

THE PRESIDENT
HAS SEEN

Remarks on the Global War on Terror – National Guard Association 2/9/06

Thursday, February 9, 2006

Draft #8 ~~18~~ 18

Thank you for that warm welcome.

I am delighted to be here with the men and

women of the National Guard Association

of the United States. For 128 years,

the National Guard Association has been

fighting for the citizen-soldiers who fight for

America. In times of crisis,

America depends on the skill and devotion

of the National Guard.

Our Nation is safer because you stand
ready to put on the uniform and defend our
freedom | And I have come to tell you:

America is grateful for your service ...
and I am proud to be your
Commander in Chief.

Acknowledgments

- Brigadier General Bob Taylor,
Chairman of the Board,
National Guard Association of the
United States
(introduced you, presented bust)
- Congressman Jim Gibbons (R-NV)
- Brigadier General Steve Koper (Ret.),
President, National Guard Association of
the United States

- Major General

Roger Lempke [LEMP-key],

President, Adjutants General Association
of the United States and

Adjutant General of Nebraska

- Lieutenant General Danny James,

Director, Air National Guard,

and former Texas Adjutant General

- Chief Warrant Officer Lewis King (Ret.),
Chairman, National Guard Association of
Texas Educational Foundation and
Chairman, President George W. Bush
Memorial Bust Campaign

- Other military leaders here today
- Charles Parks, Sculptor

The Guard has been fighting for
America since before America was a
Nation | From your "First Muster" in 1636
to today's global war on terror, Americans
have counted on the Guard to protect our
land and defend our way of life.

The role of the Guard in our military is
unique. You are the only part of our Armed
Forces that serves both your state and your
country – and in the past year, Americans
have witnessed the courage of our
Guardsmen and women at home and
abroad.

When Hurricane Katrina struck the
Gulf Coast last year, more than
40,000 Guardsmen and women rushed to
the impact zone – the largest stateside
deployment in National Guard history. /
They conducted search and rescue
operations ... distributed food and water ...
provided emergency medical care ...
protected communities from criminal
violence ... and worked around the clock to
repair homes and restore power.

Guard units from all 50 states, three U.S.
territories, and the District of Columbia
provided assistance – and together, they
saved lives and helped evacuate over
175,000 people stranded by the storm.

When the Pennsylvania National Guard
came to repair the roof of a Louisiana
woman, she said this to the soldiers:

"That's a long way to come to help us.

We're really grateful ... you boys are going

to heaven I tell you." (When tragedy strikes,

(Americans know they can count on the men

and women of the National Guard.)

As you protect your neighbors from
natural disasters, you are also protecting
the American people from terrorist dangers/
Since September 11, 2001, more than
260,000 members of the National Guard
have been mobilized for various missions in
the war on terror.

At this moment, Guardsmen and women
are training the Afghan National Army ...
standing watch over the world's most
dangerous terrorists in Guantanamo Bay,
Cuba ... and taking the fight to the enemy
in Iraq. | Across the world, and on every
front, the men and women of the Guard are
serving with courage and determination –
and they are bringing us victory in the
global war on terror.

Your service is vital to the security of our
country and the peace of the world –
and that service would not be possible
without the support of your families. /
Your loved ones miss you and worry about
you when you are deployed in far away
lands.

By standing behind you, they are also
serving our country – and America
appreciates their service as well.

Our Nation also depends on the
commitment of your employers.

In offices, schools, and factories across

America, ^{employees} businesses do without your

talents so that you can protect our Nation.

~~These~~ Businesses are putting patriotism
ahead of profit – and they have the
gratitude of all Americans.

Each of you has stepped forward to
defend your country – and your country
owes you some things in return. (We have
taken a number of steps to improve the call
up process, so that it is more respectful of
you and your families. (In most cases,
we are now giving you at least 30 days
notification before you mobilize – so you
and your families have time to make
arrangements.

We are working to give you as much
certainty as possible about the length of
your mobilization – so you can know when
you will be able to resume civilian life. |

We are working to minimize the number of
extensions and repeat mobilizations. |

X { We are working to ensure that you and your
X families are treated with the dignity you
X deserve – and the respect you have
X earned.

We are also taking steps to improve
your quality of life. We have expanded
health care benefits for Guard and Reserve
forces and their families – giving you
access to the military's TRICARE system.

We are also expanding access to education
for America's citizen-soldiers. \

I was proud to sign legislation providing our
Guard and Reserve forces between
40 and 80 percent of the education benefit
available to active duty forces – depending
on the length of their mobilization in the war
on terror.

We have also tripled the amount that can
be paid for re-enlisting in the
National Guard or Reserve.

And last month, I signed into law a new
retention bonus for Guardsmen and
Reservists with critical skills needed in the
war on terror. Our Guardsmen and

Reservists are standing up for America –
and my Administration is standing behind
our Guard and Reserve.

We are working to give you the tools
and resources you need to prevail in the
war on terror – and meet your state and
homeland security missions as well.

My 2007 budget increases funding for the
men and women of our Armed Forces by
28.5 billion dollars – including vital funds to
help the National Guard meet its
responsibilities during a time of war.

The Army National Guard currently has
about 333,000 soldiers – and my 2007
budget funds the Guard at that level. As

X { the Guard recruits above that level,
X { we will make certain that there is funding in
X { place for every citizen who steps forward to
X { wear the uniform.

And to ensure that the Army and
Air National Guard are ready for any
challenge, my budget more than doubles
funding for equipment and modernization
over the next five years. (You are risking
your lives to defend our citizens from
unprecedented threats – and so long as I
am the Commander in Chief, you will have
the equipment and resources you need for
victory.

Your service is needed in these
dangerous times. We remain a Nation at
war. In recent months, I have spoken
extensively about our strategy for victory in
Iraq.

Today, I will give you an update on the
progress we are making in the broader war
on terror: the actions of our global coalition
to break up terrorist networks across the
world ... plots we have disrupted that have
saved American lives ... and how the rise of
freedom is leading millions to reject the
dark ideology of the terrorists – and stand
with us in the struggle for justice, tolerance,
and peace.

On September 11, 2001, our Nation saw
that vast oceans and great distances were
no longer enough to keep us safe.)

And I made a decision – America will not

(wait to be attacked again) Since that day,

we have taken decisive action to protect our
citizens against new dangers.

We are hunting down the terrorists using
every element of our national power –
military, intelligence, law enforcement,
diplomatic, and financial. (And we are
clarifying the choice facing every nation:
In this struggle between freedom and terror,
every nation has responsibilities – and no
one can remain neutral.

Since September 11, we have led a
broad coalition to confront the terrorist
threat. Four weeks after the attacks,
America and our allies launched military
operations to eliminate the terrorists'
principal sanctuary in the nation of
Afghanistan.

Together, we removed a cruel regime that
oppressed its people, brutalized women
and girls, and gave safe haven to the
terrorists who had attacked America.

Because we acted, the terror camps in
Afghanistan have been shut down –
and 25 million people have tasted freedom,
many for the first time in their lives.

Afghanistan now has a democratically
elected President ... a new national
assembly ... and the beginnings of a
market economy. Women are working and
starting their own businesses, and boys and
girls are back in school. The Afghan people
are building the institutions of a lasting
democracy – and the foundations of a
hopeful future for their children and
grandchildren.

Afghanistan still faces serious
challenges – from illicit drug trafficking to
continued violence from al-Qaida and the
remnants of the Taliban regime.
So the international community is working
together to help Afghanistan's young
democracy succeed. Earlier this month,
Prime Minister Tony Blair hosted over
40 nations and 9 international organizations
for a conference in London, where they
pledged 10.5 billion dollars in aid to
Afghanistan.

With the help of 35 nations, NATO is
leading the International Security
Assistance Force in Afghanistan. (

The United States, Britain, Norway,
Germany, Italy, Spain, Lithuania, Canada,
the Netherlands, and New Zealand are all
leading Provincial Reconstruction Teams. (

These teams are helping the Afghan
government extend its authority and provide
security in provinces across the country.

Our coalition has trained nearly

27,000 Afghan soldiers and more than

56,000 Afghan police – so they can take the

fight to the terrorists and eventually provide

for the security of their own citizens.

Afghan forces are risking their lives to fight

our common enemy – and coalition forces

are proud to serve alongside such

courageous and determined allies.

Our coalition is also working to root out
and destroy terrorist networks in other parts
of the world. More than 90 nations –
nearly half the world – are now cooperating
in a global campaign to dry up terrorist
financing ... hunt down terrorist operatives
... and bring terrorist leaders to justice.

Some said that an aggressive strategy of bringing the war to the terrorists would cost us international support – and drive nations from our coalition. (In fact, the opposite has happened. Today, more governments are cooperating in the fight against terror than ever before. (And in one of the most significant developments of this war, many nations that once turned a blind eye to terror are now helping lead the fight against it.

A little over four years ago, Pakistan
was one of only three countries in the world
that recognized the Taliban regime in
Afghanistan. Today, Pakistani forces are
risking their lives in the hunt for al-Qaida –
and President Musharraf has faced several
attempts on his life since his courageous
decision to join the fight against terror.

Before September 11, terrorist supporters
were operating with relative ease in Saudi
Arabia, where fundraisers and facilitators
were providing money and logistical support
to al-Qaida.

Since the Riyadh bombings in May of 2003,
the Saudi government has recognized that
it is a prime target of the terrorists.

And in the past two and a half years, Saudi
forces have killed or captured nearly all of
the terrorists on their most wanted list ...
reduced the flow of money to terror groups
... and arrested hundreds of radical fighters
bound for Iraq.

These governments are taking important
steps to confront terror -- and as they do,
we will continue to encourage them to take
the path of political reform. By respecting
the rights and choices of their own people
these nations can marginalize the
extremists ... strengthen their societies ...
and eliminate the conditions that feed
radicalism.

These and other governments around
the world are stepping forward to fight the
terrorists because they know the lives of
their citizens are at stake.

As President Musharraf has said,

"Terrorism threatens to destabilize all
modern societies.... It cannot be condoned
for any reason or cause. (The people of
Pakistan have suffered from terrorism ...
and we are making our contribution to the
fight against terrorism." /

President Musharraf is right. / In the war on
terror, there can be no separate peace –
and no nation can stand on the sidelines.

By standing together, the United States
and our partners are striking real blows
against the enemy.

Since September 11, 2001, our coalition
has captured or killed al-Qaida managers
and operatives in over two dozen countries.

That includes many of al-Qaida's
operational commanders – the senior
leaders responsible for day-to-day planning
of terrorist activities across the globe.

In November 2001, coalition forces killed
Mohammed Atif with an air strike in
Afghanistan. In March 2003, his
replacement – Khalid Shaykh Mohammad –
was captured in Pakistan.

In May of 2005, the man who took over for
him – a terrorist named al-Libi –
was captured in South Asia. /

The terrorists are living under constant
pressure – and this adds to our security. /

[When terrorists spend their days working to
avoid death or capture, it is harder for them
to plan and execute new attacks on our
country.]

By striking the terrorists where they live,
we are protecting the American homeland. /
Since September 11, the United States and
our coalition partners have disrupted a
number of serious al-Qaida terrorist plots –
including plots to attack targets inside the
United States.

Let me give you one example:

In the weeks after September 11,

while Americans were still recovering from

an unprecedented strike on our homeland,

al-Qaida was already busy planning its next

attack.

We now know that in October 2001,

Khalid Shaykh Mohammad –

the mastermind of the

September 11 attacks – had already set in

motion a plan to have terrorist operatives

hijack an airplane using shoe bombs to

breach the cockpit door, and fly the plane

into the tallest building on the West Coast.

We believe the intended target was the

Library Tower in Los Angeles.

Rather than use Arab hijackers as he
had on September 11,
Khalid Shaykh Mohammad sought out
young men from Southeast Asia –
whom he believed would not arouse as
much suspicion. (To help carry out this
plan, he tapped a terrorist named Hambali,
one of the leaders of an al-Qaida affiliated
group in Southeast Asia called “J-I.”

JI terrorists were responsible for a series of
deadly attacks in Southeast Asia, and
members of the group had trained with al
Qaida. Hambali recruited several key
operatives who had been training in
Afghanistan. Once the operatives were
recruited, they met with Osama bin Laden,
and then began preparations for the
West Coast attack.

Their plot was derailed in early 2002
when a South Asian nation arrested a key
al-Qaida operative. Subsequent
debriefings and other intelligence
operations made clear the intended target,
and how al-Qaida hoped to execute it.
This critical intelligence helped other allies
capture the ring leaders and other known
operatives recruited for this plot.

The West Coast plot had been thwarted.

And our efforts did not end there. In the

summer of 2003, our partners in

Southeast Asia conducted another

successful manhunt that led to the capture

of the terrorist Hambali.

As the West Coast plot shows, in the
war on terror we face a relentless and
determined enemy that operates in many
nations – and so protecting our citizens
requires unprecedented cooperation of
many nations as well. It took the combined
efforts of several countries to break up this
plot. By working together, we took
dangerous terrorists off the streets –
and stopped a catastrophic attack on our
homeland.

Across the world, our coalition is pursuing the enemy with relentless determination. And because of these efforts, the terrorists are weakened and fractured – yet they are still lethal.

We cannot let the fact that America has not been attacked in the four and a half years since September 11, 2001 lull us into the illusion that the threats to our Nation have disappeared. They have not.

Just last month, we heard

Osama bin Laden declare his intention to

attack America again. Our military,

law enforcement, homeland security,

and intelligence professionals are working

day and night to help protect us.

We are safer for their efforts –

but we are not yet safe.

America remains at risk – so we must

remain vigilant. (We will stay on the offense

... we will hunt down the terrorists ...

and we will not rest until this threat to our

people has been removed.

We will continue to take the fight to the
enemy – yet we must also recognize that in
the long run victory will require more than
military means alone. / Ultimately, the only
way to defeat the terrorists is to defeat their
dark vision of hatred and fear by spreading
the hope of freedom to a troubled region of
the world.

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The terrorists have an ideology.

They share a hateful vision that rejects

tolerance, and crushes all dissent –

a world where women are oppressed ...

children are indoctrinated ...

those and ~~all~~ who reject their ideology of violence

threatened & often
and extremism are murdered.

The terrorists have aims – they seek to
impose their heartless ideology of
totalitarian control throughout the Middle
East, and arm themselves with weapons of
mass murder. ^{Stated} Their goal is to overthrow
moderate governments, take control of
countries, and use them as safe havens to
launch attacks against America.

To achieve their aims, the terrorists
need popular support. We know this from
the terrorists' own words. In a letter to his
chief of operations in Iraq, the terrorist
Zawahiri wrote that popular support is,
quote, "a decisive factor between victory
and defeat. In the absence of this popular
support the movement would be crushed in
the shadows. Therefore our planning must
strive to involve the Muslim masses in the
battle." end quote.

So a key part of the terrorists' strategy is
to feed public resentment by convincing
people across the Muslim world that the
future holds just two choices: One of Islam,
holiness, and virtue ... and one of Western
decadence, immorality, and imperialism.
They use every opportunity to advance this
false choice.

Sometimes, they spread blatant lies about
America) Other times, it is American
mistakes – like the abuses at Abu Ghraib –
that give them ammunition in their
campaign to foment anti-Western
sentiment, and rally Muslims to support
their dark ideology.

The problem for the terrorists is that they cannot hide the inhumanity of their ideology. Because they lack the military strength to challenge us directly, they have turned to the weapon of fear. They seek to break our will with stunning acts of violence.

The terrorists do not understand America.

They cannot shake our will. We will stay on the hunt ... we will never give in ... we will win the war on terror.

In the terrorists' campaign of violence and destruction, the majority of their victims since Nine-Eleven have been innocent Muslims. When people in the Arab world see al-Qaida murdering Iraqi children or blowing up mourners in an Iraqi mosque, their outrage grows. And as the terrorists spread violence in places like Riyadh, Istanbul, Sharm-el-Sheik, Jakarta, and Bali – the people of those countries are starting to turn against the terrorists.

After terrorists bombed a Palestinian
wedding at a hotel in Amman last
November, thousands of Jordanians took to
the streets and rallied against al-Qaida. /
One protester carried a sign that read
"Jordan's Nine-Eleven." Others chanted
"This is not Islamic, this is terrorism!"

The outrage even reached the Jordanian
town of Zarqa – birthplace of the terrorist
Zarqawi who leads al-Qaida in Iraq and
who was the mastermind of the Jordan
bombings. A cousin standing outside the
al-Qaida leader's family home said:
"We hate him even more than other people
do now."

Zarqawi was even expelled by his own
tribesmen, hundreds of whom declared in a
letter to a Jordanian newspaper, quote:
we "renounce his actions, pronouncements
and whatever he approves of
We disown him until judgment day."

Before the bombings, most Jordanians
reportedly sympathized with al-Qaida/
Today only a minority sympathize with
al-Qaida, and most Jordanians say its
activities are not in conformity with the
teachings of Islam. Similar shifts in public
opinion are beginning to appear in other
parts of the Muslim world/
From Pakistan, to Indonesia, to al-Qaida's
former home base of Afghanistan, more
people now say they oppose the terrorists
and their tactics.

These are positive signs – but we still
have a long way to go. So we will continue
to oppose the terrorists' ideology by offering
the hopeful alternative of political freedom
and peaceful change. We are working to
spread the hope of liberty across the
broader Middle East because we have
learned the lessons of history: Free nations
do not wage wars of aggression, or give
safe haven for terrorists to attack other
democracies.

And when democracy takes hold, nations
replace resentment with hope, respect the
rights of their citizens and their neighbors,
and join the fight against terror. Every step
toward freedom in the world makes our
country safer – so across the world we are
acting boldly in freedom's cause.

We are standing with the brave people
of Iraq, as they risk their lives to build a
strong democracy in the heart of the Middle
East. And their courage is changing their
country, the region, and the world. (

Before the January 2005 elections,
the terrorists threatened anyone who voted
with death.

The Iraqi people defied these threats, and
went to the polls in that election and
two others last year – each with larger and
broader participation than the one that
came before. Iraqis are rejecting terror and
violence for the openness and opportunity
of democracy. And they are showing the
world that the terrorists' ideology cannot
compete on a level playing field with the
ideology of freedom.

Iraqis still face serious challenges.

The terrorists and Saddamists continue to
sow terror and violence – and they will
continue fighting freedom's progress with all
the hateful determination they can muster.

And Iraqis still have to overcome
longstanding ethnic and religious tensions –
and build the institutions of a free society
that will serve all the people, not narrow
political or religious interests.

The challenges ahead are complex and
difficult, yet Iraqis are determined to
overcome them – and our coalition is
determined to help the Iraqi people
succeed.

We are carrying out a clear strategy for
victory in Iraq: First, we are helping Iraqis
build an inclusive government, so that old
resentments will be eased, and the
insurgency marginalized.

Second, we are continuing reconstruction
efforts, and helping Iraqis build a modern
economy, so all Iraq's citizens can
experience the benefits of freedom.

And third, we are striking terrorist targets
while we train Iraqi forces that are
increasingly capable of defeating the
enemy. | Iraqi forces are showing their
courage every day, and we are proud to be
their allies in the cause of freedom.

Mr Iraqis stand up
we will stand down

The courage of Iraqis is inspiring others
across the broader Middle East to claim
their freedom as well – and the message is
going forth from Damascus to Tehran that
the future of the Middle East belongs to
freedom.

As liberty spreads in this vital region and
freedom produces opportunity and hope for
those who have not known it, the terrorist
temptation will start to fall away.

And as more nations claim their freedom,
we will gain new allies in the war on terror,
and new partners in the battle for peace
and moderation in the Muslim world.

Before that day comes, there will be
more days of testing. The terrorists remain
brutal and determined – and they still have
some resources at their disposal.

The attacks in London, Madrid, and other
cities are grim reminders of how lethal
al-Qaida remains. Money is still flowing to
radical mosques and madrassas, which are
still turning out new terrorist recruits.

Some countries – like Syria and Iran –
still provide terrorists with support and
sanctuary. And the terrorists are
sophisticated at spreading propaganda,
and using spectacular attacks to dominate
our evening news.

Yet from the vantage point of a terrorist
sitting in a cave, the future seems
increasingly bleak. Consider how the world
looks four and a half years into the war on
terror: The terrorists have lost their home
base in Afghanistan, and no longer have
control of a country where they can train
recruits and plot new attacks.

^{many}
Most of their leaders are dead or in custody

– and the rest are on the run.

They have been reduced to using
messengers to communicate.

They are running low on funds, and have
been forced to beg the terrorists in Iraq to
send money. } Countries that once allowed
them free reign are now on the hunt.

Their efforts to the divide the West have
largely failed – and the vast majority of the
world's governments are standing firm and
working together in the fight against them.
Iraqis are forming a unity government –
instead of fighting the civil war the terrorists
hoped to foment. / And Iraqi Sunnis are
joining the political process.

The success of democracy in Iraq and
Afghanistan is inspiring calls for change
across the region. And the terrorists'
strategy of attacking innocent Muslims is
beginning to backfire, and expose them for
what they are: murderers with no respect
for human life and human dignity.

Despite the violence and suffering the
terrorists are wreaking, we are winning the
war on terror. Yet victory will require more
courage, and more sacrifice. In this war,
we have said farewell to some very good
men and women – including
more than 360 heroes of the National
Guard. We hold their loved ones in our
hearts – and lift them up in our prayers.

These brave Americans gave their lives for
a cause that is just, and necessary to the
security of our country. (And their sacrifice
is sparing millions from lives of tyranny and
sorrow.

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Now we will honor their sacrifice by
completing their mission. And in the long
run, we can be confident in the outcome of
this struggle – because we have seen the
power of freedom to defeat tyranny and
terror before. And because we have on our
side the greatest force for freedom in the
history of the world: the men and women of
the United States Armed Forces.

One of the great strengths of our military is that it is an all-volunteer force. And since the attacks of September 11, 2001, nearly 1.5 million Americans have stepped forward to put on our Nation's uniform – including nearly 290,000 who have joined the National Guard. Nearly 1.3 million more American troops have made the courageous decision to re-enlist and stay in the fight – including more than 350,000 members of the National Guard.

These brave Americans saw the future the
terrorists intend for us – and they said:

“Not on my watch.” Many of you in this
room can be counted among their numbers.

I thank you for your courage, and your
commitment to this vital mission.

Four and a half years into the fight,
America's Armed Forces are determined,
experienced, and ready for any challenge –
and our Nation is blessed to have such
brave defenders. All of you are bringing
honor to the uniform, pride to our country,
and security to our people. And America
will always be grateful for your service in
the cause of freedom.

Thank you. God bless you, and may
God continue to bless America.