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MAJOR POLICY SPEECH BY SENATOR AL GORE (D-TN) CONCERNING BUSH ADMINISTRATION POLICY TOWARDS IRAQ BEFORE THE GULF WAR HYATT REGENCY HOTEL, CAPITOL HILL, WASHINGTON DC

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(TEXT OMITTED) SEN. **GORE:** Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Madeleine Albright, thank you so much for your generous and eloquent introduction and for your leadership of the Center for National Priorities. This is a wonderful organization, and I'm most grateful to all who have a handle in steering it, and all of you for coming to be present on this occasion. I see a great many friends in the audience, and I will not try to acknowledge everyone who should be singled out. I hope I shall be forgiven if I single out only one person and acknowledge my friend Pamela Harriman (sp), who has been a close adviser and supporter and friend for many years. But I could as well acknowledge a dozen or more others in this audience, and I am grateful to every single one of you for being present. One of the most important questions in this campaign involves the judgment of the candidates on foreign policy. The American people know that the world is full of unexpected surprises and dangers, and as a result they want to know whether or not a president can handle these uncertainties, recognize unanticipated dangers, and realize when national policy must be changed to reflect new realities. The American people also want to know whether or not they can count on their president to tell them the truth.

President Bush, in his handling of our policy toward Iraq, has failed all of these tests, and failed them badly. His poor judgment, moral blindness, and bungling policies led directly to a war that should never have taken place. And because of his naivete and lack of candor, US taxpayers are now stuck with paying the bill for \$1.9 billion President Bush gave to Saddam Hussein even though top administration officials were repeatedly told Saddam was using our tax dollars to buy weapons technology. President Bush, of course, believes that the war with Iraq was his finest hour as the organizer and leader of a vast coalition of armed forces united for the purpose of frustrating the designs of an evil dictator. But the war with Iraq had deep roots, and if George Bush's prosecution of the war is part of his record, so too is his involvement in the diplomacy which led to it, both in the Reagan-Bush era and far more so during his own presidency, when he accelerated foreign aid and the sale of weapons technology to Iraq right up until the invasion of Kuwait in spite of repeated warnings that anyone with common sense would have had no difficulty whatsoever understanding. The path leading to that war and the path which the President has followed after are deeply shadowed in profound error, in duplicity, and in amoral disregard for our most basic values as a nation. There is also substantial evidence that his administration intentionally falsified export records and reports to Congress and in the process apparently violated a number of laws intended to prevent such horrendous mistakes. Nineteen months ago, President Bush called Saddam Hussein "a new Hitler who had to be stopped at all costs", yet today that same tyrant remains firmly in power, resisting by every means the will of the international community. No wonder so many Americans ask themselves whether our victory over Saddam will ultimately prove an illusion. The conduct of the war will remain a proud memory for all Americans, but the full history must also include events before and after the war. That detailed record requires a little more time and effort to understand. And if we really want to judge President Bush's stewardship of policy, then we had better pay attention to that detailed record which provides a deeply disturbing look at a **blatant disregard** for brutal terrorism, a dangerous blindness to the murderous ambitions of a despot, and what certainly appears to be an on-going effort to hide the facts from the American people whose tax dollars paid for this policy and whose sons and daughters risked and lost their lives in its pursuit. George Bush wants the American people to see him as the hero who put out a raging fire, but new evidence now shows that he is the one who set the fire. He not only struck the match, he poured gasoline on the flames. So give him credit for calling in the fire

department, but understand clearly who it was that started the blaze. Now, let me begin providing a basic historical frame of reference. In September of 1980, Iraq invaded Iran. Iraq was the odds-on favorite to win the war in short order. However, by May of 1982, Iraq was clearly in trouble. It had lost a major battle with Iran, and our policymakers began to imagine Iran under a radical Islamic government emerging as the dominant regional power: clearly a nightmare. I believe that is why in February 1982 President Reagan took Iraq off the list of states that sponsored terrorism. He did this not because Iraq had gone straight and given up terrorism, but because he wanted to help Iraq while there was time. By taking Iraq's name off the list, President Reagan opened the way for Iraq to receive US credits through subsidized agricultural loan guarantees and Export-Import Bank credits. Reagan's decision also removed certain kinds of export controls intended to block the transfer of US technology to countries on the official terrorism list. In other words, for strategic reasons the Reagan-Bush administration would overlook virtually any unpleasant reality in Iraq and apparently subvert US laws in order to prop up Saddam Hussein's brutal regime. Now, of course, George Bush claims he was an outsider in another momentous Reagan decision during these years: to sell arms to Iran in direct exchange for the release of American hostages. Of course, by now, most people find that very hard to believe, and the documentary record is closing in on him. Recently, we learned that former Secretary of State George Schultz and former Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger were outraged when they heard that then-Vice President Bush was disclaiming any knowledge of the Iran arms deal and the fact that these two senior cabinet officers had vigorously opposed it. Notes taken at the time of their telephone conversation about this event have Mr. Weinberger saying that Bush's comments were terrible and that far from being ignorant of developments, Bush had been on the other side of the struggle over policy. Just last week, more evidence surfaced showing that Bush is recorded as having attended numerous meetings over a span of three years White House senior officials debated the plan to swap arms to Iran, and then were briefed on the status of the program. He was also present at the meetings in which the trade for arms in return for American hostages was explicitly discussed. And now, two of the briefers have directly challenged the veracity of President Bush's claim that he didn't know arms were being swapped for hostages. Far from being out of the loop, Bush seems to have been one of the most vigorous and vociferous advocates of the illegal side of the argument. Indeed, his claims to the contrary are simply no longer credible. His national security adviser was clearly uncomfortable, even going so far as to say that Bush's version was "possibly true". Well, now new evidence about his policy toward Iraq directly contradicts President Bush's repeated statements to the American people that he did nothing that helped Saddam's effort to acquire weapons of mass destruction during the months and years preceding Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. To begin with, George Bush cannot even try to claim ignorance where policy toward Iraq was concerned. Not only was he directly in the loop, he was a principle architect of the policy from its earliest days. For example, in April of 1984, Bush personally lobbied the Exim Bank's chairman, a friend from college days, to disregard the views of his own economists and extend credits to Iraq. Doubts about Iraq's creditworthiness were very well-founded, but the overriding issue was whether Iraq could continue to hold on in the war with Iran. That's all that seemed to matter. In pursuit of that objective, the Reagan-Bush administration would overlook the fact that it was an Iraq-based group that masterminded the assassination attempt against Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom, which occurred in June of 1982. This event, of course, triggered Israel's invasion of Lebanon, not exactly a minor consequence for US policy. The Reagan-Bush administration was also prepared to overlook the fact that the terrorists who masterminded the attack on the Achille- Lauro and the savage murder of American Leon Klinghoffer, fled with Iraqi assistance. Nor did it seem to matter that the team of terrorists who set out to blow up the Rome airport came directly from Baghdad with suitcase bombs. Iraq not only stayed off the terrorist list no matter what, but in November 1984, full diplomatic relations were established with the country. The US government continued to exert every effort to channel assistance to Saddam Hussein, even with evidence that he was not only promoting terrorism, but was also pursuing a nuclear weapons program. As early as May of 1985, Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perl warned about the suspected diversion of US exports of dual-use technology to the Iraqi nuclear weapons program. But Bush ensured that the flow of technology continued. In March 1987, Bush again took a prominent role. When Iraq's ambassador complained that our defense department was taking too long and being too cautious about export licenses for high-tech items, Bush apparently agreed with him that the defense department was being capricious and had to get with the program. There might have been a moment's pause for reflection when Iraqi aircraft intentionally attacked the USS Stark in May of 1987 killing 37 sailors, but the administration smoothed it over very fast. This was the spring when the Exim Bank's staff was resisting another \$200 million loan to Iraq, but again the loan was granted after Bush, again, personally intervened to stress its political importance. The loan went through in May, barely 48 hours before the attack on the Stark. Now let me make a point about foreign policy and the real world. The actual conduct of foreign policy often bears as much resemblance to academic theory as the conduct of domestic politics bears to a civics course. If we have to deal with someone bad in order to handle someone even worse, then for heaven's sake, we should at least be ready to reevaluate the relationship the moment it has outlived its value to the United States. In other words, whatever the arguments for temporarily supporting Saddam Hussein as a barrier separating Saudi Arabia's oil from Iran's militant fundamentalists, Bush deserves heavy blame for intentionally concealing from the American people the

clear nature of Saddam Hussein and his regime and for convincing himself that friendly relations with such a monster would be possible, and for persisting in this effort far, far beyond the point of folly. Throughout this period, Saddam's atrocities continued. In March of 1988, Saddam used poison gas on the Kurdish town of Halabja (ph), brutally murdering some 5,000 innocent men, women, and children, and none of us can ever forget the pictures of their bodies, of parents trying to shield their infants, even in death, that were in our news media and around the world. The Iran-Iraq War then ended in August of 1988, and Iraq had not prevailed, but neither had it been defeated. As a result, you would think that the administration would give our policies a second look to see if they should be altered, but the Reagan-Bush administration never hesitated, even when the news became much, much worse. Within days of the end of the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein, seeing that he had gotten away with using poison gas against the Kurds previously, launched additional major gas attacks on them. The war was over, and he was determined to settle accounts. Saddam's attacks created, in addition to the wave of deaths, a flight of about half a million Kurdish refugees. The effect of these events on the public and on Congress was electrifying. The outrage and disgust sparked action and ignited an intensification of efforts in the Congress to pull the plug on US support for Saddam Hussein. I, myself, went to the Senate floor twice demanding tough action, but these efforts were resisted to the bitter end by the Reagan-Bush and Bush-Quayle administrations. For example, they pulled out all the stops to defeat the Prevention of Genocide Act after the US Senate had passed it unanimously in September of 1988. Meanwhile, the US Customs Service was reporting that in 1988, it had marked a notable increase in the activity of Iraq's network of procuring agents and front corporations. A concerted effort was underway to obtain missile technology, chemical weapons technology, and biological weapons technology. In January 1989, President George Bush was sworn in. Based on plentiful evidence, he had reason to know that his ongoing policy regarding Iraq was already malfunctioning badly. Just last week, we learned of a memorandum written in March of that year, just two months after his inauguration, to Secretary of State James Baker as Baker prepared to meet with a senior Iraqi official, in which the author of the memorandum noted that Iraq continued to cooperate with terrorists, that it was meddling in Lebanon, that it was working hard at chemical and biological weapons and new missiles. These are exact quotes from the memorandum to the administration. And what is especially interesting about this memo is that it notes that in the months preceding this meeting, Iraqi oil exports to the US had increased dramatically and on favorable terms. That point raised the question of a quid pro quo sought by the Iraqi officials: cheap oil in return for, quote, "freer export licensing procedures for high tech." End quote. The memo's drafter notes, somewhat impatiently and critically, that export applications for high tech were being held up by the Commerce Department and by the Defense Department out of concern that proposed exports could enhance Iraq's military capabilities. These concerns were, of course, well-founded. In April 1989, a nuclear proliferation expert from the Department of Energy reported intelligence indicators that Iraq had begun a crash program to build an atomic bomb. In June of the same year, the Defense Intelligence Agency reported that Iraq was running a major European network to procure military goods that were not supposed to be sold to Iraq. In August, the FBI rated the Atlanta branch of the Italian Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, or BNL, and seized evidence of over \$4 billion in illegal loans to Iraq, as well as the use of about \$2 billion of those funds to buy nuclear and other military technologies. And on September 22nd, Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly wrote a memorandum acknowledging that money coming to Iraq through the Atlanta branch of the BNL did, quote, "appear to have been used," end quote, to finance acquisition of sensitive military technology. Also in that same month, September, the USDA reported kickbacks and possible diversions of US-supplied agricultural funds for military purposes. And most significant of all, in the same month, September of 1989, the CIA reported to Secretary of State Baker and other top Bush administration officials that Iraq was clandestinely procuring nuclear weapons technology through a global network of front companies. Did all of this make any impression at all on President Bush? Did his judgment on foreign policy come into play when he was told that this nation, with a record of terrorism continuing, was making a sustained, concerted effort to acquire weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical, and biological? Well, evidently not, because in the midst of this flood of highly alarming information from the CIA, the Defense Department, the Energy Department, the Commerce Department, the Justice Department, the State Department, other agencies throughout the government, on October 2nd, 1989, President Bush signed a document known as NSD 26, which established the policy toward Iraq under his administration. This document is the benchmark for judging George Bush's record for the direction of American policy toward Iraq in the period that would ultimately lead us to war. We have only a partial idea of what is in that document, since the version that was finally released to Congress has been heavily censored, but the core statement of purpose and the fundamental assumptions behind it are crystal clear. And so, as a result, is the incredibly poor judgment of George Bush on foreign policy. NSD 26 mandated the pursuit of improved economic and political ties with Iraq on the assumption that Iraqi behavior could be modified by means of new favors to be granted. Well, perhaps so, if this were a state not under the complete control of a single man whose ruthlessness had already been totally apparent. And the text of NSD 26 blindly ignores the evidence already at the administration's disposal of Iraqi behavior in the past regarding human rights, terrorism, use of chemical weapons, the pursuit of advanced weapons of mass destruction. Instead, it makes an heroic assumption of good behavior in the future on the basis of an interesting theory, namely that Iraq would suddenly and

completely change its ways out of a fear of economic and political sanctions. Well, it leaps from the page that George Bush, both as vice president and president, had done his utmost to make sure that no such sanctions would ever apply to Saddam Hussein. Bush was the very man who had personally intervened to secure hundreds of millions of dollars in additional loans, and what was the result on the second occasion he did that? Forty-eight hours later, Saddam ordered the attack on the USS Stark, 48 hours later. The question is unavoidable. Why should Saddam Hussein be at all concerned about a threat of action in the future from George Bush, the same man who had resolutely blocked any such action in the past? To the contrary, Saddam had every reason to assume that Bush would look the other way no matter what he did. He had already launched poison gas attacks repeatedly, and Bush looked the other way. He had already conducted extensive terrorism activities, and Bush had looked the other way. He was already deeply involved in the effort to acquire nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and Bush knew it, but he looked the other way. Well, in my view, the Bush administration was acting in a manner directly opposite to what you would expect with all of the evidence that it had available to it at the time. Saddam Hussein's nature and intentions were perfectly visible. In October of 1989, representatives of the Departments of State and Agriculture met to discuss Iraq's diversion of US agricultural credits into the acquisition of US technology for its nuclear weapons program. Later that same month, however, on October 26th, Assistant Secretary of State Kelly sent Secretary Baker a memo jointly written with the State Department's legal counsel, Abe Sofaer, urging that Baker push yet another \$1 billion in agricultural loan guarantees for Iraq, notwithstanding the mushrooming scandal surrounding the diversion of BNL loans by Iraq for nuclear purposes. They knew it. Now, I will leave to others to debate whether Sofaer's efforts or those of White House counsel Boyden Gray's staff to sound out the intentions of the Atlanta prosecutor constituted a crude form of intervention. My point is that before and after consecrating a policy that tied us hip and thigh to Saddam Hussein, George Bush had all the information that he needed to know that he was in deep, deep water. But he persisted, although in November the CIA again reported that Baghdad was shopping everywhere for chemical, biological, nuclear technologies, and for ballistic missile technology. Did that set off an alarm bell in the Bush White House? And even though the CIA again reported a link between BNL funding and the Iraq nuclear and missile programs, in November, the administration agreed to go ahead with another billion dollars in US taxpayer-subsidized loan guarantees to Iraq, loans that the US taxpayers now, courtesy of George Bush, have to pay off. In January of 1990, President Bush issued a determination that exempted Iraq from Section 512 of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act of November '89 prohibiting further loans to Iraq. The Congress had seen this evidence, and as representatives of the American people, they were attempting to protect the taxpayers against the loss of funds and to protect us and the rest of the world against the use of taxpayer dollars to finance terrorism and to acquire weapons of mass destruction. But on grounds of national security, the President declared that the act's prohibitions would not apply. And yet this was the same season when the Rand Corporation reported that an estimated 1,400 terrorists were operating openly out of Iraq. In February 1990, Saddam Hussein called for the removal of US forces from the Persian Gulf, and yet the same month the administration actually apologized to Saddam for the offending content of a Voice of American broadcast which had had the temerity to criticize Iraq's human rights record. Coddling tyrants is a hallmark of the Bush foreign policy. March 1990 brought no improvement when US and British agents arrested several Iraqis in the act of trying to smuggle nuclear triggering devices into Iraq. In April, Saddam Hussein issued his infamous threat to burn up half of Israel with chemical weapons, and he noted "advanced binary chemical weapons". Still, Bush toadied up to Saddam. Nothing seemed to set off the alarm in the Bush White House. It seemed that Saddam could do anything, say anything, threaten anything, and still the US taxpayer loans continued to finance his acquisition of the very weapons that he was threatening openly to use. Also in April, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York noted that BNL money was diverted to purchase nuclear triggers in the United States which had later been seized by British Customs. That same month, British Customs also seized pipe sections headed for Iraq which were quickly determined to have been parts of a supergun. Similar shipments were seized in Greece, Turkey, Italy, West Germany, and Switzerland. And yet, on April 12th, at the personal request of George Bush, Senators Bob Dole and Alan Simpson, the number one and number two Republican leaders in the Senate respectively, travelled to Baghdad and told Saddam Hussein that President Bush was still ready to veto any sanctions against Iraq that Congress might pass. They added as a footnote, again at Bush's person request, they said, "the comforting news that the author of that offending Voice of America criticism had been fired that same day" in an effort to please Saddam. In April and May, Commerce Undersecretary Dennis Kloske attended two meetings at the White House where he recommended that the US tighten restrictions on exports of high technology. But again, he was overruled, and the flow of technology from the US continued. As a sidenote, when Kloske testified about this before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Economic Policy and Trade about a year later, he was fired within 48 hours. Well, May arrives, and a terrorist attack on the public beaches of Tel Aviv was launched and thwarted. It was planned by a Palestinian group operating openly in Baghdad with the full knowledge and support of Saddam Hussein. On May 21st, the USDA sent up another warning about diversions of funds from US-guaranteed loans. But on June 15th, 1990, Assistant Secretary of State Kelly told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the administration still opposed any congressional sanctions against Iraq, and in July, as Iraqi tanks and soldiers massed on the

Kuwaiti border, the Senate tried to pass another sanctions bill against Iraq, and the administration fiercely opposed it all out. Not only that, but on the eve of the invasion, the Bush-Quayle administration kept selling Saddam Hussein dual-use technology such as sophisticated computers, flight simulators, and equipment to manufacture gun barrels. At that very moment, however, high-level officials in the administration, including Secretary Baker, were finally forced to confront what they should have known from the outset of Bush's administration -- that Iraq had grossly abused the benefits extended to it by Bush. In July, a memo jointly drafted by four senior officers of the State Department was sent to Secretary Baker and approved by him. According to this memorandum, the existence of which just came to light a few days ago, the administration acknowledged, and I quote, "Iraq is actively engaged in developing chemical and biological weapons, and ballistic missile systems, and may be seeking to develop nuclear weapons as well. Iraq has been attempting to obtain items to support these proliferation activities from US exporters; in some cases, successfully." End quote. The memorandum concludes that the time had come for the administration to, quote, "move now on Iraq because of its very active proliferation-related procurement efforts, and because there is a danger that US exporters could become implicated in these efforts." End quote. Well, now bear in mind that at this point Saddam Hussein was only one week away from an act of open aggression that would bring us to war. It had taken this long for an awareness of what was going on for years to be acknowledged within the administration. Much has been said about the record of our ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie's famous interview of July 25th with Saddam Hussein. But the ambassador's servile message was a clear expression of Bush's personal views. Her message was totally in line with US policy laid down by President Bush personally in October of 1989 and clung to until August 2nd, 1990 when Iraq invaded, conquered, and annexed Kuwait. Within a month, our sons and daughters were to be sent to risk their lives, facing a threat that had been built up through US technology and US tax dollars by our own President, who now summoned them to battle. In answer to this charge, President Bush has explicitly denied that his policies enhanced Saddam Hussein's nuclear, biological, and chemical capabilities. He denied this, not only in an official report to Congress in the Fall of 1991, but as recently as June 13th and July 1st of this year, when Bush said, and I quote, "We did not enhance Saddam Hussein's nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons capability." That statement has no credibility. As I have just mentioned, his own secretary of state knew differently and wrote differently, at least as of July 1990, and the actual record of our exports shows the facts rather differently than the President wants to remember them. Here are the facts. Almost 30 percent of our non-agricultural exports to Iraq between 1985 and 1990 went directly to the Iraqi military industrial complex. Of these exports, there were 162 items that were licensed for sale despite their potential nuclear applications. The administration permitted the sale of powerful computers, comparable to those used in our own missile test ranges, despite objections from the Department of Defense. It allowed shipment of high tech equipment needed for Iraq's Condor 2 missile, which was to have been able to deliver a nuclear warhead at a range of more than 600 miles. It allowed for the export of materials needed for the infamous supergun project, intended to have the ability to launch nuclear weapons like artillery shells over hundreds of miles. Machine tools, lasers and other equipment for the manufacture of rocket casings needed in Scud missiles were sold. When UN inspectors got into Iraq, they found that Saddam Hussein's main nuclear weapons complex, a carbide-tipped machine tool factory, had been built with technology and equipment licensed for export by the Bush administration. The administration licensed technology and equipment for fabricating shapes out of glass fiber, over the objections of the Department of Defense, which noted that the purchaser was part of the Iraqi military-industrial complex and that this equipment was needed for a nuclear weapons program. They did it anyway. The administration preferred to blindly accept the importer's ludicrous claim that the Iraqi military-industrial complex would use this equipment to make shower stalls. Equipment for a so-called detergent factory was licensed, yet this same factory was used to make chemical weapons, used by a nation that had already broken the taboo since World War I and massively used chemical weapons on its own people. What were they thinking? Seventeen licenses for the export of bacterial and fungus cultures to Iraq were granted, even though the CIA specifically linked the Iraqi government agencies involved to, quote, "biological warfare support and numerous other military activities." End quote. The UN Special Commission, once it finally got inside Iraq, is reported to have found equipment from 11 American companies in Iraqi missile and chemical weapons plants. It is truly astounding to look at the list of Iraqi customers who were identified and then approved to receive this material by the Bush administration -- the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization, known as MIMI, which was headed by a brigadier general who was Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, and which the CIA identified as, quote, "controlling Iraq's nuclear network." That didn't set off an alarm bell? It's okay to send this equipment to the man our CIA says is in control of the nuclear network in Iraq? Another customer approved: The Saddam State Establishment and Salah al Din (sp), called in an intelligence report typical of Iraq's armed production facilities. Saad 16 (sp), identified back in 1986 as a key missile production site, where as much as 40 percent of the equipment was reported to be US made. The administration even sold Saddam Hussein helicopters for his personal use equipped with special infrared guidance and defensive systems so that he would be more at ease. Incredibly, the Bush administration knew all along that the chief purchasing agent for much of this material was the head of an Iraqi weapons complex. The tentacle of the octopus, as one law enforcement official put it, was a US company called Matrix Churchill. It was a key player in

Saddam Hussein's efforts to acquire nuclear and other weapons technologies. The chairman of this so-called American corporation was one Safa Al-Habobi, who was simultaneously the director general of the Iraqi Nassir (sp) State Enterprise for Mechanical Industries, well-known by our intelligence agencies as a major Iraqi military-industrial complex where missiles and nuclear weapons equipment were manufactured. He was the principal purchasing agent. There was report after report linking Habobi's firm, Matrix Churchill, to Iraq's global network of front companies and even back to the Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization, and Saddam's son-in-law, Hussein Kamal (sp). But the Bush administration kept issuing licenses for high-tech exports no matter what. Cozy up to Saddam. Make him our friend. This was the Bush theory in spite of all the evidence to the contrary. And as for how Iraq paid for all of this? When it was already far over its head in debt as a result of the war with Iran and Saddam Hussein's disastrous economic policies? Well, a large part of the answer is: on credit in the form of loans guaranteed by the US taxpayers at the insistence of the Bush-Quayle administration over the objections of those who were in charge of evaluating creditworthiness and evaluating the use to which the money was to be put. In the fall of '89, Bush pushed hard to make sure that that \$1 billion in new loan guarantees were provided to Saddam, and it didn't matter that federal agencies were reporting severe abuses of prior loan guarantees. In the end, the US taxpayer, of course, has been left holding the bag for almost \$2 billion of loans which Iraq will never repay. After bailing out the savings and loans, American taxpayers are now being forced by Bush's poor judgment to bail out Saddam Hussein. When it came time to confront the consequences of these years of serious mistakes, when it came time to confront Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait with an international coalition united in its resolve and purpose, George Bush all the way up to the moment the combat ended displayed fortitude, skill, and leadership. But the chestnuts he pulled from that fire were his own. His policies nurtured Saddam Hussein. He was deaf to information that to any other ear was a firebell in the night, ringing clearly that our policies were disastrously wrong, leading toward tragedy. And, of course, incredibly, immediately following the war, Bush reverted to form. At Bush's encouragement, an armed resistance to Saddam Hussein had sprung up in Iraq, but at the critical moment, it was George Bush's decision to betray that resistance by tolerating Saddam Hussein's use of attack helicopters to put down the rebellions and to slaughter the dissenters. That was a clear violation of the terms of the cease-fire, and it was a violation we had more than enough power to suppress rather easily. Had we insisted on the terms of the cease-fire, there would have been a much better chance that today we would not be facing Saddam Hussein still in power. Well, should a man who mistook Saddam Hussein for a docile and friendly ally and who then pursued that error to the point where lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans had to be put on the line have a second term as president of the United States? Has George Bush told the truth, the whole truth, about a policy that left our nation facing a brutal, murderous dictator? If he will take the credit for the victory, will he also take responsibility for the policy that made that war inevitable? The answer to these questions is, of course, no. He's not fond of accepting responsibility. George Bush sent loan guarantees to an oil-rich dictator. George Bush sold dangerous technology to a criminal who was intent on developing and using lethal weapons. George Bush sent secret intelligence reports to a man who, by any stretch of the imagination, could not be trusted. George Bush refused to face the truth or to hear the urgent warnings coming from his own administration. And then, George Bush put American lives on the line in a war that never should have happened, except for his mistakes. In so many ways, George Bush simply does not fit the requirements of the new world order his own speechwriters once summoned up. We require a fresh approach from a new leader of vigor and high intelligence, of courage and vision, who believes to the core that the enemies of freedom cannot be anything but the enemies of our country. I think that the people of the United States have and will take the opportunity to select such a leader. Bill Clinton is that man. Thank you. (Applause.) MS. ALBRIGHT: Senator **Gore** has time for a few questions, if you would pass your questions up, please. As you yourself said, President Bush has claimed that they have a legitimate policy for drawing Iraq into the family of nations. Isn't this just the way foreign policy is done? Shouldn't we give them the benefit of the doubt? SEN. **GORE**: I believe there is a clear line of demarcation between the standard which ought to be used in judging the persistent support of Saddam Hussein during the Iran-Iraq war and the standard which ought to be used in the aftermath of that war. I question the decisions that were made during the war, but the decisions made after the end of that war, when the justification for coddling Saddam so thoroughly was dissipated, those decisions reflected truly atrocious judgment. I really do not understand how anyone could receive this flood of information about the terrorism, the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, the unremitting hostility to the United States and to all of our objectives and interests, save the -- except for the continued flow of cheap oil, I don't understand how anyone with sound judgment could have persisted in supporting Saddam as much as Bush did and forcing the US taxpayers to subsidize his acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. Now, during the period prior to the end of the Iran-Iraq war, as I stated, I think a different standard ought to be used. I still question the decisions that were made then. I think we went too far. But the central point in response to this question is, when one makes a judgment of that sort, based on the calculation of the national interest in balancing the real politik motives of countries like Iran and Iraq -- when one is forced to make an unpleasant decision of that kind, when circumstances change, we have to adjust, and we have to recognize that they have changed and untie ourselves from such an unsavory, brutal, aggressive, and dangerous dictator. Instead, when the circumstances changed, allowing us to

bring our policy more into line with American values, Bush accelerated the former policy and stepped up the taxpayer loans and the sales of high tech equipment. It is an astonishing record, truly, and led directly to the war. MS. ALBRIGHT: Israeli governments have obviously been concerned about Iraqi nuclear and chemical weapons programs. Is there any evidence that the Bush administration had been warned by the Israelis of Iraqi actions prior to the invasion of Kuwait? SEN. **GORE:** Well, of course, going back to 1981, Israel took direct action of its own to halt or at least slow down at that point that Iraqi effort to develop nuclear weapons. But the Bush administration has refused to acknowledge warnings from any source. Whatever the evidence, they have ignored it. Many of our allies have provided us with evidence of Iraq's persistent effort to acquire these weapons of mass destruction. Many people within the Bush administration raised warning flags. But Bush, once he sets out on a course to coddle someone, he goes the distance. (Laughter and applause.) MS. ALBRIGHT: This is kind of a combination of questions, and it tags onto what you've just been saying, but how is it that someone like Bush, with all his supposed foreign policy experience, was so blind to this set of facts that you've laid out? SEN. **GORE:** I think it is -- I think the errors are rooted not in his intelligence, but in his judgment. I believe that he was intent on currying favor with this powerful leader on the assumption that ultimately they would be friends, and that Saddam would so appreciate what Bush had done for him, that at critical moments, this relationship could be used to modify Iraq's behavior in ways that would serve our interests. Now bear in mind that this assumption was being used by a man, George Bush, who had already done a lot of personal favors for Iraq, and had those favors followed by increasingly aggressive and outrageous responses. The second time that we know about, at least -- the second time he personally intervened to secure US taxpayer loans for Saddam, less than two days after the loan went through, Saddam ordered the attack on the USS Stark. Now it would seem to me that George Bush might begin to wonder whether his efforts were being appreciated or not, but it seemed never to occur to him. Indeed, in that infamous meeting between April Glaspie and Saddam, he even instructed Glaspie to say that we have no particular national interest in protecting the territory of Kuwait, we have no treaties with them, we aren't especially concerned about border disputes between you and Kuwait -- at a time when the tanks were massing on the border. In fact, even after the invasion, it took Margaret Thatcher to provide him some backbone. A quote from Clementine Paddleford (sp), who wrote in the 1950s is applicable here. She said, "Don't put a wishbone where a backbone should be." (Laughter.) That's what Bush attempted to do, and it doesn't work in foreign policy. (Applause.) MS. ALBRIGHT: Don't you think that the President has already addressed many of these issues? What does he have to do now to respond to the train of thought that you've laid out here? SEN. **GORE:** Well, I think he has to come clean with the American people, and in fact, he has not answered these questions. Let me compare his responses on the swap of arms for hostages with his responses on the way his policies built up Iraq's military power. On the swap of arms for hostages, he has repeatedly said he was out of the loop, didn't know that the secretaries of defense and state were objecting. If he had, he might have raised concerns of his own, but he was excluded from key meetings and just didn't know what was going on. Well, of course, now that's simply not credible because the evidence is piling up, and has he responded to questions about that evidence? No. He has just brushed it off by saying, "There has already been an investigation and I was exonerated." Well, in fact, there has not been an effort to require him to answer specific questions about that matter, and his statements that he was out of the loop and didn't know what was going on, again, are simply not credible. Similarly, to this day, George Bush is telling the American people that his decisions did not result in assistance to Saddam Hussein in building up his nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons technology. That is simply not true. His own Secretary of State had said exactly the contrary in an official memorandum written one week before the invasion of Kuwait. Repeated statements from Cabinet departments and the CIA have stated exactly the contrary. But President Bush continues to assert to the American people that there was no problem with this. Now, let me tell you the link between these two. He was willing to swap arms for hostages even though that would involve dealing directly with terrorists in a manner which risked convincing those terrorists that they could continue their horrendous activities and even be rewarded for it. If he had been held accountable for the poor judgment he exhibited during the arms for hostages swap, he might have been a little more reluctant to make the same moral mistake in the Iraqgate controversy, because the key misjudgment was a willingness to deal with a nation that was guilty of terrorism on a continuing basis and reward them on the hope and expectation that they would change their ways, when, in fact, rewarding them for their behavior could well have been expected to encourage more such behavior. It's the same basic miscalculation and poor judgment. MS. ALBRIGHT: We conclude with a final question. Beginning January 21st, 1993, what will the policy of the Clinton-**Gore** administration be towards Saddam Hussein and Iraq? SEN. **GORE:** Since this is the last question, before I answer it, let me invite the attention of those present to materials that I have asked my staff to prepare, which lays out all of the evidence that I have presented here with extensive footnotes referring in each case to the specific documents and to the specific evidence that I am relying on and quoting from in the speech. I have also asked them to prepare, and they have done so, listings of the technology that was specifically exported and a rather extensive month-by-month calendar of exactly when the warnings came, when they were ignored, and when the decisions were made to support Saddam in spite of those warnings. So, I invite your attention to the more detailed version of this presentation. Now, Governor Clinton and I have spelled out what we believe is an appropriate policy toward Iraq. We believe that the

elements of democratic resistance within Iraq deserve support and encouragement from the United States of America. We believe that Saddam must be required to comply with the UN resolutions, all of the UN resolutions, including the one, 688, which prevents him from persecuting his own people, the Kurds in the south, the Muslim resistance elements -- the Kurds in the north, the Muslim resistance elements in the south, and those Sunni resistance fighters in the middle part of the country who have formed a common bond with the Shi'a in the south and the Kurds in the north and are even now attempting to organize a more effective front against Saddam Hussein. We believe that this kind of behavior simply cannot be tolerated. And we believe that American foreign policy ought to be based on a clear understanding of what American interests are in this new world of the '90s and the 21st century and based on American values, support for freedom, political freedom and economic freedom, and not the coddling of tyrants, which has been the hallmark of the Bush foreign policy. Thank you all very much for being here. (Applause.) Thank you, Madeleine. MS. ALBRIGHT: Thank you very much. We're very grateful, Senator **Gore**. END

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