

Traprock Peace Center

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For more on Traprock's work with Scott Ritter, see

http://www.traprockpeace.org/scott_ritter.html

Scott Ritter spoke to over 1000 high schools students on December 19, 2003 at schools in Buckland, Deerfield and Amherst, Massachusetts. The following is a **raw transcript** of his address to over 400 students at the Mohawk Regional High School in Buckland. To ensure the accuracy of any quotes, please compare the transcript segment with the audio of his presentation, found at http://www.traprockpeace.org/scott_ritter_disarmament.html You will also find a photo-journal of his presentations at this link.

Lynn Dole: Thank you. It's wonderful to see such a turn-out from within our school community and within our larger community. Thank you very much. I'm going to introduce Leah Garfield Wright, who's a student at Mohawk, who's going to introduce our speaker, and it's wonderful to have so many people here today. Thank you.

Wright: Good morning. I'm Leah Garfield-Wright. Leading up to this assembly, I was slightly worried. Does Mr. Ritter realize to whom he'll be speaking? What if he's unimpressed. Why on Earth would he want to address students from Mohawk? He is the former UN weapons inspector. He has challenged the United States military claims and won. He has been labeled a spy by the Iraqi government. He has written two books. Why Mohawk when he could speak on CNN, MSNBC, BBC, NPR, Cross-fire, Hard-ball, or Frontline? Why Mohawk? Why you? Sure, Mohawk is small. Among us, there are no celebrities or newscasters or important political figures, or even people who know what UNSCOM means. I'll admit it. Right now we are not so impressive, but give us ten years. Perhaps Mr. Ritter realizes that our youth is an asset. Perhaps he realizes that high school students care more about what the status of the world will be in 10, 20, or 30 years than newscasters and interviewers may. Perhaps he knows that, at this time in history, it is more important than ever for young people to understand the roles of militaries, governments, and citizens. It is precisely because we are young and rather unimpressive that he is here today to speak to us. He is here to impress upon us the importance of knowing about experiences and knowledge in Iraq. He is here to inspire us to, at the very least, understand a little bit more and care a little bit more. So listen to what he has to say, care about the status of our world, consider the roles of governments, militaries, and citizens and how their interactions will affect our lives and our future. Be impressed. By the way, UNSCOM stands for United Nations Special Commission. I'd like to thank Sunny Miller and Traprock Peace Center, Mr. Dzialo,, Miss Dole, and all of you for making this possible. Now please welcome Sunny Miller. *applause*

Miller: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be at Mohawk. We visited last spring when students were making peace t-shirts and had a great time. Today in the world we are told that we're faced with a grave threat from both terrorists and the Iraqis who had possessed weapons of mass destruction. Scott Ritter was on the ground in Iraq for seven years, from 1991 to 1998, and, before the war, said, 'we eliminated 90-95% of the weapons.' When we see on television very diverse claims, those from Scott and those from the administration, we wonder who to believe, and perhaps Scott will tell us how to assess what we are hearing on television, how do we know whether governments are telling the truth or lying to us. Your questions are the core of this program today, and I know that Scott will give you answers you haven't heard before. Every time I've heard him speak, I've learned something new. Scott is willing to challenge the status quo and willing to challenge falsehoods. During the 1991 war, he was working under Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, and he challenged claims that the U.S. was striking down scud missiles. You might think that, to be in the military, it means simply to follow orders. I hope Scott will tell you about the code of justice in the military, which requires any soldier, sailor, or airman, any person involved in transportation, health care, or other concerns, to follow a higher law of conscience and always to disobey orders that might be a part of something unworthy. I think that he'll speak to you about allegiance and allegiance to principles that we hold together rather than to commandments by authorities who wish for compliance. Today, Scott Ritter will speak here at Mohawk and then go on to a very small program at Frontier, an interview in their television studio, and then speak at Amherst Regional, and, perhaps with more questions, you will prove yourselves to be the most courageous and good-sporting people because we need that kind of emotional

involvement in affairs of government as we do in sports. Your involvement as citizens is what we're here about. We're not here to discuss political candidates. We're here to discuss truth in government and how citizens can find truth in the world. Please give a warm welcome to Scott Ritter. *applause*

Ritter: Thanks, Sunny. I want to really thank you for getting that warrior spirit up and running here. Rub it in your face, huh? Frontier, right? Yeah, we'll show you where Frontier is. *laughter* Why would I come to Mohawk? It's a good question. Why would I come here? Maybe because of you. That might be a good start. But why would I care about you? Who are you? What do you matter? Maybe you don't amount to a hill of beans. Maybe you're not worth my time, my effort. I don't know. It's up to you to prove me wrong. I'm here today not to lecture you but to initiate a discussion, a debate, a dialogue about situations that confront us in the world, situation that you might think you can tune out by turning off your tv, but you're wrong. These situations are your situations. A couple rules before we start. I'm going to challenge you. I'm going to get in your face. But, when I finish, I want you to get in my face. I want you to assume that I am here as a representative of Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden. I'm here to lie to you. I'm here to brainwash you. I'm here to convert you over to the dark side. I'm going to make you as un-American as you can possibly be. Everything I'm going to tell you is going to challenge you, but, then, what I want you to do when I'm done is don't believe a word of what I say. Put it in my face, and say, 'you said this; back it up.' Do you know why I want you to come back in my face? Because when you leave here today, that's the attitude you'd better take with you, guys. That's the attitude you'd better have. Challenge everything. Believe nothing at face value. And if you take that attitude out, this generation just might have a chance. How many people here are seniors? Juniors? Sophomores? Freshmen? Alright, now. You guys might be looking at me saying, 'what the heck does this guy know about anything.' You want to know when I graduated from high school? A long time ago 1979. Yeah, that makes me sort of long in the tooth. One thing I'll tell you about graduating from high school is that, while you're going through high school, you're oblivious to many things. You're concerned about a lot of things, like the prom and how the football team is doing. Now I understand your football team needs a little bit of work. *laughter and applause* You're worried about a number of things. The last thing you're worried about are some of these complex issues that are taking place over the border. Ladies and gentlemen, in Iraq today, we have a war. 456 Americans have died in that war. A dozen or so graduated from high school last May. Chew on that for a minute. You think you're separated from the ... issues in the world? Some of you are going to be graduating from high school this coming May and June. You may go in the military. You may get your heads shaved. You may get a nice uniform and a gun. They're going to send you overseas, and, guess what, there's a possibility you could be dead. Now we're talking about war. You're the warriors. Pretty cool term, warriors. What's it mean, war? To watch it on tv, see a movie, you see a lot of neat things. I mean, you know, I just came back from California. They got a governor who's the epitome of televised violence; the Terminator. Pretty neat stuff, these movies. You've got flashes, bangs, booms, guys walk through, they're studly, and you've got rock-and-roll music blaring in the background. That ain't what it's like, guys. The M16 A2 rifle issued by the United States government to your average soldier/sailor/airman/marine ejects a 5.56mm projectile, a full, copper, metal, jacketed projectile out of the barrel at over 2000 feet per second. It's pretty neat; you pull the trigger, *bam*, there it goes. So out it comes, and it's spinning really neat. Now you've seen that on tv. They slow the motion, pull the trigger, and there goes the bullet, spinning out, it goes to the bad guy, hits it, ..., and the bad guy falls to the ground, and it's over. The good guy wins. Except it doesn't work that way. You see that 5.56mm projectile is coming out of the barrel spinning, but it's coming out so fast that as it's spinning it starts to tumble. So when it hits the body, who knows what angle it's coming at. Maybe it hits your chest plate, comes out and eviscerates you, guts you, ejects the guts out of your stomach in a hole the size of a melon. Now isn't that cool? Maybe it goes up to your jaw and kicks your head off with your brains. Maybe it nicks you in the arm, travels up your arm, rips your heart out, comes out the side. Who knows what it's going to do, guys, but it ain't copasetic. Sometimes it kills you. Many times it doesn't. So you're lying on the ground wondering what the hell just happened to me as you're trying to stuff the guts back into your belly. Or maybe you're sitting there peeing all over yourself in fear as your friend is stuffing his guts in his belly. That's war, ladies and gentlemen. There ain't nothing glamorous about it. It's not rock-and-roll music. I've been there, strapped into a helicopter, flying over the desert at night, thinking how cool this is until the bullets start hitting the helicopter. You start seeing the holes appear in the helicopter and saying, 'hey, that was close.' Then you realize what you're flying in, a machine that requires hydraulics to keep it afloat in the air, and you're wondering, 'what the hell happens if that bullet clips the hydraulic line?' Maybe that helicopter is going to go down, and I won't even know it. Boom, I'm dead, I'm a grease stain on the desert floor. So you start to appreciate every breath you take. That was neat. Do I get one more? Is God going to give me one more? There's another one. And that's what your life becomes; one breath after another breath after another breath. Suddenly war doesn't seem so cool anymore. Then the helicopter lands, and you have to get out, but, as you're getting out, the bullets are whizzing over your head, and you're not thinking like John Wayne, follow me. You're on the ground trying to dig yourself into there, trying to eat the Earth, become one with the Earth,

but you can't. You've got to accomplish your mission. So somehow you get yourself off the ground, ignoring the streams of guys that have been hit, and you move forward, and, if you see something move in front of you and you pull the trigger, and it goes down, it's a human being, ladies and gentlemen, it's a human being. And maybe you get the privilege of sitting there all night, listening to that human being scream for his mother in the Arabic language for twelve hours as he bleeds to death. That's war, ladies and gentlemen, and that's what it's about, killing. War is about taking human life. War is about death and destruction. War is the worst thing that mankind can bring mankind. And that's what we're engaged in Iraq today: a war. You can spin the word any way you want: a good war, a bad war, it's still war, and at the end of the war, you've got to live with the harsh reality of what you as an individual who participated in it have done, not only to others but to yourself. Now I stand before you as a 12-year veteran of the United States Marine Corps who has been to war for my country. I stand before you as probably one of the more anti-war people you're going to run into. But I'm no pacifist. Somebody threatens my country, somebody threatens my community, somebody threatens you, and I will defend you with my life. I will lay my life down for you. And right now in America today, we have a million young men and women who honor us by wearing a uniform in the United States of America, and they're willing to give their lives for you. Right now, you wake up in the morning, you get dressed for school, you come to school, you study, etc., there's a green line out there, ladies and gentlemen, manned by your fellow citizens. They are protecting you from harm. They honor you with their willingness to make a sacrifice. The question I have to ask you is what are you willing to do for them? How are you willing to honor their service? When you wake up in the morning, look in the mirror, and ask yourself the following question: am I willing to die in Iraq today? If you are, great, but if you're not, then why would you sit back idly while others are dying in Iraq for you? Do you know why we're in Iraq? Do you know what this war is about? Is it about defending you? Are the men and women who wear the uniform in the United States military today in Iraq giving their lives in your defense? We've been told the answer is yes. In fact, we just had a unique little incident over the weekend that people are declaring to be a great victory. We captured Saddam Hussein. The brutal dictator of Baghdad is no longer out and about. He's in our custody. And we've been told this is a great victory. My question is did Saddam Hussein threaten? Did we go to war to capture Saddam Hussein? If we reflect on what the administration told us, we went to war because Saddam Hussein was alleged to have weapons of mass destruction: chemical weapons, biological weapons, nuclear weapons, long-range ballistic missiles. That constituted a threat to our security. We were told that Saddam Hussein had links with the forces of Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda terror network; you know, the people who did attack us on September 11, 2001, and, because he had these links, because he had these weapons of mass destruction, he could transfer those weapons to the terrorists so they could attack us again, but making the horrific events of September 11 pale in comparison, because weapons of mass destruction are serious things.

Chemical weapons, we've got a couple types. We've got blister agents. You breathe them in, and they get into your lungs, and they make blisters, and then the blisters pop, and your lungs fill up with fluid, and you get to drown to death in front of everybody, because there's not anything they can do to stop it once it happens. You're dead. You have nerve agent. A little drop gets on your skin and attacks your central nervous system. You know, we used to laugh about it in the military when we saw the films of the goats out there, and they'd hit them with nerve agent, and they go oops or twitch and we'd say, 'hey, he's doing a nice little dance,' except it's a dance of death, ladies and gentlemen. It's a dance of death that humans will be doing when they get exposed to it. That's chemical weapons. Biological weapons is like a really bad flu gone bad: high temperature, sniffles, you're dead. Nuclear weapons, city killers. These aren't things to be trifled with. And ballistic missiles, you can fill their warheads with chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, and they can deliver these weapons of death over long distances to civilian populations. These are serious weapons that the President said Iraq had. Now the question is why did we go to war? The President said they had these weapons. Here we are nine months into the occupation of Iraq, and they haven't found the weapons in Iraq. None whatsoever. They haven't found any evidence of weapons production. So I think it's only fair to ask ourselves what was the President thinking when he ordered the troops to go to war? Did the President know these weapons existed, or did the President know that he was misleading the American public? it's a fundamental issue. it's a fundamental question. Because I'll tell you what. If he knew that the weapons didn't exist and he said they did, he's a liar. And if he thought they existed but we find out now that they didn't, he's incompetent. Those are your two options. Neither one of them is good when you reflect on where we are today. I believe that the President should have known there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and I derive that point of view from seven years of on-the-ground experience in Iraq hunting for weapons of mass destruction. Never once will I say that we could account for all of the weapons in Iraq. It wasn't that easy. The Iraqis had them. They lied to us, they obstructed our work, they confronted us, they concealed, and it took a lot of effort to hunt these weapons down. But after four to five years on the ground, we were able to ascertain that 90 to 95% of the weapons produced by Iraq were accounted for. We had verified that they were either destroyed, removed, or rendered harmless in accordance with international law. I couldn't tell you

what happened to the 5-10% of them. I know the Iraqis said they destroyed them, but I couldn't prove, I couldn't confirm what the Iraqis said, but I did know this. I've sat here, and I've talked about weapons of mass destruction, chemical weapons, biological weapons, etc., and the concepts are terrifying. Let me put your minds to rest here, guys. You don't produce these things by magic. Saddam Hussein did not have a magic wand that he could wave over the Earth and make a chemical **weapon** appear. Tap a hat three times and out pops a biological bomb. Say abracadabra and there's a nuclear weapon. It doesn't work that way. weapons of mass destruction are produced from an industrial base; factories, and one thing I know is this. We monitor every single factory in Iraq that is capable of producing weapons of mass destruction with the most advanced, intrusive inspection techniques known to man: cameras located all over the place looking at what the Iraqis are doing, sensors. Has anybody here toured a chemical plant or petrochemical refinery plant? You should do it some time. It's not copasetic. You don't walk in there and have this wonderful, clean environment. The air is spewing liquid into the ground. They're drilling gas into the air, and that's the reality of it. And the thing about it is it's polluting, but, in the case of a weapons inspection, that pollution is good, and I'll tell you why. Because I can go into that factory, dig a hole in the ground, grab the soil out, and do an analysis of the soil and tell you what was produced there six months ago, a year ago, five years ago. You want to paint over the walls to hide what you were doing? No problem. I'll drill into the walls, and then do a **spectrographic** analysis of each layer and tell you what you were doing. Do you guys watch Crime Scene Investigator on tv? They got a couple variants of that show now. I hear they've got CSI Miami, CSI Las Vegas, pretty cool places to be a crime scene investigator. If they made a tv program about us inspectors, it would be CSI Baghdad. Now we wouldn't be as good-looking as these people on tv (I think I stand before you as living testimony of that), but we were ten times better than anything you saw on tv. We could determine what they were doing and when they were doing it. We could take a site apart, and we did that in Iraq. We went through the totality of Iraq's industrial infrastructure. Never once did we find any evidence of Iraq either retaining weapons of mass destruction or producing new weapons of mass destruction. I knew this. The CIA knew this because I was working closely with the CIA. British intelligence knew this. Israeli intelligence knew this. Everybody knew this. So why didn't the President know this? What did the President know that we didn't know? The President stood before the American people throughout the year of 2002 and said, 'I know Iraq has chemical weapons. I know Iraq has biological weapons.' He wasn't guessing. He wasn't speculating. He didn't say 'I think they might.' He said 'I know.' And whenever anybody had the audacity to raise their hand and say, 'thank you, Mr. President. Could you tell me how you know,' he refused to answer the question. What we got instead was, 'it's secret,' or, worse, 'Saddam Hussein is an evil man; isn't it obvious he has these weapons of mass destruction?' And guess what happened, guys. The system we call the United States of America, this wonderful, representative democracy that we live in, failed, failed totally and utterly. You know, you guys study government here, and it might be one of those boring classes you want to sleep through (you know, three branches of government, separate but equal), but, guess what, it's important. We speak of the executive. We speak of the legislative. We speak of the judicial. it's important. Do you want to know why? How many people have read the Constitution of the United States of America front and back? Hey guys, you're going to have to be better than this. You want to know why? That document defines who you are as a people, who we are as a people, who we are as a nation. it's not a joke document. It's not an inconvenient document. it's your document. It's our document. It says who we are and what we are. Read the preamble, "we, the people of the United States of America, in order to form a more perfect union." We, the people. So we speak of the government: the President, congress, the Supreme Court. Don't treat them as something out there. You're the government. We're the government. You guys might say, 'wait a minute, I'm 17, I can't vote.' You're going to vote. You're going to vote soon. You think you're 16 and you don't have to worry about it? It's coming your way, guys. The election of 2004, if you're 16 years old, is going to impact on you because when you turn 18, the President that's voted in in 2004 is going to be your President, going to be making decision in your name. What are you going to be doing to hold him/her accountable? (I don't think there are any women on the list right now, so him.) What are you going to be doing to hold him accountable? Don't sit here and tell me it's someone else's problem. You know, that was my generation's fault. We said, 'don't worry about it.' I was the generation of the 80's, the ultimate consumer generation. Man, we were rocking with video (I know dvds are in the vogue now, but we thought videos were pretty cool.) We had music, mtv, we had malls sprung up all over the country. We were outstanding consumers. We wrapped ourselves in the cocoon of comfort, and, so long as the powers that be kept us waddling towards a relative path of prosperity, we didn't want to rock the boat. I was a Republican. I am a Republican. When I went to the voting booth on election day, I just voted Republican. That was my concept of citizenship, 'I'm going to vote Republican.' Didn't even know why I was doing it; I just did it. And do you want to know what the end result is? We're at war in Iraq. Iraq is a manifestation of all the failures of American society, all the failures of American citizens. And I use that word citizen with a little bit of scorn because we don't have too many American citizens today. We have people that call themselves American citizens. You may call yourselves American citizens, but I'll tell you what. If you don't live citizenship, you're not a citizen. You're a consumer. You're one of these people just getting by. If you're waiting for somebody

else to do the job for you, to make this country good, it isn't going to happen. I hate to say it, guys, but we failed you. We've thrown this problem at you. Iraq, it ain't going away. It's going to be your nightmare for the next decade. It's your issue. And there's another one out there waiting after Iraq. It's going to be your issue. It's thrust on you. You're going to pay the price. I apologize. There's no easy solution, too. There's no way you can just snap your fingers and make it go away. There's no ruby slippers you can tap three times and say, 'I wish I was home, there's no place like home.' You are home. You're in America. This is your country, and you're saddled with all the problems. My generation failed you. You've got to look in the mirror and say, 'are you going to fail the generation after you?' Because if you don't wake up and understand that you are where the solution lies, then the problem will never be solved. We, the people of the United States of America. You are the government. What are you doing to hold your elected representatives accountable? Wait a minute, Mr. Ritter, you say, we can't vote. Well, you will be able to vote. Your generation has a lot of potential. There are a lot of things you can do today. (a) read the constitution. You have to understand the foundation of the society you live in. Don't tell me you're good Americans if you don't know what the rules are that govern you. You don't know what your basic rights are. if you don't know what your rights are, then how can you defend your rights? How can you possibly sit there and say, 'hey, Mr. President, you're not allowed to do that,' if you don't know what he is or isn't allowed to do? How do you know what congress's responsibilities are. You think it's cool that congress, in October of last year, voted to transfer war powers authority to the President of the United States before he **publically** announced his willingness to go to war? Don't you understand that is a gross abrogation of Constitutional responsibilities? The Constitution of the United States of America says that congress alone has the right and the power to declare war. You want to know why they gave it to congress? Because congress is the one branch of government that's most immediately affected by the people. You have the ability to impact on congress more than any other branch, so, when congress disrespects you by transferring war powers authority, what are you going to do about it? Are you going to hold your congressman accountable? Have you guys made an effort to call your congressman here before you today and say, 'how did you vote in the war, Mr. congressman? What was your vote, yes or no?' Regardless of your answer, then why did you vote that way? The fact is you can't hold people accountable if you don't know what you're holding them accountable for. Guys, this is your generation. This is your life. What are you going to do with it? What are you going to do with it? Read the Constitution. Don't be confused by people that say, 'if you simply go on the street corner and wave the American flag, you're a good patriot.' I can train a monkey to wave the American flag. That does not make the monkey patriotic. I cannot train a monkey to read and live the Constitution of the United States of America. That's what makes a citizen. Citizenship isn't easy. it's hard. It's a struggle. It's a constant struggle. It's going to be a day-to-day struggle for you, and, at the end of the day, you may not have the immediate rewards that you think would be your just desserts from such a struggle. We have screwed things up so badly in this country that you may not see in a year or two years, five years, ten years, the benefit of your hard work, but I'll tell you this. The generation that follows you will forever thank you, will forever thank you if you pick up the challenge of citizenship, and they will forever condemn you as, I guarantee you this, you will condemn my generation for the failures of citizenship. You think it's easy now. You're in high school, then you're going to go to college, and then guess what? You're in the real world, and you're going have all these problems in front of you. You're going to spit with the name of my generation. You're going to say, 'what the hell were you guys thinking? What were you doing?' And that's a fair question, and I guarantee you this, though. The generation that follows you is going to say the same thing about you if you don't pick up the challenge and be good citizens. This is not a **peptalk**. I'm not here to tell you that everything's going to be wonderful. it's not. We live in a dangerous world. We're beset with a lot of problems. But you can't speak of solving a problem unless you have a solid foundation upon which you're going to build something new. Let's take Iraq, for instance. We think we're going to build democracy in Iraq. We think we're going to build a new society in Iraq. The foundation upon which we operate in Iraq is fundamentally flawed. We went to war on a lie. So we already have a weak foundation here at home. That lie is going to be exposed more and more as time goes on. The President of the United States just told ABC news about weapons of mass destruction, he says it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter. I can't think of a better way to disrespect the American people than to have the President, who told us that it's all about weapons of mass destruction, say now that we aren't finding any weapons of mass destruction, it doesn't matter. What he's saying is you don't matter. And if you don't think for a second the people of Iraq don't know what's going on, understand this. Economic sanctions that were imposed on Iraq because Saddam allegedly had weapons of mass destruction killed 1.5 million people. 1.5 million people. Now the people of Iraq were told that they're paying that price because Saddam wouldn't disarm. What do you think they're feeling today when they wake up and they realize that Saddam did disarm, that the weapons weren't there, that they had done what they were told to do and yet the United States not only invaded and is occupying their country, but 1.5 million people had to die. You think they're learning to love us? You know, when you look at the American soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines who die in Iraq, it's a national tragedy, each one of those deaths. You go to a newspaper with their face on the front cover. We get reporters coming out and filming the family and the grieving relatives, and we get

to see all about this individual's life: baby pictures, first walking, graduated from high school, that wonderful military picture with the flag behind, and now they're dead, and people speak of the sense of loss and the fact that that person won't have a life anymore. There won't be grandchildren, etc. What about the Iraqis that died? Has anybody grieved for them? Do you think that maybe somewhere in Iraq there's a mother that feels the loss of her child every bit as much as an American mother does? Have we become so wrapped up with being Americans that we forgot to be human beings? And I tell you that we're not going to solve problems until we bring it down to its basic level, we start treating people the same everywhere, in Iraq, your next-door neighbor, in Mexico, in China, you name it. If we don't take it down to the basic human value of how one person is supposed to treat another person, we're going to have a spoiled foundation and we're not going to be able to build anything solid on it. It's up to you guys to build the future of the United States. Before you start constructing it, though, you'd better reflect upon the foundation on which you're working. That foundation is the rule of law, the values and ideals that are set forth by the Constitution of the United States of America. If I could give you one assignment and only one assignment, it would be to leave here and read the Constitution and then sit down with your friends and compatriots and discuss the Constitution. What does it mean to you? What does it mean to your community? What does it mean to your nation? That would be the first step in what I think is going to be a long and difficult struggle ahead. As I promised, I will hold myself accountable for what I have said, and I would be willing to take any questions from anybody in the audience. Thank you. *applause*

I said the President is either lying or incompetent. How come nobody is taking any actions to impeach him? It's a good question. If you think about it, first of all, you can't impeach somebody for being incompetent. I mean, that's something you resolve at the election booth. You say, 'you're a bad President, and we're going to pull you out.' Lying, however, is a different issue altogether. A government official who lies in the conduct of his/her official duties has committed a felony. A felony is a high crime, and the Constitution of the United States is quite clear on what we do with government officials who commit high crimes and misdemeanors. We impeach them. You can't determine whether the President lied or the President is simply incompetent until you have a full investigation of the issue. Right now, we have a Senate Select Intelligence Committee that's supposed to be carrying out this investigation, and I've been trying to find out how this investigation is going on. Now these guys represent us, we, the people. They are the ones the Constitution says has oversight over the executive, to find out if the President is doing a good job or not. And, yet, the Senate Select Intelligence Committee is split decisively along party lines. You have Republicans and you have Democrats who don't care about the concept of we, the people and serving the people. The Republicans want to protect the President, and the Democrats want to go after the President. And the end result is nothing's getting done at all. And, to make matters worse, they've all come to an agreement that they can't do a final analysis of the problem until the final report is submitted by the weapons inspectors in Iraq. But what just happened yesterday? David Kay, the leader of the Iraq survey group, the CIA official running the investigation, is quitting. The investigation is being closed down. Now we're told there will still be a search, but the bottom line is there's not going to be a final report, which means the Senate Select Intelligence Committee is never going to issue a final judgment, which means we're never going to know if the President lied or if he was incompetent. It's just going to be left hanging there. The President, when asked by Diane Sawyer about weapons of mass destruction, said it doesn't matter, it just doesn't matter. He's changed the entire ball game. It used to be about getting weapons of mass destruction. Now we're turning it into getting Saddam Hussein. There's a classic bate and switch. So, again, I throw the problem at you. What are you going to do about it? How are you going to begin to address this problem? If you wait for my generation to solve it for you, guess what, you're going to be waiting forever. You're going to be blue in the face. We failed you. What are you doing? What are you guys doing? Who's your congressman or woman? Have you brought him/her up here and said 'how did you vote in the war?' And if they don't answer your question, then you have to go to every newspaper and media outlet and say, 'our representative refuses to answer a basic question, how she voted and why she voted, how he voted and why he voted.' How did they vote for the \$87 billion that have been put out there to continue to fund the war? I mean, if you voted for the war because the President said there were weapons of mass destruction and now we're finding out there aren't any weapons of mass destruction, how can you vote to continue the war going then? Why are you voting this way? And if they don't answer your question, what do you do? Do you accept that or do you hold them accountable? How do you hold them accountable? I don't know, maybe go to where the public records are and find out who funded that representative's election. You know, those businessmen that write the big checks, and they get all the favors and the kickbacks afterwards, find out who funded that election and go to that businessman with the letter you've prepared for your representative saying, 'I want you to answer this basic question,' and say, 'I want you to sign a petition demanding that the representative that you funded answer this question,' and if they don't sign the petition, hey, guess what, guys. You may not be able to vote, but you sure can buy something, so why don't you make picket signs and stand outside that business where everybody walks by and say, 'this man's not American. This man doesn't support democracy. This man funded a representative who won't answer our basic question, so we're boycotting his business, and we'd like you

to join in our boycott. Guess what that businessman or woman is going to be doing in the next day or two: signing your petition. And if you get enough of them to sign your petition, then that congressman or woman is going to have to answer your question. That's the basic element of accountability. And once you start that process of accountability at the lowest level, you can take it to the highest level, including holding the President accountable for what he has done in your name.

Is there an organization that I would recommend you join in the next two or so years, either in this country or outside, that would help solve this problem? So you want me to basically point you to people of my generation so they can solve the problem for you. The answer is no. You form the youth group. It's going to come back to you. If you're looking for someone out there who is already organized and already prepared to solve these problems, you're probably going to be looking long and hard. There's probably groups out there that you can join. But the thing is you've got to go in there knowing what you want to get out of that group, what you want to achieve. You don't join them to have them tell you what you're going to do. You go in there and say, 'this is what I want to accomplish.' The key to that, before you even initiate that, is to educate yourself, to empower yourself with knowledge and information so that you're aware of (a) this country you live in, and (b) your responsibilities as a citizen in this country, and, once you have that foundation, you can move forward, and you'll find if you enter an organization, you join a group of people, and you're empowered that way, you're going to get a lot more accomplished, but the thing is there's a lot of people. The Traprock Peace Center right here in Massachusetts is a resource that can be tapped into. The American Civil Liberties Union is an organization dedicated to protecting the bill of rights. That's an organization you can join. Young Republicans. Don't be dismissive of them. I'm a Republican. Join the Young Republicans. But don't let them dictate to you. You dictate to them. If you're someone who believes in basic conservative values like myself, there's nothing wrong with joining the Young Republicans as long as you hold them accountable for the rule of law, for the constitution, as long as you say, 'this is what the United States is about in my opinion, and this is what I'm willing to fight for.' There are organizations out there, but don't let them shape your mind. You have to shape them. And that's the thing. There's a lot of people right now saying, 'who can I join to carry this struggle?' And my answer is not too many people, because they fail, because whatever struggle they were waging didn't succeed. It's going to fall on your shoulders. That may not be the answer you want to hear, but that's the reality of it. It's your problem; you're going to have to solve it. You may go out and find resources to help you, but, at the end of the day, you're the one who's going to have to organize. You're the one that's going to have to decide how you're going to allocate your resources. Don't mean to disappoint you on that one.

What is this war about? You hear a lot of talk about oil. You hear a lot of talk about Israel. I asked if anybody here read the Constitution of the United States of America. I'll throw another one out there. Have any of you read the national security strategy of the United States of America. Go online. Go onto **google** and type "national security strategy document" or "national security strategy of the United States." It was published in September, 2002, last year on the first anniversary of September 11. It defines how the United States interacts with the world. It's an amazing document because it says the United States will exploit its economic and military power to impose its unilateral will on regions of the world that we define to be in our national interest, that we're above the law when it comes to the international community, that we alone make the decisions. It's about American imperialism. It's about imposing American hegemony. Why did we go to war with Iraq? Because Iraq is the first step in the process of transforming of the Middle East. You may be against Saddam, but, guess what, we're against the region. You know what Paul Wolfowitz and Donald Rumsfeld have told the United States congress when talking about Iraq? They speak of regional transformation. They say that the United States is going to liberate the people of the middle east from the chains of centuries old feudalistic and theocratic prison. What that means, when I say feudalistic, that's a euphemism for tribalism. It's saying that we don't respect your generations, your tribes. We don't respect the fact that you guys feel alliance to a certain group of people. We don't respect your culture. Religion? Theocracy. We say we don't respect **islam**. You see, we're going to liberate you from Islam. We're going to liberate you from the religion of Islam. And look what we've done in Iraq. We are now writing the fundamental law on which a feudal constitution will be based. Iraq is a predominantly Muslim country, and yet we're saying 'you can't choose Islam as the national religion.' This is America imposing itself on the region. That's why we went to war in Iraq. It's not only about oil. It's not just about Israel. It's about everything. It's about America imposing its will. And if you think that's what we're here to do, think again. If you want to know why people around the world would hate us, it's because of policies like that. How would you like someone to come in to this area of Massachusetts and dictate to you how you're going to live your life? And if you don't like it, guess what, they're going to kick your door down in the middle of the night, take your dad out, *bam* hit him with a rifle bud, put him on the ground, put a hood over his head, handcuff him, you scream they're going to point a weapon at you. Your brother screams they're going to hit him in the gut with a rifle but. We do that to a

thousand Iraqis a day. A thousand doors are kicked down. A thousand men are taken into custody. Within a week, over 950 of those men are released back to their families, but we've already humiliated them. We've already embarrassed them. We've already terrorized their wives. We've terrorized their children. You think we made pro-American converts there, or do you think we taught a generation how to hate us? You know, President Bush said that we're going to go into Iraq and we're going to create something that is the envy of the Arab world. We're going to impose western-style liberal democracy. What a joke. The only thing he succeeded in doing is making Iraq the envy of the Arab world, and I'll tell you why. Because in Iraq today, you can kill Americans. They're all over the place, 130,000 of them, and you can kill them. And that surely has become the envy of many in the Muslim world. People are flocking to Iraq right now to kill Americans. It's a great thing to go and kill an American. That's a horrible situation, ladies and gentlemen. There was no anti-American terror existing in Iraq prior to our invasion, and yet we had a self-fulfilling prophesy. By saying that there was Al Qaeda and anti-American terrorism, our invasion has created a situation in which there now is Al Qaeda and anti-American terrorism. Now this brings up the question, what do we do? Saddam's a bad guy. We've signed human rights charters and things of this nature, and here is Saddam violating this, prosecuting his own people, slaughtering them. Is it alright to go in and intervene militarily? I'd like to tell you from a selfish perspective of a marine who's put on a uniform and fought in a war for my country, I fought in the first Gulf War, so it's not like I'm opposed to holding Saddam Hussein accountable for invading another country, but to go into Iraq and dictate to them how they govern themselves, it's a tough problem because what about Rwanda? What happens when the Hutu and the **Tutsi** start killing each other? Do we go there? What about **Chechnya**? Do we go into Chechnya and hold the Russians accountable for the crimes they're committing against the Chechnians, which, in many cases, made what Saddam Hussein did pale in comparison? Do we go into North Korea? Do we go into Sudan? I'd like to tell you, as a marine whose life would be on the line, hell no. I don't die for the people of Iraq. I don't die for the people of Chechnya. I die for you. I put my life on the line for you, and if the situation in Chechnya threatens you, then I'll go and defend, but not until that point in time. We're not the policeman of the world. It's not our job to go around and solve the world's problems, because, you know what? We can't solve the world's problems. That would be like expecting somebody here at Mohawk Trail Regional High School to give up and go to a situation in Billings, Montana, that you don't understand anything about, and say 'you're going to solve their problems.' You can't. You can't. You're not from that area. Now you can talk to people. You can cooperate with people. There's things you can do to put pressure on them, but going to war is not one of them. War doesn't solve anything. War only destroys.

What ever happened to Osama bin Laden, the guy who actually attacked America? It's a good question. We haven't caught him. That's a tough thing to do. I used to be involved with special operations forces, and they could do any number of things in the anti-terrorism world. We can travel around the world. We can close with and destroy the enemy at any given point. We can repel out a helicopter, kick down a door, *bam bam bam* hit him three times center of mass with a pistol and kill him. You think that's the solution? Ask any counter-terrorist. Ask anyone who's involved in that. Is that the solution? The answer is no. How do you win the war on terror? You stop terrorists from being made. And how do you stop terrorists from being made? Understand that which makes them become terrorists. And then you put in place policies that prevent them from becoming terrorists. But at the end of September 11, we never even asked that question, why did they attack us? See, we can't speak to defeating Osama bin Laden or bringing Osama bin Laden to account until we understand what motivates him, why he and his followers do that which they do. All we did is go to Afghanistan and go to war. You know how many Afghans we killed in that little peaceful fight? 75,000. 75,000. There's mass graves in Afghanistan today that are filled with the bodies of Afghans that we killed. Did we solve the problem? 70% of the Afghan countryside is under control of the Taliban today. Did we win that war? Al Qaeda is still there. American troops are still being killed. American troops are still engaging, and Al Qaeda hasn't gone away. Al Qaeda is blowing up bombs here, there, and everywhere. That's the problem. Did we win the war on terror? Is it a war we can win? I'll tell you what. We can't win the war on terror until we realize that the only way we can win this war is to prevent people from becoming terrorists. If we think that the only tool available to win the war is that of the military, going out and killing the terrorists, understand this. They will grow more terrorists than we can ever kill. It's a cycle that we will never emerge victorious from. The only way to win it is to have people stop becoming terrorists, and the only way you're going to get someone to stop becoming terrorists is to find out that which motivates them to become a terrorist to begin with. We haven't even started that process of self-retrospection, so what happened to Osama bin Laden? He's still there. And even if by some stroke of luck we got him today, it doesn't matter. Osama bin Laden is just a person, but we've turned him into a cult figure. We've turned him into an ideology. So even if we kill Osama bin Laden, his presence will be felt by those who feel that the United States is at wrong in what we're doing in the world today.

How come they were so happy when they got rid of Saddam? Look, Saddam was a brutal dictator. Saddam was a brutal dictator, and there's many people that he tortured. There's many people that he killed. There's many tribes that he alienated. So when he was eliminated, many people celebrated. But I'll tell you what. Go back and read the tapes and take a look at the crowds. First of all, identify who's celebrating. The biggest celebrations took outside of the Iraqi Communist Party headquarters, people who were brutally oppressed by Saddam Hussein. The second biggest ones took outside of the Shi'a political party headquarters. There weren't massive demonstrations in the street celebrating the demise of Saddam Hussein. There were massive celebrations in the streets celebrating Saddam Hussein the day after he was captured. More people got in the streets at tekrit feluja romadi (ph) and Baghdad promoting Saddam Hussein than those who opposed him. Be careful what you see on tv. It's a very conflicted situation right now in Iraq. And then take a look at how we paraded Saddam Hussein in front of the cameras. First of all, if you're an American, you have to be disgusted at what you saw because it's a violation of the Geneva Conventions. That's not how we treat prisoners. We would object if an American prisoner of war was paraded before. If an American pilot was shot down and suddenly find him having somebody go through his hair for lice, open his mouth, shove something in his mouth, we would complain that that's a violation of the Geneva Convention, and, guess what, we'd be right, so if we believe in the rule of law, the rule of law has to be applied uniformly, and we can't support something like that. Again, that doesn't mean pro-Saddam. This is being pro-America. This is being pro the values and ideals we stand for as a people. I'm not shedding any tears for the demise of Saddam Hussein. No one is shedding. He was a brutal dictator. But if you think that it's good that he's gone, then what you're endorsing is the concept of the ends justify the means. You're saying that, because Saddam Hussein's evil, we can do anything necessary to get rid of him, and if that's what you believe in, you're not a very good American, because the Constitution of the United States is the antithesis of the ends justify the means. The means are the ends. Due process. The rule of law. If we're going to go after Saddam, then we should declare that up front. He has violated certain laws. We should go to the international community and get **consensus** to take him on instead of lying to the American people about weapons of mass destruction and then going into Iraq forgetting that. Saddam Hussein, brutal dictator. Was he worth the life of one American, let alone 456? And it's not just the dead Americans we have to think about. What about the wounded Americans? What about the boys right now that don't have any hands, don't have any eyes, that are paralyzed for the rest of their life. They have to spend the rest of their life living with this for what. Because we got Saddam Hussein? No. I don't think that you're going to see that there's a tremendous amount of support. Now we talk about holding him accountable. President Bush saying 'I want to execute him.' Really. What trial, what court is going to execute this guy. Who's going to pass judgment. If we have faith in law, if we truly believe that this guy has committed all the crimes that we say he's committed, then why not take him to the Hague like we took Slobodan Milosevic, the Yugoslavian dictator, and deconstruct the mythology of Saddam Hussein in front of the international community, expose him for the criminal he is. Instead, we're going to put him before a kangaroo court in Iraq that lacks any legitimacy where he's going to be tried by people with their own individual political motivations. And you know what's going to happen with Saddam/ He's going to become a martyr figure. He's going to become somebody around which the resistance rallies. And that brutal dictator doesn't deserve that status. He deserves to be known as a criminal. He deserves to be known as a rapist. He deserves to be known as a man deserving of zero respect. But if we don't give him due process, he'll become a martyr, and that symbol of defiance will be that which motivates people to kill even more Americans.

If I believe that the President is a liar or incompetent, who am I going to vote for? You know what? I'm not happy with any of the Democratic candidates right now, and one of them has got to emerge and earn my vote. I'm not giving my vote away to anybody. That's a decision I'm going to make in November, 2004 to the best-qualified opponent of George W. Bush. For right now, they need to work a little bit harder to convince me that they're worthy of my vote.

Again, I have my own personal opinion. Do I think the President of the United States deserves respect and support even though I think he's making mistakes? First of all, as I said, don't sit here and nod when I say the President's a liar or incompetent. You're allowed to disagree. You're allowed to formulate your own opinion. The office of the Presidency deserves the support and respect of the American people. It's our executive. He is our commander in chief. The question is is the individual filling that office doing a good job. And on the issue of Iraq, I have my own particular point of view. I think the President has done a horrific job. I think this was a war that didn't need to be fought. I think this was a war that was fought for all the wrong reasons. And I think this is a war that cannot be won. I believe we will not win the war in Iraq. I believe that we are doomed to be defeated in Iraq. I mean, what is our goal in Iraq? To impose democracy? We're already walking away from that. What's our goal? To bring stability? It's chaos and anarchy. Iraq is right now fractured into three separate, autonomous regions: a Sunni region, a Shi'a region, and a Kurdish region. Is that stability? You know, my whole objective right now in Iraq is to build the smallest possible war memorial, the one with the fewest amount of names. I think we already have two many names on the Iraq war

memorial. In 1967, people realized that Vietnam was a lost cause, and, yet, we didn't stop fighting that war until 1972. Imagine if we had taken action in 1971 or 70 or 69 or 68 how small the Vietnam war memorial would be today. How big is our Iraq war memorial going to be? And the bigger it is, the more I blame President Bush. This is a war that didn't need to be fought. We elected to go to war. The war wasn't brought to us. We went to it. And so I want to hold the President accountable. If the President has performed poorly, then he should be subjected to criticism. He is not above the law. The President works for us. Never forget that. We don't work for the President. The President works for us. We're his employer. Therefore, we have every right to hold him accountable for what he does in our name. That doesn't mean that we **demigrate** the office of the Presidency, but it also doesn't mean that the person that occupies that office is above our criticism.

Okay, so I spoke a lot about nationalism and pride in being American, but, if we are to take that route, doesn't that also sort of separate us from the rest of the pack? I'm segregating Americans and everybody else. Yes and no. Take a lesson from history here. George Washington at the end of the Revolutionary War was confronted by the continental army and given the opportunity to be the king of the United States of America. They said, 'you liberated us from the British, and now we want you to be king George.' The other King George III in England heard about this and said, "if Washington turns this down, then he's the greatest man in the history of the world." And guess what Washington did. He turned it down. But, in so turning it down, did he walk away from his responsibilities? No. He served two consecutive terms of President of the United States, leading the American people through the formative years. Now we take a look at the situation in the world today where the United States of America has the ability to assume absolute control. And the question is, are we going to, like Napoleon, crown ourselves or are we going to take this crown of power and give it to the world? And in giving it to the world, are we walking away from our responsibilities? No. If we give power to the world, transfer power to the world, share power, respect everybody's individuality, respect nations' right to self-determination, but then we lead by example, etc., we'll be doing the world a great favor. There's no shame in being an American. I'll tell you right now, compare and contrast our Constitution with any other document out there, and ours wins hands down. We as a people have the most promise as a collective than any other group of people out there. We're not living up to our promise, but, if we do, we could be a heck of an example for people to follow. That doesn't mean that we impose our will. It means that we lead by example, that we cooperate with people and respect people and, through that cooperation, we solve problems together. That's what I mean by being a good American, because being a good American isn't about going out and bullying the person next door. Being a good American is going out and shoveling the person next door's driveway when they need it shoveled, help carrying groceries out of their car, being a good neighbor, leading by example, and I wish we would do more of that rather than saying, 'because we have all the strength, we can impose our will on people any time, any place.'

Do I think in Iraq they put as much? They probably do. Here's my point. We are in Iraq imposing our will on Iraq, and we're taking Iraqi lives. In the United States, we're appalled by 456 dead Americans (I think now we're at 457; I think one more died yesterday.) And we should be appalled by that figure. Are we equally appalled by the number of 10,000 or 30,000 Iraqis? Is it something that we reflect on, or have we become so engrossed in the concept of the value of American life that we give no value to Iraqi life? Is it okay that our troops shoot up a car coming to a checkpoint, annihilating the lives of six Iraqis? Do we feel their pain? Because, until we feel their pain, war is going to be a relatively easy thing for this country to digest because, no matter how bad war is for the Americans participating, we have a military today that can inflict so much more damage on them than they can ever inflict on us, so if we bring this down to just a basic body count, oh, we only lost 457, we killed 30000! If we take it to that level, then we're always going to be fighting a war. ... We need to reflect on the fact that, when we send our men and women over to a country abroad to engage in military action, they are taking human life, and we should value that human life, and we should never treat that human life cheaply. We should give an Iraqi life every bit as much value as we give an American life, or else we're guilty of that kind of gross nationalism that this gentlemen raised.

First of all, I never said that we should be an isolationist nation. I actually said that we should be a proactive nation, but we shouldn't choose war as the vehicle upon which to govern our interaction between nations. You know, we're a member of the United Nations, an organization that came out of the aftermath of World War II, Pearl Harbor, Adolph Hitler. How do I feel about Pearl Harbor? We were attacked. We held the Japanese accountable, and they paid the price. We paid the price. How do I feel about Adolph Hitler? He was a power out of control, a man who believed in genocidal policies, and he was held accountable. And I think the United States performed greatly in that war. But it was also a war that took the lives of tens of millions of people, and the international community was resolved never again will we allow the situation to devolve to the point where we have to engage in another global conflict, and we created the United Nations. We, the United States of America, lead the way. We drafted the document. We signed the

document, and the whole concept of that document is to forswear war as a means of resolving disputes between nations. That's the direction I want to go in. That's where I want American leadership focused on. And, yet, we invaded Iraq in gross violation of the United Nations charter, of the same international laws and principles that we said we want to hold others accountable to. I don't want us to be isolationists. As I said, taking that crown off the head and transferring to the world is not walking away from our obligation as one of the most powerful nations on this planet to lead by example, and that's what I want us to do, lead by example, but an example that promotes peace and justice, not death and destruction.

What about Iraq? I said there is a problem in Iraq and hold our elected representatives accountable, but, ... look, Iraq is a problem that cannot be won. There is not going to be a ready solution. They're not going to wave your magic wand, snap your finger, and make everything okay. I fought against this war because I knew once we got involved in it, we were going to be in a quagmire. There is a fire burning in Iraq. Use that analogy. Iraq is on fire. The fuel that feeds that fire is the presence of American troops. So, to talk about putting that fire out, you've got to get the Americans out. Plain and simple. We're not going to impose a democracy worthy of the name in Iraq. Our best hope for the Iraqi people is to impose some sort of economic and political stability, and that can only be done with the cooperation of the rest of the world, so America has got to walk away and bring in the United Nations, but we're members of the United Nations. So when I say bring in the UN, that doesn't mean that we're not involved. In fact, we're the most powerful member of the United Nations. We're the one with the most resources. So when I say bring in the United Nations, what I'm saying is bring in the United States with the rest of the world, and what you do then is try and put that fire out, and then, as quickly as possible, we transfer political, economic, and military control back to the people of Iraq. And then you work with them to solve their problems. It's not going to be easy. It's not going to be perfect. In fact, it's going to be very ugly. But, again, my goals and objectives are quite selfish on this: to get American boys and girls home so they don't have to carve their names into a war memorial and to stop squandering billions of tax-payer dollars in a war that can't be won, and we so desperately need that money to be spent on education, health care, and other infrastructure development here at home.

What actions do I believe Bush should have taken after September 11? Look. The key thing after September 11 is we had the sympathy of the entire world. The world knew that we had been attacked and something wrong had occurred. And, again, to reflect on the Constitution (I always like to bring up the Constitution because it's so important), we're a nation of laws, so the way I would have dealt with September 11 was that a massive crime had been committed against humanity, against the United States, and that the world needs to come together and deal with it as a crime, to hold the criminals accountable for what they had done. But, instead, we declared war against terror. What does that mean, war on terror? Are we declaring war against all terrorists or only the ones that we feel? See, it became very much an American conflict, an Americanized conflict instead of a global conflict, and we lost the support of the world. And that's why Afghanistan is unresolved. That's why Al Qaeda is unresolved. Al Qaeda is becoming stronger. And then we make matters worse by going into Iraq. One of the problems with September 11 is that the people who advise the President didn't just treat September 11 as an attack against the United States. **Condoleezza** Rice, the national security advisor, said it's a great opportunity. No, it's a great tragedy, Miss Rice, not an opportunity, but she viewed it as an opportunity to implement foreign policy objectives that were spelled out in the national security strategy document like going into Iraq. Why is it on September 12, Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz, the Secretary of Defense and his depute, are briefing the President on going into Iraq when they are still pulling bodies out of the twin towers out of New York City and out of the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The President had his priorities all screwed up, and I think that that is reflected in how he proceeded, and the American people had their priorities all screwed up because we got caught up in cheering this war without reflecting what it is we were fighting. We got intimidated by fear. Why are we fearful? Because we're ignorant. Why are we ignorant? Because we don't understand the world that's out there. We don't understand the Middle East. We don't understand Europe. We don't even know our own Constitution, let alone the charter of the United Nations of which we're a signatory. Do you know to violate the charter is not only a violation of international law but a violation of the Constitution of the United States, Article VI of the Constitution? This is why I want you to read that document. It says that, when we enter an international agreement or treaty that's been ratified by 2/3 of the United States Senate, that is the law of the land. So we have signed the United Nations charter. That is the framework of laws which govern the interactions between nations. It's binding on the United States. And, yet, we violated it by going into Iraq without the mandate of the United Nations. So, when the President says I'm willing to go into Iraq in violation of international law, do you know what he's saying? I'm willing to violate the Constitution. That's why I believe we should hold the President accountable. I believe the President blew a golden opportunity after September 11 to turn tragedy into triumph, to get the international community to rally around the United States and the ideals and values that we espouse, the rule of law. Instead, what we now have is a President who

is exercising some form of frontier justice where we can go out and string anybody up by the neck until dead even if we haven't proven that they've done anything wrong. It's like breaking into a jail house, taking a cattle rustler that we have accused of stealing cows, hanging him, and then, while his feet are twitching, looking around for the cows that he stole and finding out he didn't steal any, but saying 'that's okay, because he was a drunkard and a bad guy to begin with.' That's not the rule of law. That's vigilante justice. That's something we as a people walked away from over a hundred years ago. Why are we allowing the President to carry out that kind of mentality today? It's beyond me.

If I don't believe it's about weapons of mass destruction, what do I believe it was about? Implementation of a national security strategy. About using our intervention into Iraq as the basis of creating regional transformation in the Middle East. I think that we have declared war against Islam, at least Islam that doesn't reflect our values, our ideals. We don't understand Islam. The President has taken this evangelical, born-again-Christian outlook and is seeking to convert the Middle East by the sword. This is a very scary thing. This is a man (and, against, I say this as a Christian, I'm not some Atheist who's running around) this is a man who says that God told him to go to war in Iraq. Well, you know, if God told him to go to war in Iraq, then what the heck use is democracy, because who am I to debate God? If God told the President to go to war in Iraq, and I am against the war, am I against God? That's not the way a democracy works. Iraq is a very confused situation. The reasons the President went into Iraq can only be addressed by the President. But I think you'll find, when you start to pursue that, you'll realize that his reasons are so against the fundamental values of what we allege to stand for as a people that we, the people of the United States of America, could never support this war in Iraq unless, of course, it was about weapons of mass destruction and a threat, a potential threat to our national security.

Why hasn't the President been to any funerals? That's a question to ask the President. What do I think about it? I think this President doesn't understand the military because this President avoided military service. Yes, he went and joined the National Guard, but then he walked away from his duties and responsibilities at the National Guard. This is a man who is surrounded by people, with few exceptions, who haven't served in the military and, yet, they view the military as an extension of their own political power. I think dead Americans are inconvenient to the President. I think wounded Americans are only convenient to the President when they can be used as a photo opportunity. I think this President doesn't understand the sacrifices that he's asking thousands of Americans to make based upon his decisions, and I'm not saying that military service is a litmus test for the Presidency, you don't have to have served in the military, but, for goodness sake, you'd better respect those that do, and I don't think this President, in making a decision to go to war based on distortion of information, fabrication of data, etc., I don't think for a moment he respects the sacrifice of those Americans that actually have to wage that war. I think we've pretty much run out of time. That bell is going to ring any second. Thank you very much. *applause*