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## **MODERATOR**

You may continue eating, but since we have a jam-packed program today, I don't want to waste any time, and I'd like to hand it over to Secretary Albright, for her address. Then there will be some time for questions and answers. [APPLAUSE]

## **MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

President Bollinger, and Dean Anderson, and Dick Betts, and Arnold Saltzman, my good friend and patron here, all of you distinguished guests. This first annual Saltzman Forum is now officially one-third over. We look forward to this afternoon when we will dispose of the remaining two-thirds of the world's problems through [LAUGHS] our panels on such non-controversial topics of war and peace, and values and rights, and by day's end we will have achieved a state of perfect enlightenment. [LAUGHS] The only problem is that we will have 50 different opinions about what that really means. If we agree on anything, it is that democracy is the best system of government ever designed, and we are all democrats here, whether capitalized or lowercase. And this doesn't mean, however, that we agree on whether or how democracy may be best promoted in other lands.

Shortly before he died, Thomas Jefferson predicted that the Democratic experiment would spread across the globe, and I quote "to some part sooner, to others later, but finally, to all." At the time, our leaders thought the merits of democracy were so obvious that countries would adopt the system without any need for nudging from us, so we felt that the wisest course was to mind our own business. George Washington warned us against foreign entanglements, and John Quincy Adams advised us to be the well-wisher to freedom everywhere, but to champion only our own. The globe, however, becomes smaller as it spins, while the oceans shrink, and eventually isolation becomes impossible. And that's why, in 1917, we found ourselves drawn into a bloody conflict in Europe, and President Wilson blamed the catastrophe on the inherent moral ills of dictatorship. And so we fought, in Wilson's memorable phrase, "to make the world safe for democracy."

In 1941, we went into war again. This time, to repel aggression in the Pacific, and to defeat in Europe the greatest evil ever to walk the Earth. During the Cold War, John Kennedy pledged that our nation would pay any price, bear any burden, and meet any hardship, to assure the success of liberty. There are some who think that such rhetoric goes too far, and causes America to try to do too much, as in Vietnam, but I was born in a country, Czechoslovakia, that was taken over by Communists, when I was 10 years old, and this is actually a good day to talk about this, since October 28th is the founding of Czechoslovakia, because of Woodrow Wilson, and I was one of the few of my generation who had the opportunity to grow up in freedom, because my family came to the United States. And I

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have many friends, who lived on the far side of the Iron Curtain, who told me, after the Berlin Wall came down, how important it had been to know America was standing up for their liberty.

The identification of America with democracy has been a source of strength for our country from its earliest days. Our land is home to members of more than 1,000 ethnic groups, from the Acadians to Zoroastrians, and we are divided by everything, yet hold together by one thing, and that is democracy, but we should never hesitate or doubt, that political liberty is inseparable from America's purpose, in world affairs. But what, as a practical matter, does that mean?

In the words of President Bush, we have, and I quote, "a calling from beyond the stars, to proclaim liberty throughout the world, to all the inhabitants thereof." I see the job of building democracy as more of a down to Earth proposition. In my experience, democratic progress results less from grand proclamations, than from a million acts of quiet courage. The unwillingness to be silent. The determination to print the truth. The decision to organize. The refusal to be co-opted. The strength to resist intimidation. And the willingness to try, again and again, in the face of nightsticks and steel bars, propaganda and lies. Slowly, the barriers that cannot be pushed aside are worn away, and the day of victory comes, and the forces of freedom sweep into office amidst a chorus of Hallelujahs.

The heroes of liberty soon find however, that they have arrived, not at the end of their responsibilities, but at the beginning, because to govern democratically is hard. It means governing without one of the most powerful tools ever invented for controlling human behavior, fear. It means governing, based on the theory outlined by Jefferson, that humans are endowed, not only with certain rights, but also with an innate sense of justice, in that we can be restrained from wrong, and protected in right, by authorities whom we select, whose powers we have, carefully defined and limited. This theory, that humans can be trusted to govern themselves in freedom, remains just that, a theory. It has not been proven. It is still being tested, every day, in countries across the globe, some oppressed by tyrants, some enmeshed in strife, some held back by royal tradition, and some made weak by poverty and disease. Even in many countries that have elected governments, the democratic institutions are weak, undermined by corruption, overwhelmed by public expectations, and paralyzed by division.

Witnessing these tests, we sometimes grow impatient, and think perhaps it's our job to install democracies at the point of a gun, but democracy, by its nature, must be homegrown, and America, by its nature, cannot succeed, as an imperial power. We cannot impose democracy, but we should not be shy about promoting it. We can do that, through solidarity with other democratic nations, through assistance in building and sustaining democratic institutions, through support for democratic activists, and by condemning abuses of human rights. We can do it, by understanding that democracy is not an event, but a process that

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takes years and decades and even centuries to take hold, and that it is never fully achieved. And as our panel discussion today will surely reflect, we can promote democracy, by linking that policy to others that nurture peace, stop injustice, increase intercultural understanding, and take dead aim at the real axis of evil - poverty, ignorance and disease.

In closing, let me just say that I have always believed in democracy, but that conviction was reinforced a thousand times over, on the 11th of September, 2001. The attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon reminded us all that the struggle for freedom is never easy and never over, and the masks worn by our enemies may change from Nazi, to Communist, to racist, to apostle of terror, but always, the twisted logic, is the same. Always we hear the claim, that the human race is divided between them and us, and that their security requires our destruction. There is, they insist, but one truth. A truth demanding a holy war for the glory of the Fatherland, the purity of blood, the supremacy of race, or the satisfaction of a vengeful God.

To use a diplomatic term of ours, that begins with balderdash. In democracy, we do not claim title to the truth, because the only truths we hold self-evident are those that allow individuals to determine for themselves, whose philosophy they will adopt, which leaders they will select, and what careers they will pursue. It's no accident that where terrorists are most present democracy is more absent. Certainly, terrorists can exist and strike anywhere, but they cannot long flourish in any society, where leaders are held accountable, and the rule of law is applied. As I said earlier, Americans once went to war, to make the world safe for democracy. Now we promote democracy to make the world safe. That is a hard task, but both a necessary and an appropriate one. And we, after all, gather today on the campus of Columbia University, not Kings College, and we are reminded by the buildings dedicated to Alexander Hamilton and John Jay, that from the beginning, democracy is what America has been all about.

So thank you very much. And I am delighted to answer your questions. [APPLAUSE]  
Thank you.

So Dick says I can answer questions, right?

**MODERATOR**

I was just going to say nice things about you.

**MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

Oh. [LAUGHS] We can do that.

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**MODERATOR**

[LAUGHS]

**MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

Are there any questions? Yes?

**MAN**

What about our stance, towards countries, that in some ways are democratic, but display tendencies that certainly are disturbing, but the way in which they are disturbing, is not related to our ideal would be, as far as that goes. Should we be working against the Venezuelan government? Is it a democratic enough government? That, as you know, is obvious; they are doing something that falls on the margins of democracy.

**MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

First of all, I think one thing that you learn when you have to be a policy maker is that consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds. So, [LAUGHS] you do have to have a pragmatic approach on a variety of issues while maintaining, I think general guidelines and principles. And, I think the Venezuelan issue is particularly difficult, I have to tell you, because having been in Venezuela when it was run by a bunch of tired old men that had no relationship to their people, I can certainly understand how Hugo Chavez got elected. Appealing very much to a sense that the wealth of Venezuela was not being distributed, and that a whole series of reforms had to happen, and I have to tell you, when he first came into office, that we, in the Clinton Administration, were very confused about him, and tried to figure out how to deal with him.

I happen not to be in favor of coups. Despite the fact that the new woman Commander in Chief seems to. I don't know how many of you watch that show, but [LAUGHS] she is trying to prove she is a man, but anyway, I am not in favor of coups. And, and I think that it doesn't fit into the OIS system, and a variety of other issues, but I do think that, to maintain our principles, we should be talking about the fact, that there are those within Venezuela who would like to see their rights carried out.

And, I am Chairman of the Board of the National Democratic Institute. Ken Relic [PH] is the President, and Carl Gershwin is our leader as President of the National Endowment for Democracy, and Venezuela is an issue that we have been seized with, as we would say at the U.N. And people from, the opposition parties, the Seh-mah-tay group [PH], have actually come to see us, in various ways, saying that they need to have their rights at least mentioned, in terms of the voting system, and what they can do, and I think, in that way, it is possible for us to maintain our principles - talk to them.

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OK. I don't think it helps us at the moment to be in a war with, Hugo Chavez, who has a great deal of money, and who is, in fact, doing some of the things that Castro wishes he could have done. So I think it's a difficult situation. But I would, and at this stage, a diplomat says, we have a multifaceted [LAUGHS] policy, which allows us to engage on some level, and make very clear our criticisms on another, and support those who are fighting for freedom, democracy.

The hard part and I have to move onto this question that you asked, I talked about the dissidents and people in Central and Eastern Europe, for instance, during the Cold War. They wanted to be identified with the United States. You know, when Vaclav Havel says it helped that you all talked about the fact that I was in jail, or whatever, you go to the Middle East now, the last thing any dissident wants, is to be identified with us. It's the kiss of death. And so, it makes it very difficult, in terms of how you propound these kinds of policies, to show that you want to help them - if by talking about them, you have actually made their life much more complicated.

### **WOMAN**

I am not quite sure how to raise this question, but I would love to hear your comments on the Bush Administration, and the situation with the Saudi thing.

### **MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

Well, that's easier than what I thought you were going to ask me. [LAUGHS]

### **MODERATOR**

The next question.

### **MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

[LAUGHS] No, let me just say, that I have a complicated view of the Saudis. First of all, I think there is no question that it is a country that is run by a Royal Family that permeates everything, and has incredible power, and obviously, incredible wealth, but the United States is very dependent on Saudi Arabia. And I found, much to my surprise, that, the Saudis actually, at least in our case, while they said some things in public, were actually quite helpful behind the scenes. So I would assume that the same kind of thing is going on, at this particular time. All I know about their relations is all just rumor, or Fahrenheit 911 or something. I mean, what does happen, when you are President of the United States, is that you actually have relations with the heads of other countries, and I am sure that there are a number of intricate aspects of this relationship. But, we need to try to push King Abdullah into, doing more to reform. Because if he doesn't, then the whole place is going to implode, so for his own good. I have to say, incredibly complicated relationships with Saudi Arabia.

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Now it was interesting when I was talked about for being Secretary of State. People said, well, how can she possibly be Secretary of State? She will never be able to deal with any Arabs and Saudi Arabia specifically. So I actually had no problem with them. I mean, it helped that I arrived in a very large plane that said United States of America.

[LAUGHS] But I had some very interesting discussions with the Saudis, and someday the record will show all the things that we actually were able to accomplish with them. And I have to say in passing, I actually had more problems with the men in our own government than most of the Saudis. [LAUGHS]

Yes?

### **MAN**

The United States often finds itself dealing with people who are opposed by ideological fanatics. And how is it possible, in a democracy, to educate young people, to really believe passionately in democracy, at a time when young people are taught to be tolerant of other systems? Everything is relative. I mean, how can we keep all these young people to be educated, to believe passionately in reason, and in the values of moderation, and tolerance, and so forth, and how to become passionate about those things?

### **MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

[LAUGHS] Well, first of all, you turn off the television set. This is a big question to talk about in an educational institution. And I think that, our educational systems need an incredible amount of help. Not as much at the university level as at the high school level. Which, to a great extent, I have seen this for years where, there is great waste. I do think that people need to be taught to believe something passionately. Not, however, in deciding that they have the only truth. It is, I think possible, to be really passionate, and yet not be totally certain, that the thing you are passionate about excludes everybody else's views. And that's the difference.

I think it's perfectly possible these days, in our version of madrassas, to teach people, that they have to believe in whatever. I am passionate, about a lot of things, but I also can see the value in other aspects. But I do think also, that what has to be taught, Carl, are the basics of things, not just emotions, and I think we have a tendency to think now, that facts are unimportant, and learning the history of why Communism doesn't work and democracy does, or why fascism doesn't, or what intolerance has brought throughout the world. But, you know, just to do a little advertising here, I just turned in a manuscript on a book that I think people will be very surprised I wrote. Which is about the role of God and religion in American foreign policy, and with a great title, *The Mighty and the Almighty?* But I think that, it made me think a lot about, moral equivalence, and the extent to which there is a right

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and a wrong, and the problem with relativism. And it's hard to get your head around being tolerant, and also not thinking that everything is totally relative and that there are a variety of absolute truths, but it's not necessary that I myself am the purveyor of the absolute truth. But I do think you can be passionate and tolerant at the same time.

Yes?

### **MAN**

I wanted to ask about the timing of the first elections, after a military intervention. It's common these days to say that it's a danger to hold elections too quickly, because they'll tend to reward the groups in society that are already organized. Often ethnic groups were the causes of conflict, the reason you had to intervene. So the people say, for example, that in Bosnia, because we have held elections pretty quickly, that the result was that there were the internationalist ethnic groups. That it would have taken longer to prepare the way for groups that could compete successfully on a non-ethnic kind of civic program. But on the other hand, these same people will say, well, we just have to wait longer to hold the first elections. But you can't wait longer to hold the first elections, either because the powerful group in the society, like say the Shia, who were demanding, elections, as their right, or because there is the motive to hold an election, to have an end plane, so that the intervening powers can withdraw.

So I am just wondering, first of all, do you see, that there is a problem with holding elections too quickly, and if you see that there is a problem, how to manage this, the tradeoff?

### **MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

Well, one of the things we saw on the panel this morning, and I am sure it will come out in other panels, is the difficulty of pacing the democratization, and to a great extent, this is something that develops organically from below and can't be ordered, but the desire to move towards a democracy of some kind needs to be managed. That you can't just make it. You can't control the timing of it. I think that's a fair statement to make.

And also because of everybody knowing everything about what's going on everywhere else, countries now see the election processes decide that, in fact, they have arrived at a democracy. And one of the points that I made in my remarks, is that democracy is a process, and the elections are just the first part. I do think that the hard part, every situation is different, in terms of how X country arrives at its moment when it is either independent or created part of some democratic trend. I happen to be a great believer in political parties, that political parties are the vehicle by which the people talk to their, governments, and vice versa. And that one of the issues, again which came up this morning, is the difference between civil societies where everybody is participating, but it's at the expense, to some extent, of political parties.

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So I think it's useful, if one were operating totally with the schedule that you would like yourself, is to be able to develop some political party structures, and then have elections. But sometimes, the demands of the moment are that you need to get people involved and begin the electoral process, which then means that the second and third elections are the important ones.

When we started the National Democratic Institute we actually had no idea what we were supposed to do, and we also didn't fully understand how you define democracy. And people would say, well, it's an election. And many of us would say, it's not an election, because they actually had them in the Soviet Union, or they have just had one in other countries, where if you win 99 percent, it's not exactly... it makes you question a little bit. But what really is the definition of democracy, is the existence of an oppositional party. I now feel more strongly about that, than I have in other times, and the reason, is that it then provides accountability, and the hope for choice.

So if I had my complete druthers, I would wait a little bit, in order to be able to build up party structures, and try to make sure that some of the things that you are talking about in Bosnia didn't happen, but you often don't have that luxury. And so the thing to do is to try to get people trained and organized, and then work very hard for the second election, or the third one. But if one had a little bit of time, I think you would try to pace some of the parts... rule of law, media access. But the problem is, that with the rush of events, you have to try to do everything at once. I do not think that early elections, however, actually cause conflict. I think that they may make life more complicated, but I would never blame the election process for actually causing the conflict, which I think some people sometimes say. I don't go along with that.

Yes?

**MAN**

I hope that you'll forgive me for asking an unfair question, but it really goes back to the United Nations. What do you think sometimes is the role of the United Nations so far?

**MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

I am happy to answer that, but can I also have a little bit of water? First of all, I loved my job, as U.N. Ambassador. I was privileged to be there at a time when we liked the U.N, [LAUGHS] and where we saw its value, and for me, and I can say this in this small audience, if you go by 45th and First Avenue, the place where the U.S. Mission is, there is a hole in the ground. And that is symptomatic of what the issue is here. And so, I am very worried about Mr. Bolton. I would not actually like to be in his position, [LAUGHS] of

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being there without Senate confirmation, and the difficulty of it. I have only met Mr. Bolton once in my life, and that was when I was named to be U.N. Ambassador, he was Assistant Secretary for International Organizations. So he debriefed me, and it made me wonder why I would ever want the job to go to such a hopelessly disorganized and corrupt place. But, I think that he made a mistake on the Millennium Summit when he went in and started reorganizing everything. I am wondering how much he will have learned, in order to how to deal with the Syria resolution, because I think that the U.S. would like to see it instantly, but it's much more complicated than that, and I think it will be interesting to see how he negotiates it.

I do think it is important for the U.S., permanent representative and the others to be very aware, that the U.N. needs reforming and it is absolutely essential. And I think even people who love the U.N., and I am sitting here, Dick Gardner, who probably loves the U.N. more than anybody I have ever met.

**MAN**

Well, not critically.

**MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

No, that's what I mean. And I think that, even people who love it, have a sense that tough love is necessary, and that it means reforming. We were hampered in that, by the fact that we owed so much money, both in dues, and in peacekeeping assessments, which led our best friends, the British, to say, representation without taxation. They have been waiting 200 years to say that. [LAUGHS] So I think that we do have to reform it, and the question is what spirit it's done with.

So it's hard to say, not being there every day, how Mr. Bolton is doing, but I just think it was the wrong image to name that kind of a person to it. So, other than that, I have no views on the subject. [LAUGHS]

Any more? That's it? No more, OK. Yes?

**MAN**

Could you talk about the risks? That seems to be very real, at least for the short term, that democracy in the Middle East would in fact benefit Islamists, and what that says about the wisdom of putting democracy at the center of U.S. policy for the region.

**MADELEINE ALBRIGHT**

Well, first of all, I truly do believe in democracy, as I said, and I have, wherever and whenever, thought that you couldn't just decide, that one group of people, couldn't be democratic, so there was a lot of democracy discussion and promotion. But the truth is that

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President Bush didn't invent democracy. I did. [LAUGHS] And we had the community of democracies, and we really were working on a variety of different points of trying to enlarge the democratic circle. I think we were so focused on the Middle East peace process that we didn't really push enough in the Middle East. So I basically do believe that it's important to not say that one whole part of the world shouldn't have democracy.

As I indicated in my remarks, I don't think the way we have gone about it in Iraq has helped the cause of democracy. There are not a lot of countries out there now that look at Iraq and say, I would like my country to look just like that, so that has not been a great advertisement. I do think, however, that we actually have to take a chance on the Islamic outcome, which means something else, which means that we have to be prepared to create some space for Islamic political groups, because you take something like Egypt, where the brotherhood is outlawed, but is very popular because it's not identified with the United States. Yet, if there was room for other Islamic parties that eschewed violence, it might sap away some of that martyr aspect, or victim aspect that the brotherhood has. So the question is, how to be supportive, without, given what I said earlier that any American support is kind of a kiss of death, how to make it possible for other Islamic, parties or groups, to emerge. And then, again, it is not without its risks, and it, again, goes to the, the second or third election. But I think we make a huge mistake, if we decide that, democracy for everybody but the Muslims, because that's what it looks like.

OK? Thank you. [APPLAUSE]

**MODERATOR**

Now let me just add our thanks to Secretary Albright. It's always a great pleasure and honor to have her here, and of course, to have her as a faculty member now, not only as an alumna, is terrific. To have the positions you have had in life, have to have had a very significant influence on how you think about the world, the things you understand, and for us to be able to listen to your mind work is always a great learning experience. Thanks very much.  
[APPLAUSE]