

Securing America at Home and Abroad

The United States has a special role to play in world affairs as an historic inspiration to those around the world seeking democracy, freedom, and opportunity. Our own fight for independence, democracy and basic human rights has allowed us to act as a moral force in world affairs and a guiding light for other nations.

In the last century, our strength as a nation was measured more by the extent to which others emulated and respected us abroad than by the extent to which they feared and loathed us.

Under George W. Bush, this nation has lost its way. Not only are we less secure at home and abroad, we have squandered our role as the inspiration and guiding light for other peoples. I seek to restore America's rightful place in the world and its moral leadership in world affairs.

We remain the sole superpower in the world – as Madeleine Albright once put it, the "indispensable power" for addressing so many of the challenges around the world. But we cannot lead the world by force, and we cannot go it alone. We must lead toward clearly articulated and shared goals and with the cooperation and respect of friends and allies.

I seek to restore the best traditions of American leadership. Leadership in which our power is multiplied by the appeal of democratic ideals and by the knowledge that our country is a force for law around the world not a law unto itself.

I will not divide the world into us versus them. Rather, I will rally the world around fundamental principles of decency, responsibility, freedom, and mutual respect. Our foreign and military policy must be about the notion of America leading the world not America against the world.

I opposed President Bush's war in Iraq from the beginning. While Saddam Hussein's regime was clearly evil and needed to be disarmed, it did not present an immediate threat to U.S. security that would justify going to war, particularly going to war alone. From the beginning, I felt that winning the war would not be the hard part – winning the peace would be. This administration failed to plan for the postwar period as it did for the battle, and today we are paying the price.

My opposition to the war, however, is part of a comprehensive view of America's role in the world that I presented to the Council on Foreign Relations on June 25th. In that speech, I laid out four goals for American leadership in the world:

- First, defeat the threat posed by terrorists, tyrants, and technologies of mass destruction.
- Second, strengthen our alliances and ensure Russia and China are fully integrated into a stable international order.

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- Third, enlarge the circle of beneficiaries of the growing world economy.
- And fourth, ensure that life on our fragile planet is sustainable.

Fifty-five years ago, President Harry Truman delivered what was known as the Four Point speech. In it, he challenged Democrats and Republicans alike to come together to build strong and effective international organizations; to support arrangements that would spur global economic recovery; to join with free people everywhere in the defense of human liberty; and to draw upon the genius of our people to help societies who needed help in the battle against hunger and illness, ignorance and despair.

Harry Truman believed that a world in which even the poorest and most desperate had grounds for hope would be a world in which our own children could grow up in security and peace not because evil would then be absent from the globe, but because the forces of right would be united and strong.

Harry Truman had faith as I have faith, and as I believe the American people have faith, that if we are wise enough and determined enough in our opposition to hate and our promotion of tolerance; in our opposition to aggression and our fidelity to law; we will have allies not only among governments but among people everywhere.

Such an alliance can never be beaten.

And the creation of such an alliance will be my goal if I am entrusted with the presidency of the United States. Because, this is what will keep America strong. This is what reflects the best in the American people. And this is the core of the national security message that I will be carrying to all of America throughout this campaign that I am committed to working constructively with friends and allies around the globe to help people in every corner of every continent to live in freedom, prosperity and peace.