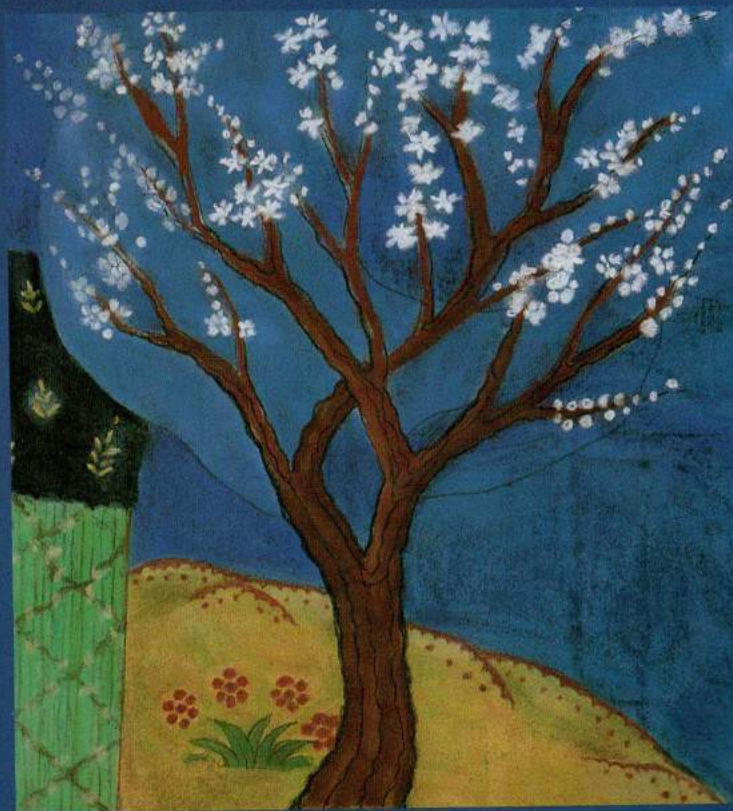


EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST: «THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY»

MARGARET THATCHER, former Prime Minister of Great Britain

September 24, 1997

THE 1997 ISSAM FARES LECTURE



"Europe and the Middle East: The Future of Democracy"
by

former Prime Minister of Great Britain
The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, LG, OM, FRS

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MARGARET THATCHER



Margaret Thatcher, former Conservative Member of Parliament for Barnet, Finchley, was Britain's first female Prime Minister. She was appointed Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, and Minister for the Civil Service in 1979, following the success of the Conservative Party in the General Election. When the Conservative Party won the General Elections in 1983 and 1987, Lady Thatcher became the first British Prime Minister this century to successfully contest three consecutive General Elections. Under her leadership, Britain changed from a country where regulation crushed initiative to one where enterprise regenerated the economic and social base. Direct taxes were reduced and companies were encouraged to invest in Britain. Educated at Oxford, Lady Thatcher has a degree in Natural Science and a Master of Arts. Upon leaving Oxford, she worked as a research chemist and read for the Bar in her spare time. She was called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn in 1954 and practiced as a barrister, specializing in taxation law, before being elected to the House of Commons in 1959.

In November 1990, she resigned as Prime Minister and in December of the same year was awarded the Order of Merit by Her Majesty The Queen. In June of 1992 she was elevated to the House of Lords to become Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven. She was made a Member of the Most Noble Order of the Garter in April, 1995. Her first volume of memoirs, «The Downing Street Years,» published in 1993, covers her years as prime minister from 1979 to 1990. Her latest book, «The Pass to Power,» was published in 1995.

Lady Thatcher is Chancellor at Buckingham University, England, and Chancellor of William and Mary College in Virginia. She is a patron of a number of charities and has established her own foundation.



Issam Fares

I am pleased to welcome Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to the Fares Lecture Series at Tufts University.

Baroness Thatcher consistently stood for what is just and for what is right, she never compromised where principles were involved and she fought hard for her convictions.

In an era of socialism, Prime Minister Thatcher carried the standard of free economy, open markets, and privatization. In an era of fear and compromise she acted with courage. She spoke for the entire Free World, and no Western leader ventured into a major international commitment without consulting with her. Such was her position, such was her influence.

When Lebanon approached her in 1983, she said she would help because Lebanon is a democratic country, and can help promote democracy in the Arab world. She helped Lebanon because her eye was on the future of freedom and democracy in the Middle East.

After extensive efforts, the Lebanese with the help of good friends, reached an accord in 1989. This accord, known as the «Taif Agreement,» ended the war. Lebanon has now regained its stability, and is one of the safest countries in the world. The United States has recognized this fact by lifting the travel ban to Lebanon which it had imposed in the dark days of the internal war.

Lebanon's long-term stability depends on the stability of the region, and particularly on the just resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. If the peace process is important to all countries in the region, it is of utmost importance to Lebanon. Until a real peace is attained, existing uncertainties will persist. Peace in our region cannot be realized piecemeal. Separate treaties between Israel on the one hand and Egypt, Jordan, and the PLO on the other, will not achieve the desired results. Indeed, they did not.

The region needs a peace based on substance, not form, which is why Lebanon and Syria are working towards a comprehensive stable and just peace.

The peace process requires the serious commitment of the United States and the United Kingdom. In the 1940s the United States and the United Kingdom joined together and won war. Now they have a chance to join together again and win the peace.

If such are the challenges that face the peace process, then let's accept them. And let's, in Thatcher's style, decide, plan, and act.

To act and not to turn back, has been her style.

This is the peace that Lebanon needs, this is the peace the region needs and this is the peace that the world deserves.

Thank you Baroness Thatcher for being our Speaker this evening, and thank you all for your participation.



Margaret Thatcher

People like Issam Fares make vision
and ideals a reality

The American way of life

I have to thank Mr. Fares very much for this Lecture Series, of his great philanthropy and good works, which bring new opportunity for many young people.

From his life and experiences of the Lebanon, he knows how vital it is always to keep hope alive among people who have experienced so many troubles. At this university, you always had reasons, starting from the earliest days of your foundation, to be thankful for the leadership of people like Charles Tufts. He and others, not only had a vision of the future, but like Mr. Fares, later, took action to make that vision and ideals a reality.

Now, in history and in current times, the question is sometimes asked: Is history merely the outcome of time and circumstance, or is it a march of events ordered and guided by eminent men and women?

Here, in our lifetime, we have no doubt of the answer.

It is often due to the leadership of great men and women who persevered with their beliefs until they reached their goals and who were steadily supported by all of those who believed in their purpose and objectives.

Now, my friends, I will tackle a particular subject some of you asked me to speak about: «Europe and the Middle East and the future of democracy.»

But, may I first say a word or two about this great country America, especially as this region is steeped in the history of the events which led to the founding of America.

My friends, this is the only country in the world founded on liberty.

Everyone, early settlers and founding fathers came here freely to practice their own religion, freely to practice their own law, to live their own lives in an exemplary way.

The declaration of independence refers to inalienable rights and it is the purpose of governments to protect those inalienable rights. These rights are inalienable for every person and citizen.

The early settlers who had great difficulties didn't need to be told to look after their neighbor as themselves. It was part of their creed and indeed it was a driving necessity for survival. All of these beliefs and this generosity and this concern for others have come through in the American way of life.

And each year, I take great pleasure in looking at the tax returns and finding how much American people have voluntarily contributed to good causes.

Two years ago, it was \$124 billion. It has now gone up to \$140 billion, voluntarily contributed in thankfulness for the life of freedom, which they live. As they have prospered, so they have chosen to try to extend their way

«The Declaration of Independence refers to inalienable rights and it is the purpose of governments to protect those inalienable rights. These rights are inalienable for every person and citizen.»

of life and prosperity to others.

As I look at the early history of this country, as it came to independence, I think we had a bad patch of that time in England. I think we had a king who didn't wholly believe in freedom of religion, and so the founding fathers who wanted to practice their own religion came here to do it. But, if you look at the marvelous set of Federalist Papers, which discussed some of the early issues, I am always very interested in the one by James Madison, Federalist Paper 55, which pointed out that democracy presupposes the virtue of its individual citizens; this is a very important point.

Let not anyone in this audience think that the definition of democracy is regular elections and the party that wins is then made government and that is the end of the definition of democracy.

It isn't, it couldn't be because you could just as well have a dictatorship of the majority as you could a dictatorship of a few people.

So, it goes much further than that, and your founding fathers realized, as James Madison said: «As there is a degree of depravity in mankind which requires a certain degree of circumspection and distrust. So there are other qualities in human nature, which justify a certain portion of esteem and confidence. Republican government,» he continued, «presupposes the existence of these qualities in a higher degree than any other form of government.» So he pointed out that democracy presupposes the virtue of its individual citizens. That is the basis upon which you can rely, upon the virtue of the majority knowing that they would also honor the inalienable rights of the minority, not only in theory, but in practice.

And so, we have found in the battles of this century - the great ideological battles which we've had in this century - when the world has really been separated into two segments:

- Those who believed in liberty and freedom under a rule of law with private property.
- And those who lived under the various tyrannies, where there's Nazism, where there's fascism of the Spanish or Italian kind, or where there is communism.

I'm afraid I have to say my friends that most of these terrible tyrannies came from Europe. And they were also beaten by the Anglo-American alliance, and the alliance of other peoples who left the countries that were beaten and came to join us.

What we have learned in the trial for freedom because the great advantage,

End of communism achieved by peaceful means



A rule of law means a rule of justice

the great achievement of our time recently, was that we actually brought down the other tyrannies by battle, at great cost of life, but we were able to bring down communism by a steady Cold War and a truism and further belief, and so that tyranny fell partly from within, partly from the policy and attitude of nations in the free world. In fact, we achieved the end of that tyranny by peaceful means.

And so, we have learned, from this century, from the tyrannies whether they'll be of the European Nazism and the fascism or whether they'll be of the communism which covered the whole of the Soviet Union, and they're still extending in a large part of China, but they have now started to release it by economic liberty.

We have learned this:

- The states, societies and economies that allowed the distinctive talents of individuals to flourish, flourished too.
- Those which dwarf, crush, distort, or manipulate, or ignore the talents of individuals and their rights cannot progress.

Now, this is a point I really wish to make. It is only western civilization of those parts of the world to which western values have been successfully exported, that have discovered the secret of continued progress, and this is because western civilization developed, in addition to democracy, a reliable rule of law. What do I mean by that? When I first went to lecture in Russia, after the fall of communism, I went to speak to young people, and I talked about the rule of law. I said what do you mean by the rule of law? Then of course it occurred to me that they had lived under a kind of law, but the laws they lived under were a dictate of the government of the day. They had certain courts, but the judge would ring up the government to see what decision they wanted before he pronounced a person guilty next day, and so they had no idea of a person having rights, no idea of a law brought about by great judges who believed in equality and fairness, no idea of laws brought about by discussion in the parliamentary system, representative of the people.

I wonder how to explain all this because they haven't, and they hadn't got it. And this is one of the great shortcomings of those countries that have brought with them communism and now find they have not the other essential of a free society, a rule of law in the sense of rule of justice.

We have to do all that we can, in fact, to see that they learn to have such a rule; they can learn from us that they have a rule which enables people to have a right to be heard freely before a court with independent judges, and

«The states, societies and economies that allowed the distinctive talents of individuals to flourish, flourished too. Those which dwarf, crush, distort, or manipulate, or ignore the talents of individuals and their rights cannot progress.»

«The governments are there to serve the people, and to provide a framework of law and economics, within which the talents and abilities of the people can flourish.»

A free and prosperous society

then for a verdict to be given.

So that is the essence of the difference, that is the essence of the victory. On the economic side, it remains a good rule of thumb that those economies in which the state takes a smaller share of the national income to be spent by the state, those economies forge ahead and those in which the state's share swells beyond half of those domestic products soon gets into trouble.

This is the definition of democracy and a free society, and it's interesting if you look down the table which I've got to see that the United States take a smaller proportion of the national income to be spent by government than any other nation. In your free society which I've described, this is why you are the most prosperous nation in the world, and the one able to give help so freely to others. So it happens that the second one, but it has very strict structure, is Japan also very prosperous but nothing like the history of the United States. The third one is the United Kingdom, which takes 41%. I must tell you that during my time, the most it took was 39%, but it's 41% now. Canada comes along with 44, and Australia is less with 36, and then you get the rise, a rise among some of the countries of Europe:

- Germany 50%,
- France 55%,
- Italy 53%,
- The Netherlands about 50%,
- Norway 45%,
- Sweden up at 64%,
- Denmark also at 61%.

Now you see all of this is part of a free society, its part of democracy, its part of saying: The governments are there to serve the people, and to provide a framework of law and economics, within which the talents and abilities of the people can flourish.

And this century has been a struggle against tyranny in which democracy and freedom has won.

Let's take the Middle East next because all during my time in office, and long before, for many, many years, the Middle East has been one of the most important international subjects of discussion and a very great concern. Indeed my friends, more blood has been shed over Palestine and the surrounding countries than for any other spot on earth.

In Britain, the great Lord Carson in the last century, said: «That this is not only the land of the Scriptures, the land of the Crusaders, the land of the Old

«This is the area where you've got three great religions and ironically enough, it has also been the area of great conflict, it's also the geographical junction between East and West. It's the bridgehead between three continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa.»

The Middle East

The clash of civilizations was formed by the extremists and the fanatics



Testament, the land of the New Testament, and the area, of course, of Islam which accepts the Old Testament, accepts the New Testament with the Christ as a prophet, with Mohammed as the last prophet.»

This is the area where you've got three great religions and ironically enough, it has also been the area of great conflict; it's also the geographical junction between East and West. It's the bridgehead between three continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa.

It's the area necessary to the defense of the Suez Canal, which is the trade route of the world. You have to pass through the Suez, otherwise go the whole way round the Cape. It was the road to India for us, and it is the road to the oil fields without which none of us could be prosperous.

This is the significance, the economic significance and the political significance of the area of the Middle East about which we're talking. It has always been of great significance. I never think you would understand the nation unless you understand its history and you don't understand the region or this place unless you look at its history.

From the year 637 to 1917, Jerusalem remained under one form of Islam or another. After that we had the clash of civilizations, and that clash was formed, not by the true disciples of any faith, but by the extremists and the fanatics who distorted the faith so much, that the resulting fanaticism had no basis, whatsoever, in the regional religion. We came towards the end of World War I; this was when great changes occurred. This part of the Middle East had, for long time, been under Turkish domination. The Turkish army was beaten by the Allies in World War I. General Allenby, the victor, came round from Turkey, round to the southern coast of the Mediterranean and came up to what is now Israel, and came to the gates of Jerusalem.

He dismounted from his horse in recognition of the sanctity of this city, and walked into Jerusalem. A year before that, or a few months before that, there has been what was called the Balfour Declaration, that is from Britain, which recognized because of the enormous services of Judaism, that the Jewish people should one day have their own National Home.

Now, also at that part at the end of that war, there were other nations that were created. The British troops went further round, and they took what became Iraq. It was three administrative regions of Turkey. Later, as result of that war, those three administrative regions aligned and they were called Iraq.

Now, you see so many of our problems arise from things which were done in the past. Britain had been in the Gulf States, long before oil was found; we



had in fact, relationships with the Sheikdoms from 1820.

Then, of course, we were very closely involved, right until 1970, where it seemed that we could no longer maintain the armed forces sufficient to have an influence on the region and we were not ready to take action, if required.

And so, we pulled out of our relationship with the Sheikdoms.

I, myself, think it was a great pity. Had I been there, it might have been different. But, I wasn't there in 1970.

Before long, and the next action, as you know, was the Gulf War with Iraqi aggression. Again it's a non-democratic state; neither is Iran.

Countries that have Islam as their religion often take the civil side of Islam and have the «Sharia» law. That, of course, does not make them democratic, if the country has that religion as its official religion and as its civil religion. This is not the case of Jordan, which indeed has an elected assembly and is one of the first areas of the region, not the only one. But now will have its third election in November.

That is the whole background. Now we have the Gulf War. The PLO was on the wrong side, and we had the first use of the Scud missiles and we knew and understood their danger. And what would happen if we ever had biological or chemical weapons attached to them.

And we also knew what would happen when those Scud missiles could go much further and not merely go from Iraq down to Saudi Arabia or merely from Iraq to Israel, but could go in fact right to London, and later right across the Atlantic to reach the United States. So we are in a very different world.

It was not all darkness for the Middle East, because, as you know, we had the leadership of one or two great people in the Middle East. Sadat in Egypt. I have met Sadat. He was a remarkable man. A man who could foresee a problem, imagine a solution and try to take action to make that solution happen. And so Sadat decided to go to Jerusalem. He received a tremendous welcome because every one recognizes a courageous man and a courageous leader. And Mr. Begin, then Prime Minister of Israel, who had been a really thorough hardliner, Mr. Begin actually negotiated and they came to a settlement and an agreement about Sinai.

My friends, you must recall this one, because it was the first agreement reached and because it gave us hope that there would be other agreements but it has not in fact been so easy. It gave hope that eventually other aspects could be solved. There have been many international discussions about this.

Sadat, Begin and the Sinai agreement

«But the fact is my friends that we have not the clutch and we have not the position and we have not the unity that the United States has. And I have to say to you that I believe the only nation in the world that can help the nations of that region to come to a solution is the United States of America.»

Terrorism a means to achieve ends



At one stage during my Prime Ministership, when I went to the meeting of the European Economic Community, it was suggested that Europe - it was then not the Europe of the 15 but the Europe of the 12 - might make an approach to see if we could help to reach an agreement in this difficult area of the world. I was chosen to go.

But the fact is my friends that we have not the clutch and we have not the position and we have not the unity that the United States has. And I have to say to you that I believe the only nation in the world that can help the nations of that region to come to a solution is the United States of America.

It is perhaps a little bit disappointing that we haven't known that it has been able to get further. I do not know how the solution will come. What I do know is this, it can only come when all sides have a greater wish to reach a settlement that will stick and which is just, then they have to rigidly hang on to every single piece of land that they have. It's called a peace process.

The Peace Process. As another favourite friend of mine pointed out, a process could go on forever. And I would rather have something much more dynamic, some negotiations to reach a solution. We can't say what that solution will be; we can say when the will is there. When the people have had enough, a solution can be reached. But there is a new feature of our time and that is the extent of terrorism. Just at the time when we are being very thankful and indeed congratulating ourselves that we have reached many agreements, that we brought down communism without war, that we have not had a major war for 50 years, just at that time, we are seeing violence recur in the form of terrorism again by extremist groups.

Let me make myself clear: these groups Hamas, Hezbollah, they are not true practitioners of the faith, they are people who are using terrorism to try to achieve their own ends. The countries where they find refuge must indeed see that they cease to give them refuge or make it clear that they are not going to negotiate. We must, as I said earlier, keep hope alive. One of the praises of one or two of our historians, the history of hope, there is a history of hope and there will be hope in the future.

And I remember very well a speech made by Rabin, which you probably saw on the lawn of the White House, when they said they're going to negotiate with Arafat. And they quoted this remarkable song: « For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven. A time for war and a time for peace... » And Mr. Rabin said: « We must call upon our inner strength and our higher moral values. The time for peace has come. »

«Now, my friends, if that is the Middle East, it does and will dominate everything. It is such a vital part of the world. It is also - we are very much aware - the oil center of the world.»

«And we would like more genuine democracies because for this reason. Not only is it much better for internal government and much better for the people, but also it is important because there is no case in history where two genuine democracies have ever gone to war with one another. So it is in fact a very good guarantee of peace, longer peace, which we all seek more than any other we could possibly have.»

UN resolutions are only a moral cover

Real democracy is a good guarantee of peace

I am not a supporter of a European Union and of a single currency



We were very hopeful. Hopes at the moment have been dashed, but they are still there. And the time will come when we'll have leaders who'll be able to lead the people to a new stage in this peace. And what we want is that it is reached wholly by negotiation, and that terrorism be dealt very firmly by those countries in which it takes refuge.

Now, my friends, if that is the Middle East, it does and will dominate everything. It is such a vital part of the world. It is also - we are very much aware - the oil center of the world. And when at the time I was still Prime Minister, the time Iraq crossed over the border into Kuwait, it so happened I was in Aspen, and George Bush and I had been speaking at the same conference, and we met and we agreed that invasion must not stand. When I had spoken, I flew up to Washington and I discussed with him how we were going to deal with it. There was the inevitable resolution of the United Nations. Now we are not undermining the United Nations. We have to have it. But resolutions are resolutions and they don't do the job. What they do is give a moral cover to the action you're going to take.

And George Bush and I were in his study that afternoon and, before that resolution had been passed, his planes were on the way across the Atlantic. I came home straight away on that Monday, and our planes were flying across Europe, and had also found a country that would give them an aerodrome from which to take off and so, they were in position quickly.

That is another aspect of the problems in the Middle East. Just remember, there are not that number of democracies in that part of the world, when you look around at the number of dictatorships. There are indeed, in the whole world only 76 democracies.

And we would like more genuine democracies because for this reason. Not only is it much better for internal government and much better for the people, but also it is important because there is no case in history where two genuine democracies have ever gone to war with one another. So it is in fact a very good guarantee of peace, longer peace, which we all seek more than any other we could possibly have.

Just one quick word about Europe, I am a supporter of cooperation between the separate European countries. I am not a supporter of a European Union. I am not a supporter of a single currency.

The case of Europe is totally different from the United States, for everyone came here to be free.

We have 15 individual countries, 15 proud nations, 15 nations with their own history, their own habits, their own cultures.

«Apart from that fact, it's wonderful to see Russia on the way to democracy, although that would take time.»



You cannot put those into a melting pot without trouble. They won't go. You cannot merge all the different currencies, all countries with different economies, all countries with different interest rates, all countries even though they make a whole draft of conditions, economic conditions, financial conditions, that deficit must not be more than 3% of our national debt; must not be more than 60% of GDP. They've totally forgotten about the effect on unemployment. They haven't thought of many of the aspects which would actually cause trouble if they were ever indeed to go for a single concept.

Moreover, the strongest currency in Europe, let's be quite frank about, this is Germany. It's the Deutschmark. They worked very hard to get it strong, and it has a low interest rate, and I wonder what I'd feel if I were German, if I had my pension for which I contributed, let's say for 40 years, in Deutschmark to be repaid in a debased Euro, in artificial currency. It wouldn't work. Cooperation will work.

A forced single currency will cause endless trouble, it will cause even more unemployment. We have the lowest unemployment in Europe and we've now the best economy. So I'm all for European cooperation. That is an advantage.

I was known to be against a European Union. Our courts of law have lasted a long time and I've taken law all over the world and we shouldn't stand for it. Now, that undermines our Parliament. There are regulations that can be made and are made. They can be made by a majority vote among the countries of Europe, so that they can have a regulation made that takes effect in your country without it ever having been discussed. And even if it's opposed by our governments, even if it's opposed by our own locals, the European Court of Justice will overcome it.

That's no way for any of the countries who have known democracy, no way for them to behave. So, no single currency, as far as I am concerned. We have a proper exchange rate mechanism, and no melting pot, but a good cooperation.

Now, I think that probably covers most of the minutes you've given me, so may I just finish by saying this:

How are things different now and how are they the same as things were before the end of the Cold War?

What has changed since the Soviet Union collapsed?

Apart from that fact, it's wonderful to see Russia on the way to democracy, although that would take time.



There will always be potential aggressors

«So, my friends, the West's technological lead has never been more important than now, nor has its defence lead ever been more important as we confront the immense dangers resulting from the possible proliferation of nuclear weapons from China and Russia and the possible use of poison gases. So, it's vital we keep our defences strong.»

I want to make these points: What is the same? It's this, my friends: there's never any lack of potential aggressors, never.

The evil men in the world have a habit, like Saddam Hussein, of getting hold of nations and of getting hold of armies, and of attacking others. There will always be potential aggressors.

Today, Islamic extremist, ethnic terrorist groups have assumed a new importance alongside the ancient problem of the dictator in charge of a non-stable state, namely the Iraq of Saddam Hussein.

A second similarity between the Cold War and now is the way of securing peace and freedom. It's to ensure that the peaceful democratic states of the core of which are still the United States and her allies, that's mainly us, have military superiority over the troublemakers. Now, I emphasize this. I have lived through a time and some of you have, when we let our defenses go down. Had we kept them up between the wars? Had we kept those strengths? Had we kept not only our strength in numbers, but had we kept our technological superiority that we have not and which we must keep, we may never have had a Second World War.

So, my friends, the West's technological lead has never been more important than now, nor has its defense lead ever been more important as we confront the immense dangers resulting from the possible proliferation of nuclear weapons from China and Russia and the possible use of poison gases. So, it's vital we keep our defenses strong.

May I finally do a short quote of Shakespeare about keeping friendships strong, and I'm referring to friendship between the democratic countries led by America. «The friends now hast and their adoption child, grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel.»

That's why my friends, we should be safe and be able to extend the liberties we take for granted to other nations who've never known them.