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* It was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt who said when ~~the~~ Japan dropped bombs preemptively on Pearl Harbor "this is a day of ~~infamy~~ ^{Infamy}"

KEENE, N. H. FREEDOM FORUM 1/25/03

Throughout our history, Americans from all walks of life have stood with clear voices and courageous actions to defend our nation, our peoples, and the values we hold dear.

Now, on the brink of a ^{Preemptive} US war on Iraq, we stand in defense once again. It was President John F. Kennedy who said: "The United States, as the world knows, will never start a war." * American values do not admit of any plan to start a war where one can be avoided, or to strike first when one cannot. Alongside the bill of Rights, these values help form the bedrock of our nation's consciousness and our democracy.

Our present emergency, is this, that there are powerful people in the present administration who will not act by or defend these most basic and historic principles. As they push for a war on Iraq, no matter what the circumstances or consequences, they violate the American spirit and bring dishonor and danger upon our nation. They endanger our rights, they endanger our cities, and they endanger the lives of our families. ~~They~~ ^{Some believe they wish to dominate the world, to build a new Roman Empire} If these people in this administration have their way, those in our armed forces - our sons and our

daughters, our sisters and brothers, our dearly held friends - will be placed unnecessarily in harm's way.

If these people in the present administration have their way, our families will be ever more at risk, for if our foreign adversaries believe they must strike first at us before we strike first at them, neither our homes nor our homeland will ever again be secure.

And if it is domination of the world they seek we will establish military bases throughout the world - what then will happen to those people praying for a national health plan? Those elders looking for relief on a pre-script drug plan?
If those people in the present administration have their way our nation will become distracted from the crucial task of defeating terrorism, a task that requires the collective action of the international community.

If those people have their way, our nation will be distracted from solving our economic crisis during this time of increasing unemployment, shrinking access to healthcare, and severe cutbacks to our education system - the guarantor of our national future.

If those people have their way, the Constitutional protections that have stood between we individuals and the overwhelming power of government will be taken down, as ~~they~~ *those protections* are now being taken down.

There is far greater security for our country when the

world believes that we strive first and always for peace, and move toward war only when all peace fails. There are good alternatives to the policies advocated by the extremists in the present administration, alternatives that will truly increase our security and meet the needs of our people.

Representatives of the United Nations are now combing through Iraq. They can stay as long as necessary and muster all the power necessary to peacefully eliminate Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. They are doing now in peace what our soldiers could do only with a great and unnecessary loss of life.

Let the United Nations inspectors continue their work unimpeded and unscorned by us Let us stand behind them with our full strength and resources to assure their success. Let us not act the part of a power-drunk fool loose in the world.

Let us redouble our efforts to work with the international community to solve the problems of terrorism and global security. Let us be guided in these efforts by our commitment to a democratic and just foreign policy that supports the missions that have long been in American hearts - for democracy,

freedom and economic justice in the Middle East and around the world.

Let us encourage truly democratic forces (not unrepresentative cliques) in Iraq and throughout the Middle East and end our support for corrupt and authoritarian regimes. Let us make strenuous efforts to help bring about a just resolution of the Israel-Palestinian conflict that guarantees the rights of security and self-determination for Palestinian and Israeli Jews alike.

And at home, let us spend no less energy and resources addressing the urgent needs facing our people in this time of economic crisis. We need to help those ^{millions} who cannot find work and those who are struggling to meet life's daily needs - not those whose children's inheritance might be reduced from \$100 million to \$95 million.

The security interests of America and of Americans are to be found only upon this road to national and international justice. America's great strength must be used for good, not for exploitation and narrow self-interest. The world is too small now for any other policy.

Finally, we remind President Bush that he swore on the Bible to defend our Constitution and its Bill of Rights. To do otherwise is a crime under our laws, which no man is above. The full application of the rights enshrined in our Constitution and expanded through its Bill of Rights and other amendments to all the peoples of our nation must be our policy at home, or else there is no freedom worth defending. We are resolved in this New Year to hold ^{you} ~~you~~ ^{to} ~~your~~ sworn duty.

9 min - Can add 6 min

*Patriots Act
Homeland Security*