

# Heritage Lectures

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## Threats and Opportunities in the World

*The Honorable Kim R. Holmes, Ph.D.*

Thank you for inviting me to join you and share my thoughts on threats and opportunities around the world. As much as things have changed since my first days at Heritage, there are some things that do not change.

The threat to freedom is one of them. Most important is the vigilance with which all Americans, and foundations like Heritage, must vigorously defend and promote freedom in the world.

I recall visiting the former Soviet Union and having a former prisoner of conscience tell us he had learned about The Heritage Foundation from the Voice of America. He said that knowing someone in the outside world cared about his cause is what kept him going and helped him keep his faith. I am sure Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, who is still under house arrest in Burma, would say the same thing to us if she were here today.

I remember another occasion when Ed Feulner, Phil Truluck, and Heritage board members visited the Berlin Wall shortly before it was torn down. We recalled how Ronald Reagan had asked Mikhail Gorbachev to “tear down this wall.” As it turned out, it was not Gorbachev who tore down the wall. It was free Germans on both sides, pulling it apart in a way you would find most satisfying—chunk by chunk, grasping at the freedom and friendship and unity that was long past their due.

Today, the Berlin Wall is gone, and in its stead stands a space where freedom echoes. I have been back to Berlin several times since then, and it is changing. But always, you can *feel* where the wall once was.

### Talking Points

- The enemies of freedom are testing our will. We may need to be flexible in our tactics to deal with them, but we must never lose sight of our strategic goals. While many roads may lead to our destination, we must never allow ourselves to get off course.
- We all desire more security in Iraq, but we should not lose sight of what has been accomplished. The loss of even one life in this conflict is to be mourned. Yet we should not forget that Iraqis no longer have to fear the fate of those who lie in hundreds of mass graves around the country.
- The war on terrorism is as much a war of ideas and a war of morale as it is a war of rockets, bombs, and suicide bombers. And while we must always keep up our military guard, it is on the ideas-and-morale front that this war ultimately will be won or lost.

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at:  
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Freedom's enemies think that their works, crafted with hatred and terror, will last forever, that history will prove them right. But they are wrong. They were wrong about the Berlin Wall, and they will be wrong about Ground Zero as well. That hole in Lower Manhattan will one day disappear just as that "no man's land" in Berlin did.

But we will not forget who caused both horrors. What is left is the certain knowledge that fear and terror did not—and will not—triumph over liberty.

### Answering the Call

Over the past century, our nation has been called on to stand up for liberty—not only for our own, but for that of others. We have answered that call many times. It is no different today. We face numerous challenges—from international terrorists, in Iraq and Afghanistan, and from proliferation, such as by North Korea and Iran. In each case, the enemies of freedom wish not only to dominate and kill, but to confuse and demoralize us and our allies.

Ladies and gentlemen, they cannot succeed unless we let them. We are freedom's force, and freedom, we know, is the true foundation of justice and peace.

There are those in the world who have a false idea of freedom. To them, freedom is their right to lord over others, sometimes in the name of religion, nationhood, or political ideology. Freedom is wrongly seen as a right to oppress ethnic, tribal, or racial enemies. A misplaced sense of victimhood becomes an excuse to seek freedom for oneself but to deny that freedom to others.

This is, of course, not freedom at all. It is its opposite. It is the twisted ideology of terrorists and tyrants the world over, who try to turn all the good values in the world upside down—love for one's countrymen, for example, into hatred of outsiders—or to transform, perversely, the belief in God into a motivating force for acts of terror and vengeance. Whereas these enemies of freedom try to demonize democracy and progress, and construct walls of fear, we tear down walls—with force if we must, but more often stone by stone, through patient, deliberate diplomacy.

Today's tension—between those who despise freedom and those who treasure it—will not ease any time soon. Too much is at stake. The enemies of freedom profit from unrest, poverty, famine, and disease.

It is far more lucrative for them to stifle opportunity than to work for peace, stability, and prosperity. Too many people see freedom as the right of the few to rule over the many.

That is why we must stay the course in this war on terrorism. It is why we must stay the course in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is why we must forcefully reject proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

The enemies of freedom are testing our will; of that there can be no doubt. We may need to be flexible in our tactics to deal with them, but we must never lose sight of our strategic goals. While many roads may lead to our destination, we must never allow ourselves to get off course.

That is precisely what the terrorists wish us to do. They want to confuse us, and our allies, into believing that we cannot win or that our fight is not worth the cost. Their real targets are the hearts and minds of the American people and our allies in the war on terrorism. The terrorists know that their only road to victory is if the civilized world weakens in its resolve to fight.

Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed it this way:

Freedom, prosperity and peace are not separate principles, or separable policy goals. Each reinforces the other, so serving any one requires an integrated policy that serves all three. The challenges are many, for the world is full of trouble. But it is also full of opportunities, and we are resolved to seize every one of them.

### The Changing Threat of International Terrorism

International terrorism, combined with the proliferation of weapons of mass terror, is, of course, the greatest threat to the world today. I would like to spend a few minutes describing some of our efforts in dealing with these threats, placing special emphasis on what we have sought to do at the United Nations and on other international efforts.

The terrorists' war against America, as your own Jim Phillips will certainly attest, did not begin on September 11. Nor did our defense. But the conscience and will of the world to respond to the threat certainly did.

As National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice testified last week, we have been single-minded in responding to the 9/11 attack on America, and to the possibility

that terrorists may try to obtain and use weapons of mass destruction. But there is much more work to do.

The threat itself is changing. While al-Qaeda's original network has been disrupted, its fractured cells are working with indigenous groups. They use the Internet and media not just to communicate, but to recruit. They use attacks like those in Spain and Iraq to rally support for their cause. Every perceived step backwards for the coalition gives incentive for a new cell to form and for those on the sidelines to join.

The terrorists believe they can outlast us, that they can break our will. So our greatest challenge is to remain patient, to stay the course, and to apply power and diplomacy as each is needed. The future of freedom for all people demands no less.

The clear and present threat from al-Qaeda presented an opportunity to mobilize the U.N. Security Council to act. Council members came together after September 11 to mandate a broad range of counterterrorism measures by all states and to create a Counter-Terrorism Committee that would monitor those steps and promote strong action.

A few months later, the Council—at our urging—strengthened existing sanctions against Osama bin Laden, al-Qaeda, and the Taliban to freeze assets and prevent travel by anyone who supports them. Over 300 individuals and entities are on the U.N. Sanctions Committee list now, and it is growing. We will continue working in the Security Council to make both committees even more effective.

Since 9/11, we have also worked through U.N. agencies like the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization to strengthen security measures for aviation and shipping.

We have done even more. For example, we have led efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring portable shoulder-fired missiles that can shoot down aircraft. We have worked closely in the G-8 to strengthen export controls and protections for government stocks of these weapons. And we have secured commitments from six countries to destroy almost 9,500 of them.

### **The Importance of the President's Proliferation Security Initiative**

Our greatest fear, of course, is that terrorists might get their hands on weapons of mass destruction—chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons. The prolif-

eration of such weapons is a grave threat to the peace and security of the entire world.

The President recognizes that, since proliferation is a global threat, it requires a global response. He has laid out an ambitious strategy. Typical of this President's desire to think outside the box, he created a new global partnership for counterproliferation called the Proliferation Security Initiative. Some 60 nations have shown an interest in or are collaborating with us to stop the flow of weapons of mass destruction across land, sea, or in the skies.

This initiative is already proving its worth. German and Italian authorities—acting under the authority of the PSI and using U.S. and British intelligence—stopped a ship on its way to Libya. They found, and seized, several containers carrying sophisticated centrifuges that could be used in nuclear weapons programs. They were being trafficked by a network run by Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, a scientist and father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb.

In September, the President called upon the U.N. Security Council to adopt a resolution to deal with proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The resolution calls on member states to criminalize the proliferation of these weapons among non-state actors, enact strict export controls consistent with the highest international standards, and secure all sensitive materials within their borders.

We are also working with the International Atomic Energy Agency—the IAEA—in Vienna to curb proliferation and strengthen nuclear safeguards. With our aid and that of other countries, the IAEA has been pressuring Iran to adhere to its pledges and suspend its enrichment and reprocessing activities. The IAEA also has been useful in managing the destruction and verification of materials associated with Libya's program of weapons of mass destruction.

To strengthen the IAEA, the President has proposed creating a special verification committee to ensure that violators of proliferation agreements are discovered and held accountable.

### **Staying the Course in Iraq**

I believe that, just as helping Libya come clean of its weapons of mass destruction and ousting al-Qaeda from Afghanistan have made the world safer, so too has removing Saddam Hussein from power. No one need fear an attack from him again.

Yet we face threats inside Iraq from former regime elements, foreign radical Islamic terrorists, and some homegrown insurgents. As the President said this week, “the defeat of violence and terror in Iraq is vital to the defeat of violence and terror elsewhere; and vital, therefore, to the safety of the American people.”

We all desire more security in Iraq, but we should not lose sight of what has been accomplished. The loss of even one Iraqi, American, or coalition life in this conflict is to be mourned. Yet we should not forget that Iraqis no longer have to fear the fate of those who lie in hundreds of mass graves around the country.

The Iraqis also have a new interim constitution, which sounds familiar to anyone who understands democratic republics. It guarantees freedom of religion, worship, and expression; the right to assemble and organize political parties; and the right to vote. It forbids discrimination based on religion or gender or nationality. It is, as Nina Shea at Freedom House puts it, a “democratic milestone” in that region.

Iraq’s market economy is stabilizing. The World Bank Group estimates its domestic output will rebound by 33 percent this year alone. Critical infrastructure, such as clean water, electricity, and reliable telecommunications systems, has also vastly improved.

All 240 hospitals in Iraq have reopened; over 22 million vaccinations have been administered; and over 25,000 tons of medicine and supplies have been delivered. More than 5.5 million children are back in school. And over 51 million new textbooks that teach tolerance are now in circulation.

The next step is working out a mechanism for creating the interim Iraqi government. We welcome Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi’s recommendations for structuring that government. His contributions will be key to ensuring that a new government of Iraq is elected through transparent, democratic elections. The Iraqi Governing Council has established an electoral committee to work with the United Nations on plans for national elections next January.

These are important steps on Iraq’s path to sovereignty; and we hope that the U.N. will continue to advise Iraq during the political transition.

I should also note that both President Bush and Secretary Powell have discussed a new Security Council resolution on Iraq.

We are starting to consider what kind of resolution

might be appropriate—looking at the kinds of elements that could be in the resolution. For example, it could build on Resolutions 1483 and 1511. It could extend a hand to a new Iraqi government. It could deal with reconstruction activities, including the future of the Development Fund for Iraq, and with the continuing need for security so that the Iraqi people can complete the political process. It could encourage other nations to get involved in security and reconstruction efforts. And it could structure a role for the U.N. in the political framework, particularly in supporting the process toward elections.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is progress in Iraq, and we have a lot still to do. And yes, it is true that the cost of war is always high. But so too is the cost of inaction. We know that over the years at least 300,000 people lost their lives at the hands of Saddam Hussein, including from bounties he offered for suicide bombings in Israel.

For those who say the cost of our action in Iraq is not worth the price, I would ask them not merely to compare today’s losses with the much larger losses under Saddam Hussein. I would also ask why they would wish to preserve a regime that surely would have killed thousands of more people in the future.

## **Promoting Democracy in the Middle East and Beyond**

Ladies and gentlemen, what is at stake in Iraq is not merely the success or failure of American policy. Also at stake is whether freedom and democracy can take root and thrive in the Middle East.

One of the President’s clearest priorities is what he calls a “forward strategy for freedom.” It pervades all our foreign policy. “Freedom,” he said at the National Endowment for Democracy, “honors and unleashes human creativity—and creativity determines the strength and wealth of nations.”

The opportunity is ripe for democracy in the Middle East, but so too is the threat of failure. Democracy cannot be imposed. People cannot be free to choose a democracy if they live in fear. And surely it can take a long time to develop democracy. Indeed, it took a great many years—centuries even—for it to develop in the Western world.

The problem is that the people of the Middle East cannot wait that long for democracy. Most people in this region want the fruits of freedom just as much as



anyone. And they want it now. The lack of freedom in the Middle East is a major driving force of the hatred and fear that fuels terrorism and seeks to export it.

The President is increasing funding for the region. The Middle East's humanitarian and security and development needs are huge, and unless they are adequately addressed, governments have neither the will nor the resources to change. A key element of the President's initiatives is democracy building—crucial if we are to eliminate many of the motivations of those who engage in terrorism.

One of the four pillars of the President's Middle East Partnership Initiative—which Secretary Powell unveiled at Heritage just shortly after I left—is political reform. Through concrete steps, words like democracy, ballots, voting, petitioning, and campaigning will become part of the everyday lexicon in that region. It also promotes public-private partnerships to train candidates and voters, to encourage representative and competitive multiparty systems, and to improve elections.

Since the 1970s, the number of electoral democracies around the world has grown from 40 to 120. Surely, more from the Middle East could join these ranks. And when they do, not only will their governments and societies transform, but the region will as well. So too will the international organizations to which these new democracies belong.

The United Nations, founded by democracies, would be far more effective if its current membership were more democratic. Even more so if its member states, which uphold political, civil, and economic freedoms at home, would champion them in the U.N. arena.

Unfortunately, too often, they do not. Too often, opportunities to address the threats facing the world, and to advance freedom, are squandered. We are working hard to change that fact. We are asking democracies to stand with us on principle and advance political freedoms, economic freedom, and human rights.

I am happy to tell you this proposal for an informal democracy caucus is catching on. A proactive caucus of democracies is beginning to collaborate at the U.N. Commission on Human Rights to promote freedom in that forum. One example is our work on a resolution this year to promote and consolidate democracy, which we are sponsoring with Romania

and Peru. It is vigorously supported by the 32 democracies on the 53-member commission. We hope this is a sign of greater collaboration to come.

Another example is the very significant vote in the commission condemning Cuba for its human rights abuses. This resolution is stronger than last year's, and the win took a lot of work. We also won similar votes, cosponsored with the European Union, on North Korea, Belarus, and Turkmenistan. These resolutions are important; they shine a bright light on the plight of the oppressed; more importantly, they let them know the world is still standing with them.

### Concerns About Globalization

Ladies and gentlemen, many wise people over the years have understood the relationship of challenges and opportunities—seeing the one in the other. One such opportunity that, unfortunately, all too many people today see as a threat is globalization. I would like to end by saying a few words about this subject. It may seem unrelated to terrorism and other topics I have discussed, but it is in fact closely related.

Globalization is a buzzword for tearing down barriers to commerce, information, and technology. Its engine is the same desire to be free that motivates democratic activists living under oppression to throw off their yoke of tyranny.

Yes, globalization can be disruptive; and it is indeed an agent of change. But all around the world, those people and countries that seek to harness that change rather than stand against it are the most successful and productive.

They also are the greatest force for peace and prosperity in the world. They are the growing middle and entrepreneurial classes of the world who make things and who create economic growth—whose main political desire in life is not to lord over others in order to control the spoils of power, but to be free to enjoy the fruits of their own labor—in other words, to be left in peace.

Economic freedom—the answer to globalization concerns—is at the heart of our current international economic policy. You might call it our “forward strategy for free markets.” Whether it's signing free trade agreements with countries like Chile, Jordan, Bahrain, and Australia or a regional agreement with Central America nations, or establishing the world's largest free trade zone among 34 countries in the

Western Hemisphere, we are striving to open markets and unleash opportunity.

Our international economic agenda extends to multi-lateral forums as well. We continue to talk with countries that support the principles of economic freedom on how we can advance them throughout the U.N. system. We are also leading efforts to revitalize the Doha Development Round of the World Trade Organization. And we will be hosting a G-8 summit later this summer, where discussions should include how to promote economic development in the Greater Middle East.

We will also move forward with the Millennium Challenge Account—an innovative program to ensure that foreign economic assistance is more effective. The first group of qualifying countries for this program will soon be rewarded for putting in place policies that advance freedom, democracy, and prosperity.

Such policies include good governance, transparency, public-private partnerships, and access to health care and open markets. These are the best ways to unleash the forces of freedom that can reduce hunger and poverty and prevent terrorism from taking root.

Countries that fail to put in place the right policies fail their people. Those who do not tackle corruption, trafficking in persons, and international crime allow their people to be robbed of the fruits of their labor. Those who fail to take advantage of the liberating effects of globalization are far more likely to succumb to the temptations of terrorists. They will become the alienated and the forgotten on whom terrorists prey with their perverse and obscure ideologies.

All the more reason to push for an open and successful global economy. All the more reason to press for economic policies that create a tide that lifts all boats. And all the more reason to continue the trade and development policies this Administration has developed to produce economic growth for all.

## Conclusion

There are indeed many threats and opportunities facing America, and I've only touched on a few of the most challenging. They are most challenging because they target the very cause of freedom.

I believe this cause of freedom is being severely tested. It is not unlike that test of will Abraham Lincoln alluded to in his Gettysburg Address, when he said:

[O]ur fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure.

The question for us today is whether the cause of freedom will endure—whether it will withstand another challenge, merely its latest, which is the threat of fanatical terrorists who will use any means to destroy us and our friends. We must be vigilant not only against the physical threats they pose, but also the moral and political ones as well.

The war on terrorism is as much a war of ideas and a war of morale as it is a war of rockets, bombs, and suicide bombers. And while we must always keep up our military guard, it is on the ideas-and-morale front that this war ultimately will be won or lost. Secretary Powell said recently in *Foreign Affairs*:

We fight terrorism because we must, but we seek a better world because we can—because it is our desire, and our destiny, to do so. This is why we commit ourselves to democracy, development, global public health, and human rights, as well as to the prerequisite of a solid structure for global peace. These are not high-sounding decorations for our interests. They are our interests, the purposes our power serves.

That is it in a nutshell: We are fortunate to have the power, but we are even more blessed to have the purpose. What we do with the two is, and always has been, the choice that makes us Americans.

—The Honorable Kim R. Holmes, Ph.D., is Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs. He delivered these remarks at the annual meeting of The Heritage Foundation's Board of Trustees in New Orleans, Louisiana.