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GEORGE W. BUSH



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Fact Sheet: Promoting Democracy to Help Make America Safer

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President Bush Draws On The Lessons From The Far East To Explain Why We Must Keep Our Commitment To Democracy In The Middle East

Today, President Bush Will Address The Veterans Of Foreign Wars National Convention In Kansas City And Further Illustrate Why Helping Democracies Of The Middle East Stand Up To Violent Islamic Extremists Is The Reasonable Path Toward A Safer World For The American People. Using the example of Asia's development, he will show that there is long precedent for the work we are doing in the Middle East that will make America safer – and good reason for confidence in our success.

- **Discussions Of The Difficult Work Our Generation Is Undertaking In The Middle East Today Echo Arguments Made About The Far East Years Ago.** There are many differences between the wars America fought in the Far East and the war on terror we are fighting today. But one important similarity is that at their core, they are all ideological struggles. We are still in the early hours of the current ideological struggle, but we know how the others ended – and that knowledge helps guide our efforts today.
- **Today, The Violent Islamic Extremists Who Fight Us In Iraq Are As Certain Of Their Cause As The Nazis, Imperial Japanese, And Soviet Communists Were Of Theirs – And They Are Destined For The Same Fate.** So long as we remain true to our ideals, we will defeat the extremists in Iraq and help that country's people stand up a functioning democracy in the heart of the Middle East, which will make America safer and more secure.

While There Were Many Doubters Along The Way, The Fruit Of American Sacrifice And Perseverance In Asia Is A Freer, More Prosperous, And Stable Continent.

In The Aftermath Of Japan's Surrender In World War II, Many Thought It Naïve To Help The Japanese Transform Themselves Into A Democracy, But Today A Democratic Japan Has Brought Peace And Prosperity To Its People. Then as now, the critics argued that some people were simply not ready for democracy. With every reform in Japan, experts stepped forward to assert

that a democratic Japan was a hopeless dream. For example, a former U.S. ambassador to Japan who served as Truman's undersecretary of state told the President flatly that "democracy in Japan would never work."

- **Japan Has Transformed From America's Enemy In The Ideological Struggle Of The 20th Century To One Of America's Strongest Allies In The Ideological Struggle Of The 21st Century.** Japan's foreign trade and investment have helped jump-start the economies of others in the region. The Alliance between our two nations is the lynchpin of freedom and stability throughout the Pacific, which has added immeasurably to American security.

Critics Of The Korean War Argued That America Should Not Intervene To Save South Korea From Communist Invasion, But Today South Korea Is A Strong, Democratic Ally Of The United States. Then as now, critics argued that the war was futile, that we never should have sent our troops in, or that America's intervention was divisive here at home. For example, a *Washington Post* reporter wrote that "Korea is an open wound. It is bleeding and there is no cure for it in sight." Many of these criticisms were offered as reasons for abandoning our commitments in Korea.

- **Without America's Intervention During The War – And Our Willingness To Stick With The South Koreans After The War – Millions Of South Koreans Would Now Be Living Under A Brutal And Repressive Regime.** The Soviets and Chinese Communists would have learned the lesson that aggression pays. And the world would now be facing a larger, stronger, and more implacable threat.

Critics Of The Vietnam War Argued The Real Problem Was America's Presence And That If We Would Just Withdraw, The Killing Would End. For example, a *New York Times* columnist wrote that "it is difficult to imagine how [the Vietnamese people's] lives could be anything but better with the Americans gone."

- **Three Decades Later, There Is A Legitimate Debate About How We Got Into The Vietnam War And How We Left, But One Unmistakable Legacy Of Vietnam Is That The Price Of America's Withdrawal Was Paid By Innocent Men, Women, And Children Throughout South East Asia.**
- **Some Argue That Our Withdrawal From Vietnam Carried No Price To American Credibility – But The Terrorists See Things Differently.** In an interview with a Pakistani paper after the 9/11 attacks, Bin Laden declared that "the American people had risen against their government's war in Vietnam. They must do the same today."

Helping Iraq Stand Up A Functioning Democracy Is Critical To The Safety Of The American People

Like Past Enemies, The Terrorists Who Wage War In Iraq, Afghanistan, And Other Places Kill Americans Because We Stand In The Way Of Their Goal To Crush Freedom And Tolerance – And They Will Be Defeated.

- **Seeing The Iraqis Through As They Build Their Democracy Is Critical To Keeping The American People Safe From The Terrorists Who Want To Attack Us.** Across the Middle East, ordinary Muslims want free societies where they are treated with dignity and respect. That is why millions of Iraqis and Afghans turned out at the polls, leaders have stepped forward at the risk of assassination, and hundreds of thousands have joined the security forces of their nations. These men and women are taking great risks to build a free and peaceful Middle East – and for the sake of our own security, we must not abandon them.
- **Elected Leaders In Washington Must Not Pull The Rug Out From Under Our Troops Just As They Are Gaining Momentum And Changing The Dynamic On The Ground In Iraq.** U. S. forces have killed or captured an average of more than 1,500 al Qaeda terrorists and other extremists every month since January. And starting when the necessary additional troops arrived in June, they are carrying out a surge that is helping bring former Sunni insurgents into the fight against al Qaeda, clearing the terrorists out of population centers, and giving families in liberated Iraqi cities their first look at decent and normal life. We will support our troops, support our commanders, and give them everything they need to succeed.
- **A Free Iraq Will Not Transform Into A Perfect Democracy Overnight, But It Will Be A Massive Defeat For Al Qaeda And A Source Of Hope For The Rest Of The Middle East.** A free Iraq will be a friend and partner of the United States and an ally in the ideological struggle of the 21st century.

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