

Set 1: troop, afghanistan, iraq, strategi, qaida, succeed, general, war

Set 2: saddam, hussein, osama, bin, laden, destruct, weapon, mass

Set 3: administr, action, vice, discrimin, upon, subject, feel, strong

Set 4: militari, world, nation, forc, peac, mission, around, troop

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GEORGE W. BUSH Thats hard to tell. I think that, you know, I would hope to be able to convince people I could handle the Iraqi situation better.

MODERATOR Saddam Hussein, you mean, get him out of there?

GEORGE W. BUSH I would like to, of course, and I presume this administration would as well. We dont know — there are no inspectors now in Iraq, the coalition that was in place isnt as strong as it used to be. He is a danger. We dont want him fishing in troubled waters in the Middle East. And its going to be hard, its going to be important to rebuild that coalition to keep the pressure on him.

MODERATOR You feel that is a failure of the Clinton administration?

GEORGE W. BUSH I do.

AL GORE Well, when I got to be a part of the current administration, it was right after — I was one of the few members of my political party to support former President Bush in the Persian Gulf War resolution, and at the end of that war, for whatever reason, it was not finished in a way that removed Saddam Hussein from power. I know there are all kinds of circumstances and explanations. But the fact is that thats the situation that was left when I got there. And we have maintained the sanctions. Now I want to go further. I want to give robust support to the groups that are trying to overthrow Saddam Hussein, and I know there are allegations that theyre too weak to do it, but thats what they said about the forces that were opposing Milosevic in Serbia, and you know, the policy of enforcing sanctions against Serbia has just resulted in a spectacular victory for democracy just in the past week, and it seems to me that having taken so long to see the sanctions work there, building upon the policy of containment that was successful over a much longer period of time against the former Soviet Union in the communist block, seems a little early to declare that we should give up on the sanctions. I know the governors not necessarily saying that but, you know, all of these flights that have come in, all of them have been in accordance with the sanctions regime, Im told, except for three where they notified, and theyre trying to break out of the box, theres no question about it. I dont think they should be allowed to.

MODERATOR Did he state your position correctly, youre not calling for eliminating the sanctions, are you?

GEORGE W. BUSH No, of course not, absolutely not, I want them to be tougher.

MODERATOR Lets go on to Milosevic and Yugoslavia, and it falls under the area of our military power. Governor, new question. Should the fall of Milosevic be seen as a triumph for U. S. military intervention?

GEORGE W. BUSH I think its a triumph. I thought the president made the right decision in joining NATO and bombing Serbia. I supported them when they did so. I called upon

the Congress not to hamstring the administration, and in terms of forcing troop withdrawals on a timetable that wasnt necessarily in our best interest or fit our nations strategy, and so I think its good public policy, I think it worked, and Im pleased I took — made the decision I made. Im pleased the president made the decision he made. Because freedom took hold in that part of the world, but theres a lot of work left to be done, however.

MODERATOR But you think it would not have happened — do you think that Milosevic would not have fallen if the United States and NATO had not intervened militarily? Is this a legitimate use of our military power?

GEORGE W. BUSH Yes, I think it is. Absolutely. I dont think he would have fallen had we not used the force. And I know there are some in our party that disagree with that sentiment. I supported the president. I thought he made the right decision to do so. I didnt think he necessarily made the right decision to take land troops off the table right before we committed ourselves offensively, but nevertheless, it worked. The administration deserves credit for having made it work. It is important for NATO to have it work. Its important for NATO to be strong and confident and to help keep the peace in Europe. And one of the reasons I felt so strongly that the United States needed to participate was because of our relations with NATO, and NATO is going to be an important part of keeping the peace in the future. Now, theres more work to do. Remains to be seen, however, whether or not theres going to be a political settlement in Kosovo, and I certainly hope there is one. Iâ€™m on record as saying at some point in time I hope our European friends become the peacekeepers in Bosnia and in the Balkans. I hope that they put the troops on the ground so that we can withdraw our troops and focus our military on fighting and winning war.

AL GORE Well, Ive been kind of a hard- liner on this issue for more than eight years. When I was in the senate before I became vice president I was pushing for stronger action against Milosevic. He caused the death of so many people. He was the last communist party boss there and then he became a dictator that by some other label he was still essentially a communist dictator. And unfortunately now he is trying to reassert himself in Serbian politics. Already just today the members of his political party said that they were going to ignore the orders of the new president of Serbia, and that they question his legitimacy, and hes still going to try to be actively involved. He is an indicted war criminal. He should be held accountable. Now, I did want to pick up on one of the statements earlier, and maybe I have heard, maybe I have heard the previous statements wrong, Governor. In some of the discussions weve had about when its appropriate for the U. S. to use force around the world, at times the standards that youve laid down have given me the impression that if its something like a genocide taking place or what they called ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, that that alone would not be, that that wouldnt be the kind of situation that would cause you to think that the U. S. ought to get involved with troops. Now, have to be other factors involved for me to want to be involved. But by itself, that to me can bring into play a fundamental American strategic interest because I think its based on our values. Now, have I got that wrong?

GEORGE W. BUSH Trying to figure out who the questioner was. If I think its in our nations strategic interest Ill commit troops. I thought it was in our strategic interests to keep Milosevic in check because of our relations in NATO, and thats why I took the position I took. I think its important for NATO to be strong and confident. I felt like unchecked Milosevic would harm NATO, and so it depends on the situation, Mr. Vice President.

MODERATOR Well, lets stay on the subject for a moment. New question related to this. I figured this out; in the last 20 years there have been eight major actions that involved the introduction of U. S. ground, air or naval forces. Let me name them. Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti, Kosovo. If you had been president for any of those interventions, would any of those interventions not have happened?

AL GORE Can you run through the list again?

MODERATOR Sure. Lebanon.

AL GORE I thought that was a mistake.

MODERATOR Grenada.

AL GORE I supported that.

MODERATOR Panama.

AL GORE I supported that.

MODERATOR Persian Gulf.

AL GORE Yes, I voted for it, supported it.

MODERATOR Somalia.

AL GORE Of course, and that again — no, I think that that was ill- considered. I did support it at the time. It was in the previous administration, in the Bush- Quayle administration, and I think in retrospect the lessons there are ones that we should take very, very seriously.

MODERATOR Bosnia.

AL GORE Oh, yes.

MODERATOR Haiti.

AL GORE Yes.

MODERATOR And then Kosovo.

AL GORE Yes.

MODERATOR We talked about that. Want me to do it with you? Lebanon.

GEORGE W. BUSH Make a couple comments.

MODERATOR Sure, absolutely, sure. Somalia.