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Talking Points on the Global War on Terror – Manhattan, Kansas
Monday, January 23, 2006
Draft #6

Kansas State University

- I am glad to be at K-State. Instead of Hail to the Chief, I was hoping I might get to hear “Wabash Cannonball.”¹
- I appreciate a school that takes its sports seriously. Your basketball team looked pretty good against the Jayhawks the other day.² My only request is that you take it easy when the Longhorns come to town.³
- I thank all the K-State students who came out today. It must have been tough to get you to skip class ... and it’s probably too early to head over to The Last Chance.⁴
- I appreciate the troops here from Fort Riley – America is grateful to you and your families.

Acknowledgments

- [TK]

Landon Lecture Series

- Alf Landon was a soldier, an entrepreneur, a governor, a presidential candidate, and always a patriot. His integrity, decency, and conviction are a model for all who serve in public office.
- I hope you don’t mind if I modify the format today. I was not a big fan of lectures back in college – I can’t promise I went to every one I was supposed to ... I can’t promise I stayed awake through every one I attended.
- Instead of a lecture, I want to share some thoughts on the job of the President, and what we are doing to build a safer country and a more peaceful world. Then I want to answer some questions.

Responsibilities ... Wartime Presidency

- Job of a President is to make decisions.
- Most solemn responsibility is to protect the American people.
- America is at war – came to our shores on September 11, 2001
 - Recent tapes are evidence that enemy is still active and plotting.

¹ The Kansas State fight song

² On January 14, Kansas State basketball beat archrival Kansas for the first time since 1994.

³ Kansas State hosts Texas on February 22.

⁴ The most popular bar on campus.

After September 11, we reshaped American foreign policy based on certain principles

- Nature of the enemy – followers of a radical ideology that exploits Islam to serve a violent, political vision: the establishment of a totalitarian empire that denies all freedom and extends from Spain to Indonesia
 - Use the tactics of terror in an attempt to spread this ideology – cannot be appeased ... must be confronted and defeated
- First: We are on the offense with every element of national power:
 - Military – take fight to the enemy
 - Intelligence – find out where enemy lurks, share information
 - Law enforcement – find enemies within our borders, prevent attacks
 - Diplomatic – leading powerful war on terror coalition
 - Financial – freezing terrorist assets and choking off support
- Second: Harbor a terrorist, equally as guilty as the terrorists
 - Afghanistan under the Taliban
- Third: Confront threats before they fully materialize
 - Saddam Hussein's Iraq
 - Sworn enemy of the United States ... firing at American military pilots ... open defiance of UN resolutions ... state sponsor of terror ... had pursued and used weapons of mass destruction
 - Tried to address diplomatically – went to the United Nations Security Council ... passed unanimous resolution to disclose and disarm ... gave Saddam a final ultimatum
 - Saddam defied the will of the world – now in prison and on trial ... America and the world are better off.
- Fourth: Change the conditions that give rise to tyranny and terror
 - Terrorists' vision – no free speech or women's rights or religious tolerance
 - Defeat the ideology with vision of freedom. Free nations are peaceful nations – spreading freedom in broader Middle East:
 - Afghanistan and Iraq have freely-elected governments
 - Elections in Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories

Central front in the war on terror is Iraq

- Words of bin Laden: "Third World War is raging" in Iraq ... will end in "victory and glory or misery and humiliation."
- Our goal in Iraq is victory – achieved when:

- Terrorists and Saddamists can no longer threaten Iraq's democracy
- Iraqi Security Forces can provide for the safety of their own citizens
- Iraq is not a safe haven for terrorists to plot attacks on America
- The enemy we face in Iraq: rejectionists, Saddamists, terrorists
- 3-part strategy for victory: political, security, economic ... adjust tactics
- Troop levels – As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down.
 - Reducing from 17 to 15 brigades by this spring
 - Bringing home 20,000 troops who were in Iraq largely to assist with security during December elections
 - Decisions based on conditions on the ground and advice of military leaders – not artificial timetables set by politicians
- Cannot lose on the battlefield – only lose if we lose our will. Will not happen on my watch.
- Democratic Iraq will lead to peace ... Japan after World War II, Koizumi

Also fighting the war here at home

- Created Department of Homeland Security
- Changed mission of the FBI to preventing terrorist attacks
- Created Director of National Intelligence and National Counterterrorism Center to better integrate intelligence and prevent attacks
- Trained 800,000 state and local first responders
- Strengthened security at airports, seaports, bridges, tunnels, other
- Improved security of food supply – thank scientists at K-State who dedicate their work to protecting our food supply from terrorist attack

Patriot Act

- Congress passed the Patriot Act with huge bipartisan majorities
- Allows law enforcement and intelligence to share more information
- Allows law enforcement officers to pursue terrorists with tools they already use against other criminals
- Includes safeguards to protect civil liberties
- Law enforcement has used Patriot Act to:
 - Break up terror cells in New York, Oregon, Virginia, and Florida
 - Prosecute terrorist operatives and supporters in California, Texas, New Jersey, Illinois, North Carolina, and Ohio
- Certain provisions scheduled to expire at the end of 2005.
- Majority in Senate and House support renewal – including Senators Roberts and Brownback.

- A minority of Senators blocked permanent renewal – Democratic Leader in Senate bragged that they had “killed the Patriot Act.”
- Congress agreed to temporarily extend the Patriot Act until February 3 – next Friday. If Congress does not act by then, our law enforcement officers will be without this vital law.
- We need this vital weapon to protect Americans – and we cannot afford to be without it for a single moment. The minority of Senators who are blocking the law should stop playing politics with national security. The Senate needs to renew the Patriot Act.

National Security Agency Program – Enemy Surveillance

- After September 11, I authorized the National Security Agency to intercept certain international terrorist communications.
- Lots of discussion, here are the facts:
 - Applies only to communications in which one person is reasonably suspected of links to al Qaida or related terrorist organizations.
 - Applies only to international communications – one end of the communications must be outside the United States
 - Includes strict review measures to protect civil liberties.
 - Leaders in Congress have been briefed on the program more than a dozen times.
 - General Hayden, America’s second-ranking intelligence official: Program has helped connect the dots – detect and prevent attacks in United States. Program has saved American lives.
- Some say NSA program is unlawful. Why they are wrong:
 - First, every federal court to consider the question has ruled that a President has authority under the Constitution to conduct foreign intelligence surveillance against our enemies.
 - Second, my predecessors as President have consistently cited and, as necessary used, the same constitutional authority I am using to conduct foreign intelligence surveillance against our enemies.
 - Third, the Supreme Court has ruled that the Authorization for the Use of Military Force passed by Congress in 2001 gave the President additional authority to use what it called the “fundamental incidents of waging war” against al-Qaida. Here is what that means in real English: Congress resolved that the President has the authority and responsibility to use all the traditional tools of war in the fight against terror – and that includes electronic surveillance against our enemies.

- The law is clear: I have the authority, both from the Constitution and from Congress, to undertake this vital program.
- Some may think, as a matter of policy, that it is a mistake for me to use that legal authority to listen to al Qaida terrorists when they contact people in the United States. That is a pre-September 11 mentality, and I strongly disagree.
- The American people expect me to protect them and their civil liberties – and that is precisely what we are doing. So I will continue to reauthorize this program for as long as our country faces a continuing threat from al-Qaida and related groups.

Conclusion

- Grateful that America has now gone four years and five months without a terrorist attack on our soil. Not for a lack of desire on the part of the terrorists – because of the courage of our military, law enforcement, intelligence, and homeland security professionals. And because we have given them the tools and resources they need to protect us.
- Cannot let the fact that we have not been attacked lull us into illusion that threats have disappeared. They have not. Enemy is still active –London, Madrid, Bali, Beslan, and other places. Terrorists will do everything they can to strike us – and we must continue to do everything we can to stop them.
- The last sitting president to deliver a Landon Lecture was Ronald Reagan, in 1982. He spoke of what he called “awesome problems” facing America at the time – economic crisis, international tension, and the danger of nuclear war. Also spoke with confidence in our future: “We can and will prevail if we have the faith and the courage to believe in ourselves and in our ability to perform great deeds as we have throughout our history.”
- History has proven his confidence to be justified. Within a decade of President Reagan’s Landon Lecture, the Soviet Union was no more. And last October, the former leader of the Soviet Union came to Manhattan for a Landon Lecture of his own.
- In every age, the power of freedom has overcome challenges, because the will to live in freedom is a part of every soul. With the strength and idealism and resolve of the American people, I have no doubt that freedom will prevail in our age as well.
- Thank you for your warm welcome – happy to take some questions.

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