the parties to recognize that violence is getting them nowhere. We have a very strong concern, and the President issued a statement last night for the Haitian people, for the dangers that they face. We are intensifying our efforts to try to get humanitarian assistance to places that are having difficulty getting it.

But what we need is a political solution in Haiti. Colin Powell is working many, many hours with his Canadian counterpart, with his French counterpart, with his counterparts from around the region, particularly from the Caribbean area, to try and get the opposition and President Aristide to agree on a political course going forward.

At which time, incident to that, you could probably find an international security and police force to try and help stabilize the situation. But without some kind of political path forward, it's just extremely difficult to deal with the situation. But I want everybody to know that it is a problem about which we have considerable concern. We are working very hard with Haiti's neighbors, as well as with the Canadians and with the French, to see if we can get to a political solution which could then provide a basis for stability.

But every -- all of the parties in Haiti need to step back and look at where they are. President Aristide needs to take a hard look at where he is; the opposition needs to take a hard look at where they are. And hopefully we can come to some solution.

Thank you, very much. (Applause.)

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