

The Honorable
Donald H. Rumsfeld
United States Secretary of
Defense

Resolve, Not Retreat

I remember when I was first elected to Congress. I was in bed one night, and I was reading a doctoral dissertation that someone had sent me from Chicago. And this fellow predicted that a Congressional district would produce a reasonably predictable Congressman. My district was in the northern part of Cook County in Illinois, and it had the highest level of education, the highest level of annual earned income and the least unemployment of any district in America.

And he went on to say that “Rumsfeld is the exception that proves the rule. Rumsfeld is distinguished principally by his total lack of social, financial and political standing in the community.” I woke up my wife and said, “Listen to that, Joyce. Isn’t that terrible?” And she said, “Yes, but go back to sleep, because it’s tough to argue with.”

Many years ago I lived in this state, down in Coronado. It was, I think, more than six decades ago, during World War II. My father was out on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific. And I think back to those years and how much I loved living in the state.

Since those years, California has given our country tens of thousands of volunteer soldiers and sailors and airmen and Marines. I meet with them all over the world. They are doing a truly superb job for our country and for the world.

I’d like to mention one Southern Californian with gritty drive and a Silver Star, seriously wounded in Iraq in combat that was so intense it was described as almost a hand grenade throwing contest. This man, Corporal Timothy Tardif, refused medical attention until the battle had been won. Later he was evacuated. He called his wife from the transit hospital in Germany, Landstuhl, and he said, “Honey, I could come home right now, but I feel I have responsibilities, and I’m going to go back to Iraq.” Apparently, he borrowed a uniform, convinced a doctor to let him out of the hospital, got on a flight back to Iraq and went to his squad. And how fortunate we are to have people like that, troops like Tim Tardif, who have absolutely no quit in them.

Today, obviously, the news is not good, and we remember those who have fallen in the line of duty, including 21 Marines killed in the last few days in Iraq. Patriots, they were determined to stop the terrorists from reclaiming Iraq and from launching more attacks on our people. Our nation needed them; our nation called

on them in battle, and we mourn them now in death. Our country will honor them by completing the mission for which they fought so hard and so nobly.

I was in Iraq and Central Asia last week, where I met with the troops, these amazing men and women in uniform who are serving our country with such courage and such professionalism. And despite the difficulties—and there are difficulties, to be sure—they’re making solid progress in helping to set the conditions for Iraqis to successfully defend their young democracy.

And once Iraq is safely in the hands of the Iraqi people and a government that they elect—under a new constitution that they’re now fashioning and which should be completed by August 15—our troops will be able, as the capability of the Iraqi security forces evolve, to pass over responsibility to them, and then come home with the honor they will have earned.

It’s been nearly four years since terrorists launched their attack on our country, killed some 3,000 innocent people. As we’ve seen, the enemies of civilized society remain deadly, even today. We saw it most recently in London last month.

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able to retreat behind convenient fictions that obscure the lethality and the intention of the enemy. I want to mention a few of those fictions, and then talk a bit about the way ahead in the global war on terror, the struggle between civilization and extremists, and then respond to some questions.

technique. It is simply not possible to defend at every location, every minute of the day or night, against every conceivable terrorist technique. It can't be done.

Therefore, the only way to defeat terrorists is to go after them where they are, not to wait to be attacked. And that's exactly what our global coalition has done, and what our troops are doing today in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere around the globe.

The president's strategy for winning the war on terror includes fashioning what is undoubtedly the largest coalition in the history of mankind. Some 90-plus nations today are working together, sharing intelligence, and cooperating. In the near term, we're confronting terrorists, capturing or killing them, and

depriving them of their sanctuaries. Ultimately, however, success will depend on advancing the cause of freedom and democracy as an alternative to the grim vision of the terrorists, and in supporting the growing number of moderate voices in the Muslim world that are disputing the claim of the terrorists that they represent the true vision of Islam. They do not.

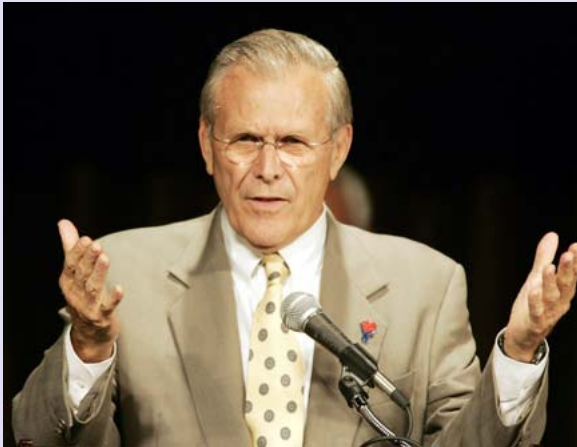
This war of ideas is at the heart of the war on terror; a conflict between a totalitarian ideology of the extremists, and the now tested vision of free societies. The fanaticism of these enemies can only be defeated if we successfully employ all elements of national power: military to be sure, but more diplomatic, financial, intelligence-

sharing, and law enforcement. We need all elements of national power to win this war. But make no mistake, it is a war.

Some also ask, how should we define the enemy? While Al Qaeda is one face of the terrorists, it's not the only face. The enemy is not one nation; it's not any one organization. It's a shifting network of violent and fanatical adherents to extremist ideologies, a movement that uses terrorism as their weapon of choice. They operate on six continents, and have cells and networks in friendly as well as hostile nation-states. They combine medieval views with modern tools and technologies. And they deny women an opportunity to participate in society. One has to ask, how could any society hope to succeed while denying half of its population the opportunity to participate?

We've now seen the future that they seek. They've made their intentions very clear. The cities they rule would be like Fallujah was last fall, where those who refused to collaborate with the terrorists in that city were beheaded and then tossed in the Euphrates River. We have heard their plans. As a cleric in Britain said to the world after last month's bombing in London "I would like to see the Islamic flag fly, not only over 10 Downing Street, but over the whole world."

This is not a war between the West and the Muslim faith. There is a struggle within the Muslim faith between extremists and moderates. The targets of terrorists are more often than not other Muslims, such as the Iraqi children who were murdered last month as they were receiving some candy from an American soldier. Indeed, their victims have included thousands of Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq—many killed simply because they had chosen to be free.



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First, there has been comment in the press of late about whether or not we are even engaged in a war, in a war on terror, and whether our efforts might be better explained in some other manner. It's a fair question. But let there be no doubt, no mistake, we are a nation at war, a war against terrorist enemies that are seeking our surrender or retreat.

The president determined after September 11 the United States could no longer try to deal with the violent extremists that were killing our people simply by traditional law enforcement approaches. The only way to defeat terrorism is to go after them where they are, not wait to be attacked. A terrorist can, of course, attack at any place at any time, using any conceivable

The liberated Iraqis and Afghans are today defying terrorist threats and condemning their violence. According to recent polls, an increasing number of Muslims are optimistic about the success of democracy in their own countries, and they're rejecting the tyranny offered by the terrorists.

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Some people seem confused about the motivations and intentions of terrorists, and about our coalition's defense of the still young democracies in Afghanistan and in Iraq. They seem to cling to the discredited theory that the recent attacks in London and elsewhere are really in retaliation for the war in Iraq or for the so-called occupation of Afghanistan. That is nonsense.

The United States and its allies did not provoke the terrorists; the terrorists attacked America. There was no war in Iraq or Afghanistan when America was attacked on September 11, and there was no war in Iraq or Afghanistan when terrorists attacked Americans in the Beirut barracks in 1983, in the Khobar Towers in 1996, or

the African embassies in 1998, or when they attacked the *USS Cole* in the year 2000.

Some still argue that acquiescing to terrorist demands by retreating from Afghanistan or Iraq would put an end to future terrorist attacks. That is also nonsense. Terrorists do not seek a negotiated settlement with the West or with the moderate Muslim nations, and they're not appeased by concessions. A car bomb in Saudi Arabia killed 17 and wounded 80 after American troops were leaving Saudi Arabia. Indeed, Al Qaeda likely began plotting the 9/11 attack during the height of the Middle East peace process in the 1990s.

Resolve, not retreat, is what's needed in this war. It is a test of wills. Courage, not concession, and freedom, not tyranny, must be the path that we forge, the future we insist on, and the legacy that America and her allies help nations build for themselves. Our coalition must win this test of wills, vowing that we will not surrender Iraq or Afghanistan to terrorists, that we do not apologize for our country's meaning in the world, and that we will not betray the principles of freedom that, at bedrock, define our nation. These enemies would not be placated by a surrender, by an apology, or by a betrayal of our values, or of our free way of life. Indeed, I would submit that they would be emboldened.

So what, then, is the task ahead? Our global coalition will continue to target terrorist networks and their sanctuaries, and to support and help and strengthen free governments that willingly join in that fight. But we have to recognize that the challenges we face come not only from terrorist networks and suicide bombers. They also come from the radical schools that teach children to be suicide bombers and to be terrorists, and from the radical clerics who preach violence and demonize a free way of life.

Free nations are best able to counter the lies that terrorists use to attract suicide bombers in partnership with moderate Muslim leaders. We have to partner with them; they are the ones that are going to prevail in the struggle within that faith. These efforts are not without great difficulties, as we've seen so tragically this week and last. Although the Iraqi people remain determined to build a free society, the terrorists are desperate to try to stop them.

But despite their headline-grabbing violence, they're failing. Indeed, the lethal attacks on innocent Iraqi citizens appear to be hardening the Iraqi people's determination to defeat Al Qaeda and the insurgents, and to succeed in building a free Iraq. More than eight million Iraqis defied terrorists to vote in last January's elections. Many were walking defiantly past voting places and into voting

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places that had only minutes or hours before been attacked by terrorists. And despite the harm that the extremists have inflicted on innocent Iraqis—and it happens every single day—consider the record of the extremists thus far.

They tried to occupy Fallujah and carve out a terrorist safe haven in Iraq and they failed. They launched a campaign of violence to stop the January election, and they failed. They try to intimidate and murder, recruits

going into the Iraqi security forces, to keep more from enlisting. And they are failing. They've tried to force the coalition to withdraw from Afghanistan and Iraq, and with the single exception of Spain pulling out its forces from Iraq, they have failed. And they're desperate to stop the forward march of freedom in the Middle East and beyond, including Central Asia. And they're failing at that as well.

As the citizens of more countries seek to live as free people under free systems, the fanaticism that fuels hostility to such systems and encourages terrorist violence will suffer still further blows. This will be a tribute to moderate Muslim leaders. It will be a tribute to the millions of moderate Muslims who have courageously supported them. And it will be a tribute

to our men and women in uniform, to be sure.

I have a pin on, an "America Supports You" pin. I've seen a number of them in the audience as we were visiting earlier. I thank all of you who have those pins for wearing them.

You can look at www.americasupportsyou.mil It's a compilation of all the things that we know of that are being done across our country to support the troops and to support their families. And you will be impressed and amazed at the creativity and the generosity and the energy that is being put into this important activity. I hope you'll go to the website. I hope you'll interest yourself in all the things that schools are doing, families, clubs, corporations,

organizations of every conceivable type. It says a great deal about the hearts of the American people.

We are, as a country, needless to say, greatly in the debt of those who raise their hands and say, "Send me." Day in and day out across this globe, American men and women in uniform, soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines, are on the front line fighting in this global war on terror. They're doing noble work. They are properly proud of what they're doing. And certainly our country is deeply in their debt.

May God bless them and their families, and may God bless our wonderful country. Thank you so much.

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