

democracy. But in the end, how can these evildoers fight back when liberty begins to gain momentum? Their one strength—and it's a great strength—is their ability to kill and terrorize and intimidate. But they offer nothing positive. I can't think of a guerilla war in history that had such a negative agenda. Instead of building schools, they use them as bases of attack. Instead of putting people back into their homes, they blow them up. Instead of buying bikes for little children, they kill them and maim them with roadside bombs and rob them of their mothers and fathers. This utter lack of regard for human life, this philosophy of despair, this death worship, is their only strength, but it is also their fundamental weakness. It will prove to be their ultimate undoing.

This is a fight that cannot be won by the West alone. But we are not fighting alone. In fact, the fight against the killers who pervert and exploit a great world religion is most effectively fought by Muslims themselves. It is more appropriate for Muslims to refute the extremist's false arguments that Islam condones terrorism and suicide bombing and the killing of innocents. Muslim voices are the ones that will be most effective in calling for the reform of madrassas that deny Muslim children the opportunity to cope and excel in the modern world. Muslims are the only ones who can dispute theologically the extremist teachings that are distributed free to millions. And many good, decent Muslims have spoken out against those who have tried to hijack their religion. Unfortunately, all too often, they have to do so in the face of threats and intimidation from well-funded extremists.

Sgt. Replogle said "Something had to be done." In each generation, countless Americans have done it. Just as in World War II and the Cold War, we weren't simply fighting the evils of Nazism and Communism, we also were creating opportunities for Germany and Japan, Korea and Poland to become strong allies in the longer term goal to build a free and peaceful world. So too, in Iraq and Afghanistan today, we are not only fighting against terrorists and the terrorist regimes that supported them, but we are helping Afghans and Iraqis become strong, moderate Muslim allies in the longer-term struggle against extremism.

Their struggle is our struggle and their courage and resolve in the face of evil will ensure that brave Americans and our brave coalition partners who have sacrificed so much to liberate those countries will not have sacrificed in vain.

The most remarkable demonstration of that resolve and courage that I encountered during our recent visit to Iraq came from a young Iraqi woman who served as our interpreter up north. Her sister had been assassinated not long before because she was working with the Americans. And yet, here was this energetic, vital young woman, still working with us and we asked her why. And she said, "Because my father told me that you must never retreat in the face of evil."

We must never retreat in the face of evil. If we want to stop evil from coming to our shores or to our heartland, we must stand up to that evil in Iraq and Afghanistan. If we want to have allies in the fight against terrorism, we should not only enlist our old allies, but we should help countries like Afghanistan and Iraq to become new ones. Given the opportunity to choose, the overwhelming majority of people will choose freedom, whether they are Muslims or Christians, Arabs or Americans, Europeans or Afghans. That is why we will win and the terrorists will lose. Because we stand for life where they stand for death. Where they stand for tyranny, we stand for freedom.

The greatest strength of this country is not our military forces. It's not our great economy. It is above all what we stand for – the cause of freedom. The future belongs to those who dream a dream of peace and freedom, the oldest and noblest dream of all. Thank you. [Applause.]

MODERATOR: Thank you very much. Thank you very much. Opportunity for questions from anybody in the audience. Yeah, yes.

Q: When it comes to the outside influences that are impacted in Iraq, is there anything you can do to quantify for us how much of that is coming from outside of Iraq and what could ultimately be done about that?