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## Speech

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## Beyond Nation Building

*Remarks as delivered by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, 11th Annual Salute to Freedom, Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum, New York City, Friday, February 14, 2003.*

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Secretary Rumsfeld: -- We have some of the truly great leaders of the military of the United States of America and certainly our appreciation goes out each of them and their associates for their courageous and outstanding service to our country. [Applause]

General Tom Franks, you've behaved pretty well. [Laughter] I was a little worried. Our nation is so fortunate to have General Franks doing what he is doing so brilliantly at this critical moment in our nation's history. [Applause] I want you to know that I consider it a privilege to serve with him. And Kathy, we recognize that you also serve and we appreciate that as well. [Applause]

From time to time General Franks and I do a press briefing somewhere around the world with troops or a townhall meeting with troops or at the Pentagon, and when people ask him about his career, he talks about where he came from and what happened and what he did and how he got there and it makes it sound like it was a [big reaction] and he ends up by saying, "Isn't this a great country?" [Applause] And it is a great country. And this country's fortunate to have his talent and dedication and his leadership at this moment.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your warm welcome. It's a delight to be able to shake hands and meet so many of you. It's also a pleasure to be on board an aircraft carrier.

It's hard to believe that the first time I was aboard a carrier was 60 years ago. It was during World War II. My father was assigned to an aircraft carrier and [it was] waiting for it to be completed and commissioned. At the right moment there was a big ceremony. I suppose I was 11 years old or something and went aboard the carrier and you could hear the noises, you could smell the smells, and you could see the people and the tension and it was a memorable time for me. I think back to it with very fond memories. So to be aboard this ship some six decades later and to receive this fine award is indeed a great honor.

But there's another reason why I'm so pleased to be here tonight and that's, some of you may not know this but the Intrepid and I have a great deal in common. She was commissioned into naval service in the middle of the 20th Century. So was I. She went on to serve in the United States navy in various capacities for more than three decades. So have I. She retired from government service in the late '70s and

then was brought back from the scrapyard. [Laughter] So was I. [Applause] I suppose there's one other thing in common. We're both living proof that a couple of broken down old Navy vessels can still strive to serve their country. [Applause]

I know that the Intrepid is helping to generate the next generation of Americans about the sacrifices of so many who made it possible for them to live in freedom. We have that opportunity because of the vision of Zachary Fisher who founded the Fisher House Foundation, founded this wonderful museum and so many other military charities. We're grateful to his nephews -- [Tony] Fisher, Arnold Fisher and to Steven Fisher, and needless to say, Steve, our hearts go out to you and your family on his terrible loss.

The family and friends of the Fishers and these charitable activities deserve the appreciation of all the men and women in uniform and it's a fitting legacy to all of those who risked their lives and gave their lives aboard this ship so many years ago.

I'm told there are a number of you here this evening who served aboard this ship during World War II, and we thank you for your service as well. [Applause]

The story of the Intrepid, of course, is the story of freedom's defense. After our country was attacked at Pearl Harbor the Intrepid played a critical role in the Pacific war. In her years of service she witnessed both the heroism and the carnage of war. On her deck a half century ago American sailors watched in horror as on five separate occasions, I'm told, suicide bombers crashed into the [inaudible] of the ship and each time amid the mayhem, heroes climbed into action dousing the flames, steadying the ship, risking their lives, pulled wounded from the wreckage. More than a half century later this entire ship once again witnessed heroism and carnage. From the deck on a clear September morning Americans could watch with horror as suicide bombers struck again -- this time crashing planes into the Twin Towers.

But just as the Intrepid rose from the devastation of those attacks a half century ago, so too has our nation, moving from the devastation of September 11th. And let there be no doubt, we will achieve victory again. [Applause]

Our experiences then and now are similar. They're similar in another sense. After Pearl Harbor our country fought back and defeated those who attacked it. But we also made clear that America was not interested in conquest or colonization. And when the hostilities ended after World War II we helped the Japanese people rebuild from the rubble of war and establish institutions of democracy. Today Japan is of course a staunch friend and a steadfast U.S. ally.

Similarly, after the September 11th attacks we fought back in Afghanistan. We also made clear that America was not interested in conquest or colonization. Today we're helping the Afghan people rebuild from the rubble of war, establish institutions of government. That indeed is the American way. [Applause]

In a way it's ironic that the terrorists really attacked us of who we are, a free people, yet the result of their attacks was the liberation of the Afghan people. Those terrorists had [inaudible].

Before September 11th Afghans lived in fear. The freedoms we enjoy were for them but a distant dream. Today the Afghan people are free. Afghanistan is no longer a safe haven for terrorists. It has a transitional government with a popular mandate. Girls and boys are back in school. And well over one million refugees have returned to their homes. They're voting with their feet and making a conscious decision and judgment that what's taking place in that country is going to work. This is a remarkable

transformation.

Tonight as we gather on this ship to celebrate the progress of human freedom let me speak about how that transformation came about.

The folks that made progress possible in Afghanistan and why it's so important not just for the future of warfare but for the future of international efforts to help struggling nations recover and more, regain self reliance.

From the outset of the war our guiding principle has been that Afghanistan belongs to the Afghans. The United States does not aspire to own it or run it. This shaped how we approached the military campaign. General Franks would not send a massive invasion and occupation force as the Russians had. Instead he -- The Soviets had. Instead he keeps the coalition footprint modest. He adapted a strategy of teaming with local Afghan forces that opposed the Taliban. And the careful use of precision-guided weapons helped ensure that there were fewer civilian casualties in this war than perhaps in any war in modern history. As a result we did not alienate the Afghan people.

Not only did we make ever effort to avoid civilian deaths, we worked hard to save civilian lives. Coalition aircrews dropped more than 2.4 million humanitarian daily rations to Afghan villages, reinforcing the message that we were coming not as a force of occupation but as a force of liberation. These principles which brought success in war are now guiding our efforts to shape the peace.

Afghanistan belongs to the Afghans. The objective is not to engage in what some call nationbuilding. Rather it's to try to help the Afghans so that they can build their own nation. This is an important distinction. In some nationbuilding exercises well-intentioned foreigners arrive on the scene, look at the problems and say let's fix it. This is well motivated to be sure, but it can really be a disservice in some instances because when foreigners come in with international solutions to local problems, if not very careful they can create a dependency.

A long-term foreign presence in a country can be unnatural. This has happened in several places with large foreign presence. The economies remained unreformed and distorted to some extent. Educated young people can make more money as drivers for foreign workers than as doctors and civil servants. Despite good intentions and the fine work of humanitarian workers individually, there can be unintended adverse side effects.

For example in East Timor, which is one of the poorest countries in Asia, the average income is about a dollar a day yet the capital of East Timor is now one of the most expensive cities in Asia. Local restaurants are out of reach for most of the people. They cater to international workers who have salaries that are some 200 times the average local wage. In the city's main supermarkets prices are reportedly on a par with London and New York.

Take Kosovo where a driver shuttling international workers around the capital can earn ten times the salary of a university professor in that country. A recent Wall Street Journal story described how three years after the war the United Nations still runs Kosovo really by executive orders. They issue postage stamps, passports, driver's licenses and the like and decisions made by the local parliament are invalid without the signatures of the UN administrators.

Our goal in Afghanistan is to try and not create a culture of dependence but rather to promote

[inaudible]. Long-term stability comes not from the presence of foreign forces but from the development of functioning local institutions. That's why in the area of security we have been helping to train for example the Afghan National Army. Our coalition partners have been training the police. And the goal is so that Afghans over time can take full responsibility for their own security and stability rather than having to depend on foreign forces versus for a sustained period.

Our challenge in the period ahead is to put similar principles to work and guide our efforts to aid Afghan reconstruction.

The United States, interestingly, has already provided some \$850 million for that task with another \$3.3 billion authorized over the next several years. It's a sizeable investment and we need more help from the international community.

This year we are embarked on a major international effort to bolster a new Afghan government. Our goal is to begin moving toward an end state in which the Afghan government is sufficiently established so they can provide security and stability for the country. Some ask what lessons our experience in Afghanistan might offer for the possibility of a post-Saddam Iraq. It has a nice ring, doesn't it? A post-Saddam Iraq. [Applause]

As you know, the President has not made any decision with respect to the use of force in Iraq, but if he were to do so that principle would hold true. Iraq belongs to the Iraqis and we do not aspire to own it or run it. We hope to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and to help liberate the Iraqi people from oppression.

If the United States were to lead an international coalition in Iraq -- and let there be no doubt it would be a very large one -- it would be guided by two commitments. Stay as long as necessary, and to leave as soon as possible. [Applause]

We would work with our partners as we are doing in Afghanistan to help the Iraqi people establish a new government that would govern a single country, that would not have weapons of mass destruction, that would not be a threat to its neighbors. And that would respect the rights of its diverse populations and the aspirations of all the Iraqi people to live in freedom and to have a voice in their government.

The goal would not be to impose an American style template on Iraq, but rather to create conditions where Iraqis can form a government in their own unique way just as the Afghans did with the Loya Jurga which produced a representative government that is uniquely Afghan.

This is not to underestimate the challenge that the coalition would face. Iraq has several advantages over Afghanistan. One is time. The effort in Afghanistan had to be planned and executed in a matter of weeks after September 11th. With Iraq, by contrast, there has been time to prepare. We have set up a Post War Planning Office to think through problems and coordinate the efforts of coalition countries and U.S. government agencies. General Franks in an interagency process has been working hard on this for many months.

A second advantage is resources. Afghanistan is a poor country that's been brutalized by continuous war -- civil war and occupation. Iraq has a solid infrastructure with working networks of roads and [resources] and it has oil to help give free Iraq the means to get on its feet.

But let me be clear, whatever happens elsewhere in the world we will not abandon Afghanistan. Afghanistan remains an important ally, not just in the war against terrorism but in that larger struggle for freedom and moderation in the Muslim world.

If we succeed, Afghans will take hold of their country, develop their institutions of self governance, reclaim their place as a responsible member of the international community. Such a transformation we believe is possible because of the courage and sacrifice of many brave Americans who have served in Afghanistan and who serve there today.

In closing, let me report something particularly to the Fisher family but to everyone else. I was, oh, goodness, I suppose it was two or three weeks ago I was out at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C. visiting with American servicemen who had been brought back wounded from Afghanistan. There was a young man who had had his left hand blown off, his jaw was wired, and his right hand was strapped to his leg with a skin graft. But he was upbeat, he was proud, and he appreciated his young wife who told me has been there with him every day since he arrived back in country.

I asked his wife how it was going and how long she'd been there, how long she might stay. She said I'm going to stay here until he gets out and I can take him home. I said where are you staying? She said the Fisher House. I said where is it. She said right near Walter Reed. She said it's wonderful and I can afford it. The accommodations are great. I get to be with the wives and families of others who are here in the hospital. And I'm so close to the hospital. I'm so thankful.

Then out of the blue she said if you ever see Mr. Fisher, will you please tell him thank you very much. [Applause]

So I told her a little bit about Mr. Fisher and I explained that I'd be here tonight and though I couldn't personally thank Mr. Fisher, Zachary Fisher, for her, but I would do the next best thing and express her appreciation to the family, all the family members, their friends and supporters of Fisher House for doing so much to carry out that fine gentleman's work. I thank you all so much for all you do for our country. [Applause]

I'm told that I'm supposed to leave and go back to Washington in about 15 to 20 minutes, but I would be happy to respond to some questions.

I'm an old man and it's late, so make them easy, will you? And the lights are a little better. Now I can see folks.

Yes, sir. A Medal of Honor winner.

Voice: Mr. Secretary, I don't have a question, I have a comment.

Thank you very much. I've got a baby boy that's a lieutenant colonel B-52 pilot that's going to be supporting you. Work his little butt off to get that job done. [Applause]

Secretary Rumsfeld: Tell him thank you.

Who's next?

Voice: Secretary Rumsfeld, what can we do to help support you against terrorism? What do you suggest?

Secretary Rumsfeld: This is a great city, and I must say that the support that we feel here and the President feels when he comes here, and there is wonderful support given to the men and women in uniform. We deeply appreciate it. And I would say you're doing exactly what you should be doing.

Let me say a word about what's happening in the world. [There are] people who are on this side and people who are on that side and people who have this view and people who have that view, and tugs across the Atlantic and tugs within the European community. A big vote over there in NATO was, I think it was 16-3 in favor of helping the Turkish people with some AWACS and some chem/bio protection equipment and some Patriot missiles. So there's a division in Europe. There's big debate and discussion.

You know, that's not bad. They're a free people. Free people are free to arrive at different decisions, they're free to think things through at a different pace. And I must say what is going on in our world is not easy. It is tough stuff. We have spent our whole lives, most of us, believing we can sit back and wait to be attacked, take a deep breath, marshal our forces, and go prevail. We're uncomfortable with the idea of having to deal with something other than competing with an army or a navy or an air force which we all understand from history, from our lives.

But we're not dealing with armies, navies, and air forces today in this shadowy threat that we face in terrorist networks. And what's happened is so distinctly different. This new security environment of the 21st Century is so distinctly different that it's going to take time for people to get comfortable with it, to understand it, to realize what it means.

But the lethality of these weapons is so great than what we've experienced previously. And the nexus between weapons of mass destruction, particularly biological weapons -- Think of the scare anthrax caused, and anthrax is not contagious. A biological toxin that was contagious can ripple through this country and the world in ways [inaudible].

Now the connection between those kinds of weapons, terrorist states that have those weapons -- and let there be no doubt they do -- and terrorist organizations like the ones who attacked the Towers here in this city and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., that nexus has created something that's totally different. It must cause us as individuals to think fresh about these things. That's not easy to do. And to the extent people don't have the same sets of facts that they're working off of, they're very likely to come to different conclusions. It takes time for those facts and that information to seep out.

I met with the Sultan of Oman in a tent a month or two I suppose after the September 11th period. He said something that just struck me. He said, Mr. Secretary, I hate to even say this but it may be that September 11th was a blessing in disguise. I said why? In what way? He said because the weapons today are very dangerous and so powerful and can kill not 3,000 but 30,000 or 300,000 human beings. Maybe, just maybe, it will be the wakeup call for the world, that they will recognize that this new century [inaudible] and the difference in the threats we face today from the threats we faced before. And by having that attack people around the world will [initiate] a series of things that need to be done. The Muslim world needs to take back its religion -- it's been hijacked by a small minority. [Applause]

I guess all of us have to hope and pray that he was right, that in fact not just the people in our

country but the people across the globe will register the difference and realize the circumstance they're in and think about things and be willing to face up to problems that have the ability to impose that kind of carnage on our world.

Question?

Voice: Mr. Secretary, would you briefly discuss the North Korean situation and what our possible military options are?

Secretary Rumsfeld: You sound like my wife when you say briefly. You're giving me calibrations.

Sure. We've got a very serious problem. North Korea is assessed by the Central Intelligence Agency to have one or two nuclear weapons. It is assessed that North Korea if it starts its reprocessing plant, which they now seem to be in the beginning steps of doing, will be able to produce an additional six to eight weapons by this summer. Correction. Not weapons. Nuclear material sufficient to make six to eight weapons. It would take a bit longer to make the weapons.

People talk about it as a threat to Japan, which it is; a threat to the South Koreans, which it is; a threat in the region, which it is. I would submit that its real threat is to the world because they're a terrorist state that are in the process of making a good deal of progress towards having a variety of ranges of ballistic missiles as well as a nuclear program. What they need in many instances is the nuclear material.

North Korea is the world's leading proliferator of missile technology. If they have sufficient material for another six to eight weapons, there isn't a doubt in my mind that they'd sell some portion of it. What that means is the world we're living in over the next five to ten years would end up with another four, five or six countries with nuclear weapons. Countries several of which are on the terrorist list, terrorist state list. States that have a record of being involved in terrorism and states that have relationships with terrorist networks.

Now that is going to be a notably different world than the world we're living in and we're going to have to figure out how to live in it.

What it means is, we're able to do a great deal militarily [inaudible]. The truth is, we can't do much politically or economically along. And if international sanctions or political discipline is going to be imposed we have to have the support of other like-thinking countries, and particularly the technologically advanced countries. What we have today is a situation where we would not even be thinking about Iraq today, the word wouldn't even be in the newspapers unless the sanctions had failed, unless the political diplomacy had failed, unless the economic pressure had failed. Everything they want is flowing in and across those borders. The borders are porous.

We have this oil for food program and they bring in various types of things that are dual-use, and contend that they're for a civilian purpose and in fact they're not. They're for military purposes. Many of these things that are needed for chemical and biological weapons have a legitimate use as well, and yet the world didn't have the stuff to fashion programs, treaties, international agreements that would in fact squeeze Iraq sufficiently so that it could not continue with its weapons of mass destruction program. We simply didn't do it. It's in tatters. And unless the world addresses that fact we're going to find a world which, as I said, in short order a number of additional countries, terrorist states, will have nuclear weapons and with relationships with terrorist organizations. That is not a pleasant picture.

Questions?

Voice: Mr. Secretary, you've heard from four Fishers already. I can't sit here and not say something.

Secretary Rumsfeld: Someone who likes the Fishers must be passing out the mikes. [Laughter]

Voice: That's what Billy is really here for.

A few months ago we opened a Fisher House in Landstuhl, Germany, the second one. At that time I accepted a little award from [D.D. Martin]. I told him then and I told the audience then that I would dedicate myself to telling the American people who don't already know this, that the United States military is a much different military than we've ever had before. This is intelligent, this is dedicated, this is the finest young people America has to give to this world. We should all know that. We all should be very proud of the military and their performance abroad. [Applause]

Sometime ago my son [Paul Buca] who at that time was the head of the Medal of Honor Society, said they wanted that society to fade out. They didn't want any more Medal of Honor recipients, therefore they wouldn't need a society and we wouldn't have any more war.

We at Fisher House hope that same thing happens. I hope we never have to build another Fisher House. No wars, no Fisher Houses. We'll build it for the veterans and not for the active military. [Applause]

Secretary Rumsfeld: Thank you.

The last question.

Voice: [Inaudible]

Secretary Rumsfeld: You read a lot about the United States "going it alone" and the United States is a unilateralist. The fact of the matter is that the United States went into the United Nations and achieved a unanimous vote from the Security Council for Resolution 1441. That is hardly going it alone and it's hardly unilateralist.

If the United States decides, the President decides that the United Nations is going to allow 17 resolutions to be set aside by Iraq and disobeyed and ignored, and the President decides that the interests of that institution and the interests of the world requires getting together a coalition of countries, it will be a very large coalition. It will be a coalition that I would submit will very likely be as large or larger than the coalition that existed in the Gulf War.

The United States will not go it alone. It will go with a great many countries.

Wouldn't it be nice if everyone agreed? Wouldn't it be nice if every single country came to the right conclusion at roughly the right time on big issues? The world isn't like that. I don't believe for a second that Harry Truman was following a public opinion poll when he decided to put the Marshall Center in

place. I don't believe for a second that John F. Kennedy was following a public opinion polls when he said to the world with respect to the Soviet threat that the American people would bear any burden and pay any price to contain that expansionist regime. I don't believe there was any public opinion poll that told Ronald Reagan he should tell Mr. Gorbachev to tear down that flag.

The job of leaders is to lead. The task of leaders is to determine what is in their country's interest and make a decision and set a track and [refine] that when leaders believe and when leaders are right, right-thinking people follow. [Applause]

One last thought. The Congress of the United States has spent months and months and months trying to figure out how they can connect the dots with respect to September 11th. How might we have avoided that? What would have enabled us to take all of the pieces of information and act in a way that could have prevented the death of 3,000 people? What did we have? We had a scrap of information, a phone call here, a credit card there, someone learning how to fly but not learning how to land.

If we had gone with that pieces of information -- no smoking guns. We get that after the airplanes hit the Twin Towers. If we had gone to the world and said we need to take care of al Qaeda and go into Afghanistan. Will you join us? How many countries? Zero. [Inaudible]

What we're trying to do right now is hard. It's to connect the dots before the [facts]. It's to see if we can't avert a September 11th with weapons of mass destruction. That is not easy stuff. It's hard. And everything else has been exhausted. The political effort's been going on for 12 years. We're now in the 17th resolution. People talk about the UN doing a second resolution. That's not the second, it's the 18th. Economic sanctions failed. Military efforts failed in the southern no-fly zone and the northern no-fly zone.

So what's happening here is trying to find a way to persuade people as to what the nature of the world is and to get them thinking about that world not in conventional terms but in unconventional terms. What was normal and seemed right in the last century may not be normal or right at all in this century.

Let me close with this embarrassing experience here in New York. I was a midshipman in 1951 aboard a battleship. We went over to Cuba, and we went to Europe and we came back, and we were being given liberty in New York City. They pulled that battleship up into the Hudson River. They parked it, we got off in boats, went ashore and had a wonderful time in New York. Came back. Got in bed. The next morning all kinds of noise and confusion. It had pulled mooring and settled on the New Jersey shore.

Now a battleship is big. It's about 900-plus feet. Maybe they've grown since, but back in those days, it was [inaudible]. There it was, stuck. And the captain had been ashore too, and he came aboard and he looked a little disheveled and a little concerned. Down below all the midshipmen were standing around looking [inaudible], and here's a tugboat that would stand off and then it would come bashing into the side. Then another one would bash into the side. There were about 14 or 15 of these things.

Finally they got them all organized, they all put their noses up against that battleship, and they all pushed at the same moment and it was free.

One day Joyce and I were having dinner with Admiral Zumwalt. He was Chief of Naval Operations. I said to him, Admiral, I told him that story. I said you know, I tell that story once in awhile because I think it's important. It shows that if everyone's off doing their own thing one at a time not much can happen. But if everyone gets at the same thing in the same way, great things can happen.

He said Congressman, I was on that ship. [Laughter] I said how in the world did you get to be Chief of Naval Operations? [Laughter] He said I was the navigator. [Laughter]

Well, he's a very smart guy. He's passed away now. But he said I was the navigator but I want you to know, I protested mooring. He said I told the Navy Department that's a lousy place to park that battleship; it's only going to get us in trouble. I protested twice. They said look, you park it there, so he parked it there. And he said that's how I got to be Chief of Naval Operations. [Laughter]

So I said to him, is that story about right? He said it's exactly right. He said that's exactly what happened. It pulled mooring, settled. These tugs were forcing around, getting nowhere. They all snubbed up, and all of a sudden it was free. He said Don, there's one other thing you ought to know. I said what's that? He said the tide came up. [Laughter]

So with a little help from the Lord, good things can happen. Thank you very much.

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