

Notes for lectures before the Economic Club of Phoenix, Arizona and the Committee for the Republic in Washington D.C:

March 1, 2008

With all eyes fixed on the forthcoming election, we must consider the issues that will face whomever become our next president for these are issues that we – and perhaps even our grandchildren will have to cope. The urgent issue before our country in this time of great danger is the health of our society and the well-being of our country. Foremost is the impact of the war in Iraq on our society, our constitutional system and our economy. Like many of you in the room, I have helped to see America through some dangerous times. For me, the searing experience was serving on the crisis management committee of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Then the deputy head of the National Security Council, the Assistant Secretary of Defense of International Security Affairs and I oversaw events during that perilous week. The scars are still with me. But one positive thing I learned then is that the most dangerous thing is to close one's eyes to reality, to see only what one wants to see. **Only in absolutely honesty and clarity is there hope.** So please forgive me for laying out here today the cold hard facts with which we must live -- or die.

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So, I want to talk with you today about three things;

First, **what is our struggle in Iraq costing us;**

Second, **the nature of terrorism, guerrilla warfare and insurgency;** and

Third, **what should we do now.**

Here, I propose to skip over how we got into Iraq, the legal and constitutional issues posed by our policy. Not that these are unimportant, but they are relatively often discussed so I would rather focus on what is less known. At the end, if you will bear with me, I will project ahead on the implications of the thrust of current policy. I begin with the cost of our policy in Iraq:

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As you will know from the press, the US has suffered nearly 4,000 casualties — as of last week, to be exact, 3,958 in addition to another 482 in Afghanistan. Our wounded cannot be so precisely counted as they fall into various categories. One hears or reads the figure 30,000 -- that was the figure given by Senator Obama last night, but he was wrong about it. It is only a small fraction of the total.

One of the most striking wounds is a direct result of the nature of guerrilla warfare — concussions. Concussions were not even noted until after 2003. Now it is believed that about 1 in 10 US soldiers and Marines — that is roughly 50,000 men and women — has been affected. Treating these wounded is a long-time task. Most will never fully recover. Meanwhile, they will be unable to function normally. So side effects will ripple through their communities — loss of jobs, inability to function as parents, divorces, anger,

despair. And the cost of treatment will range from \$600,000 to \$5 million dollars a person

The loss of limbs should be easier to count, but the figures are in dispute. A minimum is about 8,000. Most of these people will recover, but many of them will spend their lives in wheel chairs.

As far as I have been able to find, no statistics have been broken out for those paralyzed.

But 1 in 4 of the soldiers and Marines ñ the US Surgeon General put the figure at 1 in 3 — that is between 125 and nearly 200 thousand ñ has an illness we did not even know existed until 1980. It is PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder.

And the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported that 1 in 3 of the men and women who served in Iraq — perhaps 200 thousand needs mental health treatment. Some of these need help because they are either suicidal or could endanger others.

The most complicated and frightening “wound,” however, is result of the use of depleted uranium bombs and artillery shells. We used them because uranium is a very heavy metal and is better at penetrating armor. In itself, depleted uranium is not much more dangerous than steel. But upon impact, a shell generates intense heat which causes the depleted uranium to mutate into an aerosol of uranium oxide, U3 O8. As Dr. Hans Noll American Cancer Society Professor of Biology has written to me, “It settles as a fine dust, which enters the body in a variety of ways. Uranium oxide is an extremely potent neurotoxin with a high affinity for DNA. This DNA fragmentation results in genetic defects like cancer and malformation in developing fetuses. Inhaled as dust, uranium oxide accumulates in the lungs, liver and kidneys and affects the nervous system.” It is inevitable that we face thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of cases of cancer as a result of the use of this weapon. As General Brent Scowcroft laconically put it, “Depleted uranium is more of a problem than we thought when it was developed.” It certainly is.

These "wounds" add up to very large numbers. We should not be surprised since 169 thousand of the 580,400 men and women who fought in the first Gulf War are on **permanent medical disability** at a cost of \$2 billion a year. For this, the second Gulf War, the estimated **medical** costs equal the **combat** costs or roughly half a trillion dollars.

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Leaving aside the armed forces, what is the war’s effect on America?

Consider first the standing of America in the world. This is much more important for our safety than all the weaponry and soldiers we can muster. And no one denies that the reservoir of good will that that great Republican candidate for the presidency, Wendell Wilkie, found so gratifying at the end of the Second World War is now a **reservoir well drained. Everywhere you look, there is growing distrust and increasing anger at America.** The most recent polls show an alarming decline even since last year and even in our closest ally, England. There our standing is **down** from 75 percent to just over 50 percent. In Germany it is **down** from 60 percent to 30 percent. And outside of Europe the numbers are unprecedented. Our NATO ally Turkey everyone thought to be rock solid.

As an aside when I was in government we asked the Turks to commit forces to NATO and they turned over their whole army. When we set up our supersecret spy bases ó the National Security Agency (NSA) and CIA bases for monitoring Soviet missile activity and flying the U=2, the Turks allowed us to put over 21 thousand officials in Turkey and never even asked to have a look inside the bases, so complete was their trust. **Now only 9**

percent of Turks favor America.

In Egypt and Jordan, the heavily touted props of our Middle Eastern policy, only about 1 in each 5 favors us. Polls indicate that nearly **8 in 10 Muslims worldwide** believe our intent is to destroy their religion, that President Bush's famous use of the word "crusade" to describe our policy was not just a slip of the tongue, and that the issue for them is defense of their whole way of life. Of course **in Iraq itself**, the feeling about America is sharper. All public opinion polls and all observations by our officials indicate that the one issue on which Iraqis of every sect, opinion and economic strata agree is that **they want us out**.

Why is this? First, of course is a truism that we all share: no people wants to be ruled by foreigners. Often we don't even want them in our country. But from the American Revolution onward, people all over the world have struggled to get foreigners to leave them alone. The Iraqis are not different from Americans on this matter.

But there are more pointed reasons. I won't trouble you with all the details, but will say merely that **we have destroyed the social fabric of Iraq**. That sense of **coherence** is the most important attribute of any society. It dwarfs in importance physical things. Without it no society can exist. Consider your own city: it is possible for a small police force to keep order here because your neighbors accept the general order. Were this not the case, order could not be maintained by a whole army. That is the situation in Iraq. 160 thousand heavily armed soldiers plus what remains of the Iraqi army and police and about 20,000 mercenary security people cannot prevent mayhem because the social fabric has been shredded.

Other things matter — hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed, many more have been wounded and still more have lost their homes and livelihoods. Practically speaking, there are very few Iraqis who have not lost a parent, a child, a spouse, a cousin or a neighbor. All observers agree that the Iraqis blame America for these things.

Not only in Iraq, but all over the world, the issue of torture runs like a dark stain on our reputation and has diminished America's ability to speak with moral authority when we most need that authority to cope with a very dangerous world.

These new feelings — which did not exist when I lived in Iraq — have made possible schools of terrorism. Despite what we were told, there was no terrorism directed against America from Iraq before our invasion. Now it is a daily, almost hourly event. Even our heavily guarded Green Zone is more a target than a fortress. And despite all the talk about counterinsurgency, American troops have largely disengaged and pulled back into more or less safe havens. True, we have imprisoned about 20,000 Iraqis, and killed at least that many insurgents but new recruits join daily. By military means — even the much hyped new program of General David Petraeus — there is no end in sight. **So the Pentagon is planning for an almost unending war.**

Even if this dismal projection is wrong, it is striking that the current American policy's most significant long-term effect on Iraq is precisely the opposite of what President Bush presumably wanted to occur: it put into power a government that is closely associated with the very country President Bush has targeted as part of the "Axis of Evil," **Iran**.

This disheartening drift of affairs may, and most sober observers believe it almost certainly will, impact upon us by attacks on Americans and American facilities all over the world and eventually in America itself.

But one **area** where the impact is already evident is in energy: Oil has been much in the

headlines for months. Access to it on acceptable terms has always been one of the three or four critical requirements of a successful American foreign policy – I know because years ago in the Kennedy administration I wrote the basic US policy paper on the Middle East.

How much does oil cost? If you are a broker, you can answer immediately, somewhere around \$100 dollars a barrel. That should be alarming since it has risen from about \$27 since the Iraq war began. And it is generally accepted that **each \$5 rise per barrel reduces our national income by about \$17 billion a year. That is a total of roughly 200 billion dollars.**

But, that is not a complete figure. Actually, factored into the price of oil are at least two other major costs: the first is what we have to do to **create the environment in which we get access (often by bribing governments or nations)** and the second is **how we protect that access by stationing military forces in the neighborhood.** Estimates vary of course but everyone who has looked into this matter agrees, I think, that they cannot be less than 100 billion dollars a year and is probably many times that amount. So the "national" cost of oil is probably already something like \$150 or even \$200 a barrel.

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These economic figures amount to political poison so politicians do their best to disguise them. No one likes the idea of paying more taxes so the best way to ease the pain and disguise the costs is to **borrow money.** To shield the public, we have been borrowing at a staggering rate. **Our national debt has grown about 70% during the last six years.**

Domestic borrowing is one thing, but our government has **borrowed vast amounts from foreign countries.** As of November 2007, the Legislative Reference section of the Library of Congress reported that in government-to-government loans (that is US Treasury obligations), we have borrowed \$2.7 trillion dollars since the war began in 2003 and private sector loans as of **2006** amounted to \$5.8 trillion dollars. China alone owns over \$1 trillion dollars in US government obligations. That is, China has lent us about 60% as much as its yearly income and the equivalent of nearly 10% of ours.

The **yearly interest cost** on our debt is about \$300 billion.

We are currently borrowing at the rate of at least -- more recent total figures are not available -- \$343 million dollars a day.

You probably heard that Alan Greenspan told *The Wall Street Journal*: “The Republican Party, which ruled the House, the Senate and the Presidency, I no longer recognize.” So, we are doing exactly what George Washington warned us in his Farewell Address **not** to do – we are as he said, “ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burdens we ought ourselves to bear.” The administration is projecting a \$410 billion budget deficit this year. That perhaps is the most solid figure we have.

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Other figures are elusive. It is virtually impossible to track down the exact numbers since there is a **great deal of slight-of-hand in statistics** on the monetary cost of the war in Iraq. It is impossible to track down exact numbers. The Bush administration claimed we made a small profit on the 1991 Gulf War. That is simply not true. It actually cost \$80 billion in 2002 dollars. And to convince us that we could handle the costs of the 2nd Gulf war, the war we are in now, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld told us it would be less

than \$50 billion. Paul Wolfowitz even said it would cost us nothing because Iraqis would pay for it themselves. **So far the Iraq war and Afghanistan have cost us** – just counting the Congressionally approved expenditures -- \$535 billion plus a supplemental outlay of \$300 billion, inching up at \$380,000 a minute – that is growing 20% a year -- **toward \$1 trillion. During the time I have been speaking to you, we have spent \$14 million.** And these figures are not complete; the Library of Congress Congressional Reference Section has complained that it has been unable to get complete figures from the Department of Defense. For example, the cost of the equipment used in Iraq is not included in the figure I just gave you for the cost of the war. Much of the cost is hidden in the Department of Defense budget. **Then there is the “opportunity cost.”** That is what we could have done had we not been fighting the war in Iraq. Opportunity cost estimates run to between **\$2 and \$6 trillion that is up to \$20,000 for every man, woman and child in America.**

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One consequence of these gigantic figures is the fall of the dollar. The dollar has fallen roughly 45% against the Euro. Three years ago, 80 cents bought a Euro. Today a Euro costs one dollar and forty seven cents. I speak with particular pain about this since I am spending much of my time now in Europe. What has happened is that business people and bankers in Europe have closely analyzed our economy and have lost much of their confidence in the “almighty dollar.” The numbers are so huge that one seeks concrete examples of what we are talking about: just the Congressionally allocated figure of \$500 or so billion of direct costs of the war in Iraq would pay to build 4,000 new, well-equipped high schools or fund Medicare for a year or eliminate starvation all over the world.

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Costs beyond the economy are particularly disturbing and are likely to last far longer. Polarization of our society is more striking than at any time since the Vietnam war. These are alarming reports of neighbors, even family members who have stopped speaking over this issue and we are resurrecting the violent and vile language of the 1950s: just when we need for our own safety to think most clearly it is the hardest.

On a personal note: I have recently been asked by both Democratic and Republic members of Congress to help prepare legislation aimed at getting us out of Iraq safely, quickly and at minimum cost. So I have spent a good deal of time with our representatives. The first thing one hears from them is their **fear of being thought “not to support our troops.”** That has become a sort of mantra. It partly explains, I think, why the Congress is not playing the role in foreign affairs it is Constitutionally obligated to play. With few exceptions in either party, **Congressmen do not even ask questions of key witnesses.** For example, no one questioned General Petraeus on his counterinsurgency strategy for Iraq. It appears that they don’t want to hear the answers, only to be reassured that, hopefully, those in charge know them. This explains why **no one asked Petraeus serious questions – such as where his strategy has ever worked or whether it is really new.** The importance of this failure was long ago identified for us by that great Conservative, Edmund Burke, when he commented on the British inability to think clearly about the American Revolution. “No passion,” he said, “so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.”

A different kind of polarization of our society is shown in what we have had to do – since we are unwilling to conscript soldiers – to fill up our army: a high percentage of our soldiers come from the poorest, least educated part of our society. Only 71% have graduated from high school...that is down over 30%. One in 8 must get a waiver to join the army, over 1 in 10 has a criminal record and some 28,000 have been sent home for

misconduct. As a senior army recruiter put it last year, “We’re really scraping the bottom of the barrel trying to get people to join.” In fact, not only are we taking people whom normally we would reject, but we are paying out bounties to get even them to join. The bounties amount to about a billion dollars a year.

And, at the same time, we are losing the “best and the brightest” of our officers: I am told that over half the graduates of West Point now quit the army. And this is true not only of the armed forces. The decline of morale in the civilian side of the government, particularly in the State Department and the Intelligence Agencies is both striking and disturbing. The critically important work of the National Intelligence Council has been disrupted and seasoned officers are resigning in alarming numbers.

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If we are willing, as we have proven to be, to devote vast resources and blood to the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia, we should make the effort to understand the nature and sequences of insurgency. I don’t think we have done a good job of this and in part for this reason much of what we have done, regardless of the legality or morality of our actions, is merely ineffective or to use that Washington word, “counterproductive.”

In my time in government, I was deeply disturbed by our actions and our lack of appreciation of the nature of the war in Vietnam. I had previously had an opportunity to observe, sometimes more closely than prudent, the wars in Palestine and Greece. Then shortly after I joined the Policy Planning Council I was appointed head of the government task force on Algeria and later had a close look at the war in Yemen. Comparing them to Vietnam, I began a quest that would lead me to study a dozen other wars and write the book before you, *Violent Politics: Terrorism, Guerrilla Warfare and Insurgency from the American Revolution to Iraq*. From these experiences and studies I have concluded that most are about shaking off foreign rule. Some, such as the Naxalite insurgency in India, are more about social unrest, or, as in Gaza today about a combination of anti-foreign feeling and fury at economic deprivation, but I will put them aside for the moment to concentrate on the more “normal” or at least common insurgencies.

They are motivated by the desire to get the foreigners so how do insurgents go about it? Almost all have miniscule origins. Half a dozen up to about 3 or four dozen insurgents – or as the French call them, *militants* -- is the norm. So, being unable to field significant forces and usually having only light arms, they have to begin with terrorism. Their first aim is establish a basis to speak for the general public – that is, to acquire political legitimacy. Often, indeed usually, this is done by picking a target that the general public believes to be illegal, morally wrong, corrupt and oppressive.

By attacking these targets, they accomplish several objectives – first they demonstrate their own courage and do what many others would like to do but did not dare; second, they prove that action can be taken and that those who take it can survive; and third they acquire the tools to continue their struggle. So the insurgents attack the “oppressors,” the police, the landlords, the foreigners, with the ostensible but also real aim of acquiring arms. For them, the police and army are the hardware stores. This was certainly the case in Vietnam where the South Viet Nam army was the source of most of the arms for the Viet Minh. Then as a few arms are acquired, the original little band grows bolder. As it does, it attracts followers so that soon it becomes several hundred. These groups often scatter to make themselves less vulnerable.

Some insurgencies never get beyond this stage. The IRA is an example. But, if they are lucky and smart, they begin to acquire safe havens to which they can retreat to rest, train and

recruit. . Then, as their numbers and effectiveness grow, they begin to try to destroy the existing government. In Vietnam for example, the Viet Minh murdered the police, tax collectors and government-appointed village officials. The IRA tried to destroy Mrs. Thatcher's whole cabinet. Often their most dreaded enemies are fellow citizens who cooperate with the government or the foreigners. We see that in Iraq today and it was evident in Yugoslavia where Tito fought Mikhailovic and the EAM/ELAS fought Napoleon Zervas. Next, successful insurgents begin to replace the old government so they themselves start to collect taxes, open schools, run clinics and manufacture or repair arms. Tito even ran a postal service on his own railroad. Tito manufactured cigarettes and even rifles – each stamped with the logo of his movement. And, Tito, the EAM/ELAS and the Viet Minh set up mini-governments in all the villages they could reach.

Finally, as they arm, train and grow in numbers they move from hit and run raids to formal confrontation. This is a very dangerous transition and often it is tried too early, as General Giap did against the French. But even if battles are lost, if the insurgents have done the other things right, they can regroup and rebuild, as the Viet Minh did and as Tito did.

But fighting is not the core of the struggle: it is to wear down the morale of the opponent, to make his **task too expensive or too ugly to be sustained**. This was the aim of the Battle of Algiers. The FLN lost the battle but won the war. When I laid out this scheme years ago to the “best and the brightest” of our soldiers, sailors and airmen at the National War College, it was fashionable to ascribe numbers to these various efforts. I guessed that about 80% of the insurgents' task to establish political legitimacy, maybe 15% to wrecking and replacing administration and only 5% -- the short end of the lever – was force. So most insurgencies are lost almost before the dominant power becomes engaged. I told my audience in 1962 that we had already lost the war in Viet Nam. Coincidentally, one can say that we lost the war in Iraq just about the time when President Bush announced it a “Mission Accomplished.”

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Let me interject here just a few words here about **Afghanistan** and **Somalia**: In my book *Violent Politics* I describe what the Afghans did to the British and the Russians. **They inflicted the greatest single defeat the British suffered in the 19th century and the worst the Russians suffered in the 20th. We are not faring much better.** As I mentioned, while we have not suffered as many casualties as in Iraq in “Operation Enduring Freedom” which we launched in October 2001, our actions **further united the Taliban and al-Qaida**. Now the Taliban is on the rise again and al-Qaida was never stopped. We are losing our allies (Germany and Canada and, according to today's press, also the Dutch) and endangering what remains of NATO.

What we have left is not much: the government of President Hamid Karzai is weak and has tried to survive by bringing the drug lords into government – it is they, not Karzai who rule outside of downtown Kabul. In 2007, they produced some 8,200 tons of opium or over 90% of the world's heroin. It is hard to find much solace there. If possible,

Somalia is a worse mess. If you remember the movie, *Black Hawk Down*, the really bad guys were the warlords. The Somalis agreed. So when we got out, they threw out the warlords. The only replacements they could find were the religious leaders. The Muslim Fundamentalist are not our favorite people, but they were the only force that could stop the warlords' extortion, rape and murder, and the Somalis supported them. Now we have encourage and paid the Ethiopians to invade Somalia and drive them out. We also committed our special forces and our Navy in this attack. It worked – temporarily and at the cost of great human suffering – and has made the Somalis hate us. Worse, it has brought no

political solution that anyone thinks can last. The war has not been won, merely worsened.

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So what can we do? Consider carefully our position in Iraq. President Bush has said we must “stay the course.” But also remember that we did that in Vietnam for nearly 16 years. Even after the Tet Offensive had shown that we were deluding ourselves with the hope of “victory,” and at least some of us realized that we could not “win,” we stayed and suffered an additional 21,000 casualties. Is there a lesson in this? General David Petraeus tells us there is. He says that what we have been doing in Iraq did not work, but that he has a **new** formula -- Counter Insurgency -- that **will** work. I agree with him that there is a lesson to be learned, but unfortunately it is not the one he identifies

Why is this? It is simply that the “new” formula he prescribes is **the same old one** we tried in Vietnam and **the same old one** the Russians tried in Afghanistan. Listen to the editors of the Pentagon Papers. They had access to everything we learned about the war in Vietnam so their account is the most complete ever compiled on an insurgency. They commented (and I quote) our “program there was, in short, an attempt to translate the newly articulated theory [**that was 40 years ago**] of counterinsurgency into operational reality. The objective was political though the means to its realization were a mixture of military, social, psychological, economic and political measures. The long history of these efforts was marked by **consistency in results as well as in techniques: all failed miserably.**”

General Petraeus admits (and again I quote) that “Political power is the central issue in insurgencies and counterinsurgencies; each side aims to get the people to accept its governance or authority as legitimate.”

Can we do that? No, we cannot. In our age of politically conscious people, natives refused to be ruled by foreigners. That is why in our Revolution we threw out the British. The Iraqis today are following the trail we blazed. Napoleon bitterly remembered that his efforts at counterinsurgency cost him his army – Spain was a worse defeat for him, as he remembered in exile, that Russia. De Gaulle almost lost France because of the counterinsurgency of his army and the Secret Army Organization. Greece’s counterinsurgency gave rise to the bitter dictatorship of the Colonels. And so on.

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So, should we just as President Bush says, “cut and run.” No, as he would describe such a policy, it would not be either to our interests nor to those of the Iraqis. I have laid out in the book that Senator George McGovern and I wrote, *Out of Iraq: A Practical Plan for Withdrawal Now*, a detailed, carefully costed out and phased program that Senator McGovern and I believe will work. Whatever faults the plan may have, it would start a process that leads out of Iraq with the least possible damage to us and to the Iraqis. I won’t go into it here as it is long, but I urge you to reach the plan in the book.

Here I will just mention **two features**: first, it provides for a **replacement for our troops by a “multinational stability force” that the Iraqis could and would accept** and, second, if the plan is followed it would **save the lives of perhaps a thousand Americans, about \$350 billion in direct costs and perhaps \$1 trillion in indirect costs.** More important, perhaps, it would staunch the hemorrhaging of good will for America throughout the world and, even more important to us, it would **reduce the danger of terrorist attacks on us here at home.**

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Will we do it? That really depends on you and me. We cannot expect that the Congress will act unless **we push them** nor will this or any future president take any risks. Governments as most of us who have served know is like a freight train: it is very hard to start, but even harder to stop. We have already allocated money, devoted troops and committed resources to build the “infrastructure” of counterinsurgency. For the last seven years, the public has been told that the war is just, will be successful and is necessary. The terrible costs, which I have laid out to you are mostly obscured and made inaccessible to the public. Time after time, some “new” strategy is trotted out, as General Petraeus recently did and as General Westmoreland did long ago on Vietnam, so decision is put off. To see their futility requires understanding and to act on that understanding requires courage. So, sadly, I have concluded that **only after we lose a lot more soldiers and much more money is anyone apt to act.**

Indeed, at the present time we are really moving in the opposite direction. We have developed a momentum that has nearly carried us into a new “Iraq” War – this time in Iran – and we have offered to begin operations in Pakistan. Both of which could literally dwarf the Iraq war. We were saved from a new catastrophe in Iran when, in November 2007, the 14 US intelligence agencies produced a National Intelligence Estimate that showed that Iran was not trying to build a nuclear bomb. President Bush allegedly knew the report’s conclusion from last summer when it was finished, but he kept on charging Iran with building a bomb – and so preparing the way for a war -- right up to the time the report was published. We very nearly invaded Iran. On Pakistan, as you know, General Musharraf was pressed to accept an American force to fight on the Northwest frontier. He turned us down. But we are still pressuring him to let us commit this folly. These are not random events. Nor are they just shooting from the hip. There is a strategy behind them.

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The strategy behind these operations is what the **Neoconservative advisers to President Bush have called “the Long War.”** A leading member of the Neoconservatives, James Woolsey, a former director of the CIA, said he **hopes it will not last more than 40 years. The cost of such a generational conflict has been estimated at more than \$17 trillion dollars.**

More important, in the long period of stress, the American way of life would be severely challenged, perhaps irreparably damaged. The real cost could be the destruction of the world in which we live and the replacement of our civic, cultural and material “good life” by something like nightmare George Orwell predicted in his novel 1984.

At minimum it would greatly increase the risk to us of terrorism.

But we should be aware that what Woosley and others have discussed is not just rhetoric or speculation – it is given substance by operational plans, dedicated military personnel, operating from **737** – I repeat seven hundred and thirty seven -- existing bases worldwide, with already constructed and positioned weapons, and sustained by an already allocated budget.

In the spring of 2006, before he left office, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld approved three plans to fight the “long war” beyond Iraq and Afghanistan. Among other actions that have now been implemented, the **Special Operations Command** – now made up of 53,000 men and working with an already allocated budget of \$8 billion for fiscal year 2007 – has dispatched **Special “Ops” forces** to at least 20 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. These teams are loose cannons, not under the control of regular American embassies and allowed to engage in covert warfare not only against groups regarded as

terrorists but even against states. Although they could involve us in war with any number of countries, they are treated as though not subject to Congressional oversight or decision. They are, as I said, loose cannons.

But they are not working on their own. Their use has been justified by the March 2005 “National Defense Strategy of the United States of America” which calls for the US (and I quote) “to operate in and from the global commons-space, international waters and airspace, and cyberspace...to surge forces rapidly from strategic distances [to where adversaries may seek to deny us access and] to deny adversaries sanctuary...[These campaigns] may entail lengthy periods of both major combat and stability operations [or] require regime change...”

Not surprisingly, the conservative journal, *The Economist*, editorialized, “the Neoconservatives are not conservatives. They are radicals. Their agenda adds up to a world-wide crusade. With all its historic, anti-Muslim connotations, it is precisely the word most calculated to perpetuate movement down the path desired by the Neoconservatives, **permanent, unending war.**”

Is permanent war – one Iraq after another – to be our future?

That really depends on how much you and I care. If we don’t care enough to force our representatives to care, no one else will. As President Truman put it, in another context, “the buck stops here.”

Thank you.