

Senator Chuck Hagel

03:15 I particularly want to thank King’s College for hosting this event. I am particularly proud of the University of Pennsylvania for its role in this effort, as well as the institutions represented here from Israel and Jordan, and for all of you who have devoted so much of your lives and attention and focus and energies on making a better world for all of us. Thank you.

03:53 I believe we are living through one of those great transformational times in the history of man. Where we are in that wind tunnel, I don’t know, but every measurement of world affairs—the human condition, relationships, alliances, challenges, opportunities —is undergoing this great change. And we are adrift on this sea of uncertainty, knowing first that it is uncertain. But if we look beyond the horizon, I hope and I do believe, we can see the possibility of influencing the world so that we can have a better world.

04:56 And I do believe that. I believe that’s what politics is about, I believe that’s what public service is about, I believe there is no one in this audience who doesn’t share some part of that statement, or you wouldn’t be here. You’re not here for yourselves; you’re not here for today. Just like a senator who votes every day and goes to a committee hearing every day, gives a speech every day, that effort is not about today. There’s not much I can do about today. Not much *you* can do about today. Maybe you can pull somebody out of the way of a truck or train, save their life; but as far as the future of mankind, today’s over. We can influence tomorrow. We can do something about tomorrow. And that’s what this effort is about.

05:54 We are witnessing the greatest diffusion of geopolitical economic power the world’s ever seen. And I need not go much beyond the reality of what the United States’ economy is going through today and use as an example the largest financial service institutions in the world as to where they are going to recapitalize their companies. Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley, Citigroup—they’re going to the Persian Gulf, they’re going to Asia, they’re going to places they may not have gone to ten years ago.

06:43 Energy, the environment, poverty, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—all of these issues now fit into a global theatre of challenges. And what you are about and what you are discussing here at this conference—not just radicalisation, but the underpinning of the human condition that causes people to react the way they do—there is not a military answer to that.

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| 07:20 | <p>Senator Chuck Hagel <i>contd</i></p> <p>Just as General Petraeus said before our committee last Fall, when he came to testify on Iraq, that there is no military solution in Iraq: well, of course not. Of course not. And if we are to be successful in dealing with the great challenges of the 21st century, —challenges that now represent a slimmer margin of error than the world has ever known: if for no other reason, because of the immediacy of the world, whether it's technology or weapons of mass destruction—we are now <i>all</i>, six and a half billion people on the face of the earth, connected. We are part of a global village underpinned by a global economy.</p> |
| 08:07 | <p>So, as we deal with these great issues—specific issues: energy, the environment, the economies, radicalism, terrorism, differences, common interests—all are interconnected. They are now all interwoven; they are woven into the same fabric. So in the United States as we deal regarding energy, environmental policy, you can't talk about energy policy without talking about environmental policy or without talking about economic policy or geopolitical positioning. Where does energy come from? Who's polluting the earth? These are all global issues. And it is that foundation of common interest that we must find some consensus in.</p> |
| 08:57 | <p>Radicalisation, the causes of extremism, terrorism are not challenges just to a few, or not indigenous just to certain areas or to certain religions; they're challenges to mankind. And if we don't address these great issues with some consensus as the foundation being a common interest of mankind, then we will never, <i>ever</i> get close to resolving these great issues.</p> |
| 09:34 | <p>Today we are capable, the world, of destroying ourselves. We are absolutely capable of destroying ourselves. And I think we live also at a time not unlike what the world looked like after World War II. And the great leaders of our time recognised clearly what had happened in the first half of the 20th century, and they knew that if we were to avert a second half of the 20th century not unlike the first half—specifically meaning World War III or nuclear exchange—then we are going to have to do some things radically different.</p> |
| 10:24 | <p>And so they built coalitions of common interests. We made more strides for mankind in the last sixty years than in any time in the history of the world: science, technology, medicine, space exploration. But what did <i>not</i> happen is that a good part of the world was left behind. And every regional area, every troubled spot in the world, represents an area that was left behind—that they were not beneficiaries of these great strides for mankind: whether it's the Middle East, North Korea, South America, Africa, different regions, different cultures, different religions, different dynamics. But they were left behind. Where was their opportunity? Where was their possibility? Where was their individual options? Where was their potential for making a better life for themselves and their families? Limited.</p> |

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| 11:36 | Senator Chuck Hagel <i>contd</i> The other part of all of that, that we, in my opinion, misjudged was a certain mentality about Westernising the world: that those of us who lived in the West had a superior system, had a superior lifestyle; our values were better, we thought. And so therefore we would—however way you want to say it—democratise, we would change the world for the better, based on our standards, based on a Western model, based on a Western standard. |
| 12:17 | And the word `impose' is a harsh word, but that's what happened in many areas of the world. And the motives, for the most part, were noble; not always. And it caused a reaction. And we're living now today with the consequences of some of that reaction. |
| 12:43 | Now, we're not going to go back and unwind every bad decision that we all made—and we're all guilty of it: every country, every leader: all imperfect, all flawed, all problems. We're not going to change that. But, as I said earlier, we <i>do</i> have a possibility of changing things for the future and learning from our mistakes—learning from what did not work, what <i>did</i> work. A lot of things <i>did</i> work. A lot of things did work. |
| 13:09 | But the human condition will always dictate the outcome of events. It may take a long while; it may take years. But policies inform policy, and actions and reactions are not in a world of aberrations, they are not abstractions. The human condition is a reality; it is not an abstraction. So when men and women are tied to a cycle of despair—they live in a world of no hope, where they have no dignity—not much else matters. |
| 13:57 | And it's rather predictable, the consequences of that kind of world for countries, people, regions. And I'm not one who connects poverty or lack of opportunity necessarily to terrorism. We do know that when people are without hope and without dignity there are consequences. And usually those are not very good consequences. Those who would use religion, who would use other opportunities to entice people, to encourage people to do things not in the interests of mankind, that is a reality. So that the people that are without these possibilities are prey to those who would use them. |
| 15:01 | And until we are able as a global community to not only understand but deal with and focus our energies and our resources and our efforts on the underlying dynamics and factors of what causes extremism and radicalism and alienation from responsible society, until we are able to focus on that and start changing that, then little will change except the world will get more dangerous. |
| 15:38 | Governments are limited as to what they can do about that. Governments can help, governments can encourage, governments can bring some consensus. But far more than governments it is private institutions, like those represented here today, who history has shown have always had the most impact and have always been most responsible for change. |

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| 16:04 | A political leader—a president, a prime minister—cannot change society, cannot change culture. Culture is changed because of events and dynamics and people and conditions as a society. But we can help lead, we can help frame, we can help shape, we can help focus, leaders can. And governments can be integrated into that, but it is always the religious institutions, the educational institutions, the non-governmental organisations, it is society in itself that changes society. Politics just mirrors society. Government just responds and reacts to society. |
| 16:54 | I am, essentially, who sends me to the Senate. I'm somewhat representative of those who send me to the Senate. If I wasn't, then I wouldn't get elected. |
| 17:08 | And so the broader sense of responsibility for the kind of world that we live in and the kind of world that we make falls on the shoulders of all of us, responsible citizens. And it's up to each of us, as we work within our own spheres of influence—private institutions, educational institutions, religious institutions—to help bring some consensus to this, to the great challenges of our time. |
| 17:38 | Why these kinds of conferences are so important, it not only gives voice to an area that we need more focus on and more effort toward, but it starts to define channels and avenues and ways and programmes to do something about it. Governments will respond to that, partly because governments in and of themselves are not smart, intelligent institutions; governments are made up of the individuals. Governments are not some monolithic thing that's out there and you flip a switch, and today that government finds an answer; it doesn't work that way. |
| 18:24 | Regardless of the kind of government you have, it doesn't work that way. Answers come from individuals, each of us. And you represent the accumulation of all of that in a way that very few conferences, institutions, formats, forms can do. And one of the reasons, when Henry came to me a couple of months ago to talk with me about this, and Peter and others, that I was so interested in what you were doing is because we had, on the world stage, been missing—been missing this kind of an effort. Because we had been missing the human connection, the human condition. |
| 19:12 | We in the Senate, the United States Government, every government in the world, responds to our governmental, to our national self-interest. There's nothing wrong with that; that's predictable. The world gets dangerous when there's too much unpredictability—how leaders in certain countries may or may not respond to something. That represents a dangerous world. |
| 19:35 | But doing something about getting <i>underneath</i> the surface, getting underneath the issues so you're dealing with cause and response—now, that is something that's critically, critically missing from not just the debate in the forums in the world today, but in fact in practicality avenues to address these great challenges. |

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| 20:05 | These are challenges that face us all. 21 st challenges will require a 21 st century frame of reference: that's difficult. Every generation has dealt with it—every year in the history of man and every generation through their own dynamics have had to find and frame and work within that relevant frame of reference to deal with the challenges of their time. The 20 th century is gone. This is a different world. It's an interconnected world. |
| 20:47 | I think there are more opportunities than ever before within that world, but there are also more dangers in this kind of a world. The world is more combustible, it's more complicated, it's more interconnected and it's more dangerous. But at the same time, as I know, at least, in my opinion, we are more capable of doing more to deal with these issues than we ever have been—if for no other reason than we have more resources, and those resources are more diversified than we ever had. |
| 21:24 | Well, I am incapable of saying anything profound. After all, I am a United States Senator—we don't make profound statements! <i>[laughter]</i> We talk occasionally. But I am here, as much as for any other reason, to show this Senator's support for what you're doing and to thank you and applaud you, but also to tell you that there are many of us in governments all over the world who understand your efforts, who understand the reality of what you are trying to do. And we too need your leadership, we too need your help in pointing us in directions that we are, not just structurally or institutionally, incapable of dealing with. |
| 22:19 | But just with the myriad of all the other dynamics that we are charged with the responsibility of leading on, we can't do it all. And without your help and efforts and leadership and resources, then we will unravel a world that's already dangerous enough. And that world will unravel into even more danger. |
| 22:46 | I again applaud what you're doing, and I will continue to lend my support and energy and efforts to everything that you're doing in any way I can. And I would be very pleased, as I have said to those who've organized, if you're interested in questions I will do my best to give you an honest answer—I'd even take an insult or two <i>[laughter]</i> if it's civil! But other than that, that's about all I can offer this morning. |
| 23:20 | Thank you very much! <i>[applause]</i> |
| END OF Senator Chuck Hagel | |