

Bob Krueger
LBJ Lecture Oct. 1, 2003

UNEDITED

LBJ Distinguished Lecture
Remarks for President Denise Trauth
Student Center Teaching Theater
Wednesday, October 1, 2003
7:30 p.m.

Good evening, and welcome to our fall 2003 Lyndon B. Johnson Distinguished Lecture.

Our speaker tonight comes to us with a particularly timely issue — the foreign intervention policies of our country.

It is certainly a subject that consumes the front pages of our major newspapers, fuels the rhetoric of presidential candidates and provides fodder for news talk shows.

Some of those doing the talking about this subject are simply grabbing headlines and are marginally acquainted with the deeper issues involved.

Robert Krueger, however, has the background to justify his opinions.

He has served as a Congressman and a Senator.

He has held ambassador positions under two presidents on two continents.

He is currently a consultant on international trade issues and government policy.

And he is doubly qualified to give his opinion because he started his career as a university faculty member.

That was at Duke, when he was 25 years old, and by age 36 he was dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

He earned his degrees at Southern Methodist, Duke and Oxford.

He has returned to teaching occasionally and recently taught a graduate course in public administration here at Texas State.

I understand that he will be back in the spring to team teach a course in the Master of Public Administration program with Howard Balanoff.

We are delighted to have Dr. Krueger talk to us tonight about “When Should the United States Intervene? A Look at U.S. Foreign Policy Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow.”

Dr. Krueger....

Bob Krueger

“When Should the United States Intervene? A Look at US Foreign Policy
Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow”

Thank you very much, Dr. Trauth, for that generous introduction.
And my thanks to you for that warm reception.

I was deeply honored to be asked to deliver the LBJ lecture tonight at Lyndon Johnson's alma mater, an institution with which I have particular connections.

My mother was a classmate of Lyndon Johnson's at Southwest Texas State Normal College and I'm really proud of it.

I would remind the students here today that Texas State University, then called Southwest Texas State Normal College is the only institution in the state of Texas that has ever produced an United States' President.

And in many respects he was one of the more capable, gifted presidents this country has ever had.

Each of you students here tonight has an opportunity to continue in his footsteps.

My topic tonight is when to intervene, that is when to intervene with the full power of the United States government in affairs of the world.

United States today has the most powerful military force, the most dominant economy, the most influential culture and most formidable presence of any nation at any time in the history of our planet.

One of Shakespeare's characters once said, "It is excellent to have a giant's strength, but tyrannous to use it like a giant."

So, for the United States, when and how to use a giant's strength? *That is the question.*

Lyndon Johnson chose to intervene with the full power of the United States government in two history changing ways.

The first, was Vietnam.

There he probably felt that he didn't have much choice. When he became president, John F. Kennedy had recently been assassinated and America had thousands of troops in Vietnam. His choice was either to try to win the battle or to withdraw. He chose to try to win. The results were over 58,000 killed and hundreds of thousands wounded \$70 billion in costs and his efforts to include both guns and butter in the economy at the same time led to inflation and stagflation. And ultimately the war ended his long and distinguished political career.

But paradoxically, during this period, even as his intervention in Vietnam was dividing Americans, Lyndon Johnson began a second intervention that ultimately did more to unify this nation than anything else in the last 100 years.

By summoning the conscience of our nation and employing the full powers of the Federal government to break the back of segregation, he destroyed the patina of respectability that had accompanied [the] laws and customs and policies and attitudes for centuries that had denigrated and humiliated millions of Americans.

America's most influential twentieth-century poet, TS Eliot in one of his many ground pronouncements once said, "Dante and Shakespeare divided the world between them, there are no others." Well, similarly, if we consider three great epoch changing achievements promoting civil rights and human dignity in this country we can with equal assurance say, "Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Lyndon Johnson divide the world of civil rights achievement in this country between them, there are no others."

In the eighteenth century, Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence*. In the nineteenth century, Lincoln's "Emancipation Proclamation". In the twentieth century, Lyndon Johnson's "Civil Rights Act". No other actions have done more to bring simple

dignity and justice to Americans, and thereby to liberate the best instincts of the American people then these actions.

Southwest Texas State Normal School and Texas State University should feel awfully proud being a part of that tradition.

These then were Johnson's two great interventions: Vietnam, a tragic failure, and Civil Rights Act, monumental success.

But my intent is not to focus on Lyndon Johnson, whose actions are well known at this alma mater.

Rather, I want to discuss three different opportunities for intervention by the US government.

One, where we did it right.

One where we didn't do it, but it would have been right.

And a third, where we've done it wrong.

I'll begin in the middle.

The intervention we didn't make, but should have made in 1993-94.

There I can draw on my own experience and from my personal observations.

I'm speaking tonight of Rwanda and Burundi, two small countries located one degree south of the equator, in the very heart of Africa. Each is about the size of the state of Maryland.

If you draw a line from Temple to La Grange to San Antonio to Junction and back to Temple you could fit both countries inside.

You'd also have to fit in some 14 million people, which is almost as many people as the state of Texas had in the late 1980s.

How do these people live? Well, the average family has six children who depend entirely on what their family can produce on one acre of land.

If you're an average American, for every two dollars that you've got in your wallet the average Burundian or Rwandan will have one penny. The per capita income there is only \$140 a year.

Most people go barefoot almost all of the time. If you have a pair of shoes, if they do, they save it for special occasions.

There's only one car for every hundred people in that country. In America, we have more cars than we do adult population.

Eighty-five percent of people there live by subsistence agriculture, that is, they live on what they can produce on their little piece of land for their family and hardly even have anything to sell.

They're scarcely in a cash economy.

The countries themselves are gorgeous. Mountains nine thousand feet high. One degree away from the equator, wonderful climate, tropical all the time, orchids growing wild in the forest. A gorgeous place.

You can hardly drive through the countryside without having people wave, very friendly, open people, eager to see people drive through in a car—it is very exciting for them. If you walk among rural peasants and happen to have children, as mine were, blue-eyed and blond-haired and 6 & 4 years-old, taking them through a refugee camp, I remember, what we quickly found was that we had a whole pied-piper line of children walking behind that had never before seen anyone with long, straight, blonde hair. These were the first children of that sort they had ever encountered.

The people are hard working, you have to be if you're going to support a family of six on one acre of land.

Most of them, however, are illiterate. Because education, beyond the age of eleven, is largely restricted to a very narrow group.

Both countries, for the last forty years particularly, and certainly even today, are riven with ethnic conflict. It was not always so.

To the best of our knowledge, the Tutsi tribe which is historically thought to make up 15% of the population and the Hutu tribe which makes up the remaining 84-5% got along amicably for centuries.

Then the Belgians were given control of these two countries after the first World War. When the Belgians come in, and they wanted to decide, being colonialists, they wanted to decide a hierarchy to decide how to govern this place. And so, they had to choose their local leaders. Well according to the science at the time, what they did was measure the circumference of the head and measure the length of the forehead, the prominence of the nose. And they found that the Tutsi—who were angular and tended to be taller, and to them looked more aristocratic, perhaps because they looked a bit more like Belgians, who knows—they were thought to be the natural aristocrats and should have governance of the country. They were taller, they were more impressive to them than the shorter, stouter, more snub-nosed Hutus.

Historians at that time believed that the Tutsi had originally come from Somalia and were perhaps descendants of Ham, leader of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. So, putting all those things together, they gave property ownership and education largely only to the Tutsi tribe.

Well, once independence was granted, those countries erupted like the volcanoes of those landscapes. Erupted because of an inequality that had been established beforehand. And they have tended to erupt ever since.

In March and April of 1994, a very corrupt and fearful Hutu government, which had gained control in Rwanda, came under attack by an army of Tutsis who had earlier fled Rwanda to go to Uganda and who were returning to reclaim land and power.

The Tutsis successfully assassinated the Hutu president, and when they did so, unleashed seemingly cosmic violence.

In 8 weeks, in Rwanda, a country of 7 million people, in 8 weeks, 800,000 people were slaughtered--the largest genocide since the killing fields in Cambodia. Most were Tutsi, some were moderate Hutus, all were civilians.

And what did the world do?

Nothing.

What did the United Nations do?

Nothing effective.

What did the United States of America do?

Well, the commander of UN troops in Rwanda requested 5,000 troops to deep potentially warring groups apart before the violence began. The United States suggested cutting that by 98%, reducing 5,000 to 100.

And we were successful in getting that through.

Mind you, there was bi-partisan support in the USA to do nothing.

Bob Dole, who was the Republican leader in the Senate went on television and said, "We have no national interest in Rwanda." And Bill Clinton, who felt scarred by

the fact that our television cameras had had pictures of Marines being dragged through the dust of the streets of Somalia where they had been killed, knew that there was not nay support in America for a little-known African country to receive US troops.

And we, we Americans, we silently watched television footage as we saw the bodies floating down the rivers of Rwanda like logs on their way to a paper mill. And we saw the pictures of the bodies, stacked like cordwood outside the churches that had been burned.

But what did we do?

Nothing.

When people are poor and isolated and uninfluential and uneducated and black sometimes it seems the world just doesn't care.

It was only a few weeks after the genocide was at its worse, in March and April in Rwanda, that I arrived in Burundi just south of the border. A country that in most ways, in its ethnic makeup and landscape and everything else, essentially matches Rwanda. I arrived a few weeks later. And the main difference that I found was that in Burundi, the Hutus had never been in control during the 20th century.

That is, until they had their first free elections in 1993 in June.

And then the majority Hutus, 85% of the population, for the first time had a chance to elect one of their own, and they did. They elected a man named Melchior Ndadaye, a follower of Martin Luther King and was committed to nonviolence and to coalitions between the Tutsis and the Hutus that had so long been at odds.

His party defeated the incumbent president the Tutsi military dictator that had been there, Pierre Buyoya by a 2:1 margin.

But the Tutsi, that had run all aspects of the country for a very long period of time, comprised 99% of the army and 99% of the gendarme or the police forces spread all around the country. They also controlled the so-called "justice system" there are only six Hutu lawyers in a country of 6 million people and not a single Hutu judge, and not a single Hutu bishop.

The Tutsi had been effective lords and the Hutus serfs for almost a century. And lords don't give up their power very easily.

And so, on the 101st day in office, the Tutsi army, under the direction of the former dictator who had been defeated at the polls surrounded the presidential palace with tanks and took the president from the presidential palace, took him to the military headquarters, and the next morning they, having tortured him all night, they bayoneted him to death right there and buried him in a mass grave at the army headquarters along with the vice-president and all the members of the cabinet who they could find that night that were Hutu and that included a half-dozen of them.

It was as if Bill Clinton and the Joint Chiefs of Staff had sent troops over to the White House and taken President Bush to the Pentagon along with Dick Cheney and along with half the cabinet and killed them and buried them right there on the grounds of the Pentagon and then the next day they figured they'd go right on with business as usual, the army would run things.

Well, fortunately, at that point, the international community made such an outcry that Burundi realized it could not go forward. And the United Nations sent a special representative who patched together a coalition government. But he arrived without any troops to help him and over time the Burundi army reasserted its control.

Well this was the situation then, that had happened in October of '93 in Burundi, this was the situation when I arrived in June of 1994. And I'd like to try to convey something of what its like to live amid genocide.

One night during my family's third week there, my daughter Marianna, then age six, and her younger sister Sarah, age 4, came over across the hallway to our bedroom and lifted the mosquito netting around our bed and said, "Mommy, Daddy, can we sleep with you?" The grenades were louder than usual outside that night and they had seen the tracer fire illuminating the night sky. And they were frightened. And I remember Marianna asking after she got in, she said, "Mommy, why are they having a war out there?" And it wasn't easy to explain how one group had subjected another for generations and that group was fighting back, and both were seeking revenge, and power and each was afraid of the other.

And it wasn't very many days after that that my wife got a phone call that said, "Your going to have to pick up your daughters a little later from the French school [they were attending] today because there's been some violence."

What the Marine guard didn't say when he phoned was there was a Tutsi youth gang that had gathered. They had captured, I should say, a young, Hutu teenager, tied his arms and legs and neck, put him inside a stack of tires, coated the tires with gasoline, and burned him alive outside the wall of the French school.

Things like this happened almost everyday. Not always next to the school, but almost everyday.

I estimated that five people a day were killed in Bujumbura which had five percent of the country's population, so if you extrapolate that that means 100 people around the country.

I traveled around the countryside every week, once or twice, and I knew that the violence was no less in the countryside then it was in the city.

If we adjust for the difference in population between the USA and Burundi, Burundi with 6 million and the USA with approximately 280 million at that point in time, its like a factor of 42:1 so it'd be like having 4,200 people killed every day in the United States of America. Now we lost 3000 or a bit less in the twin towers attack and the Pentagon. So put another way, it's like having ten twin tower attacks every week in Burundi. Or still another way of putting it, it's like having an Oklahoma City massacre every hour of the day 24 hours a day 365 days out of the year! And nobody pays attention.

I am going to tell you about one of the most remarkable people whom I met in Burundi. A Man named Prosper Mpawenayo. Most of the people in Burundi have one French name and one African name. I came to meet him in the following way: it was January, 1995, and Mr. Niels Nielson, a Danish missionary had an appointment, came to see me, and he came to see me and he said, "Mr. Ambassador, can you help us?" He said, "One of our pastors from Butaganzvu [which is sixty miles to the north] has reported that the army is going through and massacring people there. Is there anything you can do?" I said, "Mr. Nielson, every week I go into the countryside and I go back and I meet with either Colonel Bikomagu, the head of the army, or with Firmin, the defense secretary, and I will go and tell them what I've been told is happening, and they always say the same thing. "Mssr. Ambassador, *c'est la rumeur. C'est ne pas vrai* (it's just rumor, it's not true)." I said, "I will go to the countryside, but you must find for me

someone who knows that part of the world, someone who is known there, and we will go there, and we will take tape recorders and we will take cameras and we will interview the people there, and we will dig up graves, we will do whatever is necessary to find out exactly what is happening. So that when I come back, nobody is going to say to me, “Msr. Ambassador *c’est la rumeur. C’est ne pas vrai*. We are going to know the facts. Now you’re going to find somebody who can do that---who can speak Khurundi,” because Khurundi is a language so little known that it isn’t even taught in the Foreign Language Institute at the State Department in Washington.

Two days later, Prosper Mpawenayo arrived at my house, to go with me to the countryside.

Prosper was a professor of physics at the University in Burundi.

As I was driving out there, and Prosper was sitting in the front seat with me, I said, “Prosper, tell me about yourself. What’s your story?”

He said, “Well, what is there to say?”

And I said, “Well, are you Hutu?”

He said, “Yes.”

I said, “Prosper, how old are you?”

He said, “Well, I’m 44.”

I said, “Prosper, you can’t be 44 and a Hutu and well-educated and alive.” I said, “I was told that in the genocide of 1972, that Micombero sought to wipe out all of the educated Hutus and that is why everybody that I have met that is a Hutu in government is 38 years old and less. How can you be 44 and be educated?”

He said, “Mr. Ambassador, there were two hundred Hutus at the University out of two thousand, four of us survived.”

And then he went on to tell me that on the 5th day, as the genocide—this was in 1972—was beginning he realized of course what was going on. And he fled during the night from the dormitory and he went to the attic of his aunt, who lived nearby, and she set out to get a Zairian passport. Today we call Zaire the Democratic Republic of Congo, then it was called Zaire. She sought to get him a forged Zairian passport so that he could get away to some other country because he’d be known, his name would be on the list at the University, he’d be known to be educated. They were sending busses to pick-up children at the secondary schools and carry them away for mass killings. If they could see a pen on a Hutu, or a pencil, as they went down the street that meant they knew how to read and write, that was a cause to be killed. So, he went to the attic and 25 days later they came back with a Zairian and a forged passport. And he got ready to set out, and as he did so, his aunt said, “Take this Zairian man with you as you go,” the Zairian border was only 14 miles away right at the top of lake Tanganyika. “Take him with you” because Prosper did not speak Swahili, and the Zairians speak Swahili. So, if he’d shown a Zairian passport, and the soldiers knew he didn’t speak Swahili, they’d know that it was forged.

Three times the soldiers stopped him, three times Prosper pretended to be deaf and dumb.

And he made it to Zaire.

And from Zaire, he made it to Rwanda where the Hutus were in.

And he attended the university.

Through a US program, he was able to go to the University of Turin in Italy where he wrote his doctoral dissertation in Italian in physics and he came back to teach at the University of Rwanda.

On the day that Melchior Ndadaye won presidential election, they had been together at the University of Rwanda, he phoned Prosper and said, "Prosper, come home." And Prosper came back to Burundi. That's how he was with me that day.

What we discovered when we went there, we drove, in many of these places there are no roads to get up to the homes because as I said, only one person in a hundred has a car, so we walked the last mile and a half and there we came to a little village on the hillside. And I looked and I saw the bodies lying outside the house, they had been covered with just a brightly colored cloth, but nothing more.

And I can tell you, if you've never smelt decayed human flesh that has been lying in the sun for nine days, it is absolutely as odious and stomach turning as anything you have encountered.

But all of the bodies had this cloth over them, and I thought "I've got to know. I've got to see."

So I took as deep a breath as I could because I didn't want to breathe more often than necessary, and I walked over and I pulled back the cloth and there was the skull, as I pulled it down, and the skull had been all eaten by vultures or dogs or something and the yellow decaying flesh beneath. And the man's children were lying nearby and the wife as well.

I talked with others, we took their names, we got the names of the people, we interviewed people who had been there. And I remember a woman whose name was Primitif, or "primitive," and she was telling about how the soldiers had burned her hut, and then as they came out they captured or slaughtered the people with machetes or guns. She managed to get away pregnant, though her small child had been killed.

We went to one sort of middle-class farmhouse, it was by their standards, and I can recall looking over a precipice that was about 20 feet down at a bananerie, and there I saw the bodies of three children, their black skin covered with white maggots eating away at the flesh, and the grandmother and mother lying beside them. And next to me was a pigpen with the pigs quite active. The soldiers had left the pigs to live and they had thrown the Hutus to die.

In a day and a half, we had the names of seventy people. I dug up some of those graves. We took interviews with those people. We knew what we had. We had photographs of these things and I went back.

The State Department is not a place that encourages controversy.

That's terribly undiplomatic.

Unlike being in Congress, where I could give a press conference anytime I wanted to, in the State Department, you have to get permission.

So, I thought, "Alright, I can understand how to play this game."

So, I sent back a front-channel cable, meaning with wide distribution. I started out the cable saying, "Martin Luther King has said that, 'those that remain silent in the face of injustice become parties to that injustice.' And Bill Clinton, in his letter of appointment to me, has said that, 'human rights is one of the most important issues in US foreign policy.'" So I put Martin Luther King on one side, and Bill Clinton on the other and I thought, "Okay, now who's going to take me on?"

And they didn't.

I got to give my press conference; the press conference had the photographs, it had the names. It indicated, when they asked the question, "who was responsible?" I said, "Well the local people said it was people in uniform." I think they could figure out who that was.

What are the consequences?

Well the initial consequence was they pulled the army out of that area, they don't like publicity. One of the things you can keep in mind is that murderers don't like to have their identity revealed, even in a country like that.

The second consequence was that within ten days there were two newspapers that on their front page had called, in big bold letters, in French, "Kruger should be assassinated."

They don't take these things lightly.

We also had the private threats.

They didn't do anything then.

Some six months later, they did, they ambushed my convoy.

I was fortunate. The bullets missed me and missed everyone in my car, but they killed two and wounded eight. About where President Trauth is sitting there was one person who fell out, dead in a pool of blood in the car next to me.

They do play for keeps in those kinds of circumstances.

And so you can say, "Alright, in a country as violent as this can anyone from the outside help?"

And my answer is: yes.

The international community can effectively intervene in a place like Burundi because Burundi had had an established democracy—it had chosen a president who was committed to unifying the people. They had had free and honest elections. They had someone fair to all sides, and an army that overthrew them. But the people wanted democracy again.

And an intervention could work, also, because all the killing had been done by the Tutsi Army and gendarmerie. I remember a conversation with an American missionary from Kentucky who had been there for eleven years. I said to him, "My impression of the killing is that 90% of the killing is Tutsi killing Hutu and majority of that the army. Is that more or less right?"

And he said, "No. It's 99%."

There are four inescapable facts about the Burundi army, and some of these would have applied to some other locations too.

Number one, they are ill-trained, ill-educated, and they have never faced a foreign foe at all. Their efforts are entirely spent shooting civilians. I used to say, "You know, they hunted Hutus the way we hunted armadillos when I was a boy in Texas."

Most of the people they kill are women and children for a particular reason.

Women tend to run slower particularly if they are carrying a child on their back.

When the Burundi soldiers occasionally met armed rebel forces, who were not good either, they were so scared they would shoot up in the air and then run.

And they had no support from the majority of the population, the 85% Hutu, who fear and despise them; therefore, they would have no base of support in the population,

no support system to engage in guerilla warfare against an international peace keeping force.

Thus in my judgment, if even a very small intervention force had come in after the assassination of President Ndadaye tens of thousands of lives could have been saved in Burundi. And if we had gone into Rwanda as well, we would have had hundreds of thousands of lives saved, and it would not in my judgment have involved a very large force.

But having considered then two instances then, in Rwanda and Burundi in which international community, in my judgment might have entered and saved lives, but didn't, let me consider an instance where the US *did* intervene with extraordinary success.

I'm referring to World War II and the Marshall Plan.

In one sense, our entry into World War II was not really an intervention because we had had war declared on us by Japan and Germany and we had no choice but to respond, which we did with devastating force.

But, after the War, through the Marshall Plan, we choose to intervene in a new unprecedented way by rebuilding physically, politically, socially, the very nations that had declared war on us. We had no imperial designs of military occupation or enforcing our government on theirs, we had no interest in exploiting natural resources, no subjugating their populations, we wanted instead to give them the tools to forge the freedom for their own future.

In my judgment, there has been nothing like it that I know of in human history in the history of war and peace. Before or since that rival it in scope and magnanimity. Without question, it was the outstanding achievement of US foreign policy throughout the twentieth century.

Every country lying outside the Iron curtain, former friend or former foe, received our assistance. The financial cost was high, according to Time magazine last week, it was \$47.6 billion in adjusted current currency. Many people said we can't afford it, and yet every country that received assistance from the Marshall Plan became an ally and trading partner of the United States of America. Some of the closest allies that we have. Britain, Germany, France, Japan, Italy. Putting money and support into hope and opportunity for vanquished people has proven our best investment in peace and prosperity.

And it may be useful to recall the difference in what we did after the Second World War with the Marshall Plan, and what we did after the First.

After the First World War, Woodrow Wilson's proposals were overridden by France and Britain and their European allies. Germany was stripped of its colonies which were redistributed to countries like: Belgium. And it was forced to pay massive reparations for the cost of the war, thereby creating an inflation in Germany so bad that families literally took wheelbarrows, sometimes to carry German Marks to the marketplace to buy food. The consequent collapse of the German economy brought the fall of representative government with it, and the rise of a man named Adolph Hitler, who made scapegoats of Jews and foreigners for allegedly manipulating the German disaster. Thus after WWI, Britain and France got their revenge and twenty years later, Adolph Hitler and Germany got their revenge. And they all suffered. As Churchill said, "Revenge is of all satisfactions, the most costly and long drawn out retributive persecution is, of all policies, the most pernicious." Or as Martin Luther King has said,

“the problem with an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is that it leaves both sides toothless and blind.”

There were many differences between the Treaty of Versailles and the Marshall Plan. But the fundamental difference between 1918 and 1947 was the difference between revenge and forgiveness and history has shown which pays richer dividends.

I want now, to turn to a third intervention: Iraq, where in my judgment, we’re doing it wrong.

Let’s begin with the night of September 11th, 2001. At that time, Bob Woodward, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, was present at a meeting in the White House Crisis Room, with the leaders there.

And as the reports were coming in on that night, Vice President Cheney asked the following question, according to Woodward he said, “Is there some way we can link all this to Iraq?” The reason for that question has become rather clearer as time’s passed.

Two weeks after that, I was in Austin at a dinner gathering, a small group, and one of the people there was a man who owns over one hundred American newspapers, including one of the ten largest newspapers in this country. I was talking with him, and as I was doing so, he said to me, “Be ready Bob, this administration is going to try to link this attack on September 11th with Iraq. And use it as an excuse for an invasion.”

And I said, “Why would they do that? Nineteen of the twenty attackers were Saudi Arabians. If we’re going to attack somebody, well that seems to be where they’re from. Why would they choose Iraq? There’s no demonstrable reason, no demonstrable connection between them.”

He said, “Just listen to what I’m saying. I’m telling you, they want to go to war with Iraq. George Bush wants to.”

And I said, “Why?”

He said, “Well I think there’s several reasons.” He said, “First the administration wants a secure oil supply and they want a foothold in the Middle East—in the Arab world. And second they think that if they remove Saddam Hussein, Israel will have a stronger position. And third, I think George W. has personal reasons. He believes the decision that his father made, *not* to pursue Saddam Hussein led to his defeat in the election. And beyond that, he knows that Saddam Hussein wanted to assassinate his father.”

And so I said, “Sir, you’re saying it’s kind of an Orestes and Hamlet thing. The son wants to avenge the father.”

He said, “Yes, that’s it. George W. believes that Saddam Hussein intended to kill his father physically, and did kill him politically.”

Well that conversation took on then additional seriousness for me a week or two later because at that point I called on an old friend of mine from my days at Oxford, Oliver Miles, who had taken a double first, which is a super big deal at Oxford. He had had a brilliant career studying Arabic languages at Oxford. And Oliver had then gone into British Foreign Service and spent thirty-five years there in a top position, including three ambassadorships, one to Libya, one to Greece, and one to Luxemburg.

So I called to ask them what’s going to be the impact if we decide to invade Afghanistan.

And he said, “Bob the USA has suffered a horrendous loss on 9/11 and if the USA goes into Afghanistan, the world will understand.” He said, “Keep in mind, the

Afghans are Muslims, but they are not Arabs, the Arab world will not turn against you if you go into Afghanistan.”

And then he said, “But if you follow Wolfowitz’s plan, and invade Iraq, which is an Arab country, you will turn the Arab world against you. They already feel you are excessively partial to Israel. If you attack a Muslim Arab nation that has not attacked you, you will create thousands of new terrorists ready to engage in a jihad against America. You have no idea how much ill will you will create in the Arab world.”

“Wolfowitz’s plan” referred to the design developed by Paul Wolfowitz now Deputy Secretary of Defense, the number two position just under Rumsfeld.

But it was in 1992 when Wolfowitz Defense Undersecretary for policy to Dick Cheney, who was then Secretary of Defense, that he drafted a document that resurfaced in the year 2000, before the election. This document was the work of a group called Project for a new American Century. A private group funded and staffed by neoconservatives in this country.

Among the many specific policy recommendations to achieve their goal of having the United States rather than the United Nations be the World’s police man.

They said the following: that Iran, Iraq, and Korea (later known as the “Axis of Evil”) should be targets.

They suggested that we should establish new military bases on every continent.

And that we should undertake regime change (which is a nice term for overthrowing governments) wherever it was necessary.

Well, that document then became part of the official national security strategy presented by President Bush shortly after his inauguration. And several of the authors of that project are now in high positions in the Bush Cheney administration. To mention just three in addition to Wolfowitz, there is also Dick Cheney’s chief of staff and the comptroller of the United States Department of Defense. Now one of the co-chairs of that project was a man named Professor David Kagan of Yale University, and according to the *Atlantic Constitution* that interviewed him, he made the following statement, and I quote, “We’ll probably need a major concentration of forces in the middle east for a large period of time. That will come at a price. But think of the price of not having. When we have economic problems, it’s been caused by disruptions in our oil supply if we have a force in Iraq, there will be no disruption in our oil supply.” That is from the co-chairman over a year ago.

Well, thus far he has been wrong.

Iraqi oil supplies today, are lower, now, for the world than they were by 700,000 barrels a day, they’re about 30% lower than they were before the invasion.

Last week, OPEC dominated by Arab countries, decided, they were not too happy about our invasion of an Arab country, decided to cut back OPEC’s production by a million barrels a day.

The consequence, of course oil price futures immediately rose, making oil more expensive to consumers and businesses around the world.

But all this makes clear that while the White House was protesting for the longest period of time that they had not made a decision on whether to invade Iraq, the decision had been made a long time ago. They were determined to invade Iraq.

Now the justification they began making once the invasion got underway have been many and varied and ever changing. But first and most often, of course, we were

told by the highest authority including Secretary of State Colin Powell, that we had irrefutable evidence that was his word, not mine, irrefutable evidence of weapons of mass destruction present in Iraq that could be launched against the United States in 45 minutes. Forty-five minute notice. That's Colin Powell and many others in the administration. Well, Hans Blix and the UN inspection team just couldn't find them, so what happened?

Well, when they couldn't find them, they got absolutely scored maliciously and in a sarcastic way by the administration who rebuked them for being either naive or incompetent or dishonest. What happened last week? Well we know have 1400 people there on a team paid for and assigned, chosen by the Bush administration led by David Kay the former weapons inspector and the interim report, according to every news account, is they haven't been able to find them either. It's enough to make one wonder, who it is that was being naive, or incompetent, or dishonest when we were told that we had irrefutable evidence.

Repeatedly, American public is reminded by the administration of September 11th. Which are undoubtedly one of the most horrible events in the experience of our country. But then, in the same sentence, or nearby, we are always reminded that Saddam Hussein is a terrorist. And by using the terrorist word in close conjunction to describe the attackers of 9/11 and Saddam Hussein, the administration attempts to link the two, and yet none of the known attackers have any provable, demonstrable connection with Iraq.

Its almost as if one would say, there [are] criminals in San Marcos, and there are criminals in San Francisco, and these people are both criminals, and they must be connected somehow with one another. So, we think those San Francisco criminals have committed a crime in New York and they might do it again. So, we'll launch a preemptive strike because we think they've done something in New York and we think they may have weapons hidden that can do us great harm.

I don't know of any ethical system anywhere to justifies preemptive strikes which say, I think you might want to murder me, therefore, I'm going to kill you real quick before you have a chance. This sort of thing defies logic and law and this and comes much nearer to propaganda.

Not only has there been no demonstrable connection between the events of 9/11 directed by Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein's Iraq, but the fact is that these two men have been rivals and enemies for a long period of time. It was Brent Scowcroft the national security advisor to the first George Bush, the same position Condeleza Rice has now, it was Brent Scowcroft who a number of years ago, said, "Saddam Hussein is probably on Osama bin Laden's hit list." And a CIA report made public well over a year ago indicated that if we were to invade Iraq it would very likely drive Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda together with Saddam Hussein. I think they were right. Iraq has become a Mecca for terrorists from all over the Muslim and Arabic world to plot against the great Satan, the United States of America. There's an old French saying *les ennemis de mes ennemis sont mes amis*—the enemies of my enemies are my friends. Our attack on Iraq has sown world-wide discord. I think we can take no comfort in the fact that it has made Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden into friends.

In 1998, it was former president George Bush who explained why in the Gulf War of 1991, he had ordered American troops not pursue Saddam Hussein and not to enter Baghdad. And I will quote from what former president Bush said in 1998, "Trying to eliminate Saddam Hussein, extending the ground war into an occupation of Iraq would

have incurred incalculable human and political costs. We could conceivably still be an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land seven years later.” Thus spoke the father. The son evidently did not listen.

A year ago, on a panel at this university discussing whether or not the US should go to war with Iraq, I quoted a statement from Winston Churchill about war. Let me say that Churchill himself fought in five different wars on three different continents and became of course one of the world's most renowned war leaders in the history of war. Here now then are the words of this former head of state—this former soldier—who had such broad experience in war, cautioning those with quick trigger fingers but with less experience in war, first hand, than he. Churchill said, and forgive me but I listen to his tapes from time to time [emulates Churchill's voice], “Let us learn our lessons, never, never, never believe any war will be smooth and easy or that anyone who embarks on that strange voyage can measure the tides and hurricanes he will encounter. The statesman who yields to war fever must realize that, once the signal is given, he is no longer the master of policy, but the slave of unforeseeable and uncontrollable events.”

He then went on to say, “We must not regard war as a kind of game in which we may take a hand and with good luck and good management may play adroitly for an evening and come home safe with our winnings—it is not that. And I rejoice that it cannot be that. I have frequently been astonished, since I have been in this house, to hear with what composure and how glibly members of Parliament, and even ministers talk of war, but war can only end in the ruin of vanquished and the scarcely less fatal commercial dislocation and exhaustion of the conquerors.”

Well Churchill was talking of a European war. We're already experiencing what he called, “the scarcely less fatal commercial dislocation and exhaustion of the conquerors.” Our unemployment is up. Poverty levels are higher than they have been in three years. Business investment is down. The budget which had \$200 million surplus when this administration came to office, this year will run the highest deficit in the history of the United States of America in excess of \$460 billion deficit and growing daily.

The financial and economic costs then, are immense. Jonathan Weisman, drawing upon a study by Yale University economics professor William Nordhaus, has pointed out that “with \$166 billion spent or requested now by this administration Bush's war spending in 2003-4 already exceeds the inflation adjusted costs of the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, and the Gulf War combined.”

We can have little doubt which money was better spent: the Marshall Plan at \$46.7 billion or the current war at \$166 billion and climbing. As Churchill said, “revenge is of all satisfactions, the most costly.”

Everyday more Americans are killed in Iraq. We know the numbers, they now exceed 300 and it's hard to find, but we can find that some 6,000 American troops that are wounded have been medivacuated because of serious injury. We don't know how many of these lives are permanently changed, but we do know that their injuries are serious, or they wouldn't have been medivacuated.

But we're never even given estimates of the numbers of Iraqis killed or wounded. At some point, we Americans need to put into our own personal ethical calculus the fact that every person wounded or killed in Iraq by American troops acting under the direction

of our nations leaders is a death or injury for which we in some cases and to some extent are responsible. Can we assume that an Arab Muslim mother or father who sees their child killed or crippled for life cares any less for that child than the child of an American mother and father? If so, I think we're very naive about what unites our humanity. By our silence, we have shared and do share in taking those lives and limbs and ultimately those losses are even greater than the economic costs.

If then, Iraq was the wrong intervention, Rwanda and Burundi were the intervention that should have been, but weren't and the Marshall Plan was the right one, what guidelines do I suggest for the future?

I'll offer a few suggestions.

First, we should bring to our international relations the same values and expectations that we bring to our personal interactions with others. If [in] our personal relations we value honesty, openness, tolerance, helpfulness, goodwill, then we should take to and expect from others the same sort of things in international relations, because the motivations underlying any relationship are likely to govern the success of that relationship, whether it's an international relations or in personal relations.

Second, I think we must define more carefully what we mean by the term "national interest." Whether or not an intervention is in our "national interest." Are our national interests purely commercial for financial gain or commercial security, or military for strength of arms, or political for influence? Or could they also include things like valuing democracy, nurturing it, nurturing human rights, freedoms of speech and religion and public assembly such as this, equal treatment before the law? How we define our national interest says much about how we define ourselves.

Third, we should not undertake military intervention in support of democracy unless the foreign country either has some experience with democracy, or the population is prepared to demonstrate whether with arms, or non-violently to demonstrate publicly their support for democratic government. The local population must be prepared to take risks and to risk their own lives if we're going to ask our troops to risk theirs. And we must understand that democracy cannot be implanted by an outside nation upon people who do not want it.

Fourth, if there is to be intervention, it should be with multi-national forces, not unilaterally. To act unilaterally is to act like a tyrant. It is excellent to have a giant's strength," Shakespeare says, "but tyrannous to use it like a giant." We cannot claim to act as a democratic nation intervening for the professed cause of establishing democracy if we ignore the expressed wishes of the United Nations, whatever its failings, I've worked with the UN and they've got plenty of failings, whatever their failings, the United Nations is the only international democratic forum that we have that is empowered to decide when and where to enter and intervene militarily. We have to respect the only democratic organization that exists of that sort.

In providing troops for it, we must recognize that the lives of civilians in a country where they intervene are as valuable as the lives of their own troops. The phrase collateral damage always chills me; sounds like someone bumped into a fender and scraped a fender in a parking lot. Collateral damage is a polite term for saying we're killing innocent civilians. We need to care as much about civilian casualties to others as we do about military casualties to our own troops. We should not act in the name of

democracy unless we really believe that all men and women are created equally. And if they are, then their lives are equally important to our lives.

Finally, we should recognize that there may be extreme circumstances such as widespread genocide that could justify an international intervention without all these other guidelines being met.

Well clearly the guidelines I've proposed don't match our current circumstances in Iraq. So, you can legitimately say, "Very well Bob, even if we're in a mess, what do we do now?"

And to that I certainly don't have an easy answer, but I would suggest this, lets get out quickly and turn it over to the United Nations as quickly as we can. I say this because the United Nations will be trusted by the Iraqis far more than will the United States of America. They don't think the UN is there to capture their oil supplies. They don't think the UN is there to Christianize a Muslim country. They know the United Nations whatever it spends is international, is going to include a lot of Arab nations.

The longer we stay, the more American lives we lose. Jihadists from Arab and Muslim countries everywhere are going to come to Iraq to enjoy the greatest opportunity they'll ever have to depose the "Great Satan" the USA, to slay Christian and Jewish infidels, and to gain salvation for themselves. The longer we stay, no matter how many buildings and hospitals we construct, the more Iraqis will be convinced the US is here to stay and how would we feel if any other nation came and said, "we're here for your benefit and we're just going to stay around until you show yourselves ready to govern yourselves." I don't think we'd trust them.

And trust is the basis that underlies every government's relations with its people. Peace and normal civil society cannot exist without trust. That trust is absent now and the United Nations will have a much better chance than we will of establishing it. And establishing an Iraqi government that can win trust from its own people.

I suspect that LBJ, in retrospect, might have wished he had pulled troops, pulled the American troops out of Vietnam when perhaps 5 or 10 or 15,000 troops had been killed rather than waiting until 58,000 were.

If one realizes that a mistake has been made, it's best to correct it quickly rather than wait.

That was true in the 1960s, it's true in 2003.

And basically that is going to conclude my question of when to intervene.

But I want to thank you and Texas State University for the opportunity to be with you this evening.

I would like to leave you with words from William Shakespeare—the greatest writer of all time—and Abraham Lincoln—the greatest president of our nation. Shakespeare said, "it is excellent to have a giant's strength," but Lincoln might have added, "but let us now do all we may to achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and all nations."

Thank you very much.

Lecture transcribed by Benjamin Hicklin, graduate research assistant 2007-08