

U.S. Global Leadership Coalition Tribute Dinner July 17, 2012

LIZ SCHRAYER: Good evening, everyone. Can I invite those that are still standing to take their seat?

Good evening. I'm Liz Schraye. I'm the executive director of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition. And as I look around, I am absolutely thrilled to welcome you here this evening. As many of you know, a few years ago The Washington Post called our group the strange bedfellow coalition. And I look around this room and I'm not sure I see anything strange, but I certainly see something to celebrate. What I see is a vast coalition that brings a broad coalition together around a common purpose, and that common purpose is our theme for tonight, to build a better, safer, more prosperous world.

So tonight we are going to celebrate, and we're going to celebrate this broad coalition; we're going to celebrate businesses large and small, faith-based leaders, development experts and even some political leaders from both sides of the aisle. We're going to celebrate our incredible national advisory council. It includes the who's who of foreign policy, including all the former secretaries of state. Of course, among them are two very special guests tonight. It includes over 100 retired military leaders that make up our National Security Advisory Council. And tonight we also celebrate and we also honor thousands of veterans, many of whom are here tonight, that have joined our effort.

What I'd share with you is in a town that is divided, our united voices are more powerful than ever before. Your being here tonight sends that powerful message, that Americans believe that there is an important role for us to play in the world, and our American leadership is strengthened by the smart power tools that are embedded and made possible by the international affairs budget.

So all of you Washingtonians know us here in our nation's capital, but what you may not know is our voices are growing across the country. So what is a great honor is for me to introduce you to just a few of the many, many voices and faces of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition.

(Video playing.)

JIM WARREN (ph): I'm former captain Jim Warren (ph) from Herndon, Virginia. The day after I graduated West Point I married my high school sweetheart. We now have five children. I served in the 82nd Airborne Division in both Iraq and Afghanistan. I spent my life preparing for military service, but nothing prepared me for what I encountered when I led a rifle platoon tasked with preventing the Taliban from reoccupying isolated and impoverished villages. I recall the day we brought food and supplies to a small village near the Pakistani border. We expected excitement at the gifts we brought. But I was taken by surprise when they asked for a pair of mating goats. They wanted a hand up, not a handout.

LIANE VENTURA: And I'm Liane Ventura from Miami, Florida. I'm the daughter of Cuban immigrants and today serve as senior vice president at the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, representing more than 1200 businesses. Miami is the gateway of the Americas, where many people come for a new life and opportunity. But like many states, Florida was hit hard by the recession. Yet the businesses in South Florida know our economy is linked with the economies of the rest of the world. They know new markets abroad are the key to a vibrant economy and to jobs here at home.

TONY BEAM: Hi, I'm Dr. Tony Beam. I'm from Greenville, South Carolina. I'm an ordained minister, I'm vice president for student services at North Greenville University and I serve as host of Christian Worldview Today, the radio program that's heard across the South.

I was born and raised in North Carolina. My parents toiled in the textile mills before they started their own businesses. My world didn't very much exist outside of Rutherford County, North Carolina. But on my first mission trip overseas, my eyes were opened to the extreme hardships endured by people in other parts of the world. And I thought, you know, if we have the world's goods and we see people in need but we close our hearts, how can we have the love of God in our hearts? Helping those in need reflects who we are as a country; it reflects who we are as a people; it's the foundation of doing what's right from a humanitarian perspective.

DEREK KAYONGO: And I'm Derek Kayongo. I was born in Uganda but fled Idi Amin's brutal dictatorship when I was 10 years old. And today I live with my family in Atlanta, Georgia. I work at CARE, one of the largest humanitarian and relief organizations in the world. After our escape, we were lucky enough to rent a tiny little apartment in Nairobi. But hundreds and thousands of my countrymen were condemned to slums nearby. Seeing their desperation moved me to dedicate my life to humanitarian work. At CARE I see firsthand how fighting global poverty gives people hope and opportunity. We don't just provide temporary relief; we at CARE give them the skills and the ability to shape their future.

MR. WARREN (ph): The proud men and women of our armed forces are ready and able to do what's necessary to keep America safe. We all understand all too well that military might alone can't defeat the challenges we face today. For every stick, you need a carrot. That's why nearly 20,000 veterans have joined USGLC's Veterans for Smart Power.

MS. VENTURA: With 95 percent of the world's consumers living overseas, businesses know that to be competitive, we need American global leadership. I hear from business men and women every day that investing in development and diplomacy is not just the right thing to do; it's also the smart thing to do.

MR. KAYONGO: America, we should be proud of our generosity. Whether responding to famine, earthquake or tsunami, I've had the privilege to see the difference we are making – an investment in my children's future, an investment in children everywhere.

MR. BEAM: When we do the right thing when it comes to helping people in need around the world, the blessings that flow out of that action make us a better, safer, more prosperous world, for us but also for future generations.

(End video.)

MS. SCHRAYER: So those are just a few of the many faces of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition. And on behalf of all of us, we not only thank you for participating this evening, but more importantly, for joining us on our journey. Thank you to our faces. (Applause.)

And now, to get our tribute started, it's a pleasure to introduce the co-chairs for tonight's dinner: Carolyn Miles, the president and CEO of Save the Children, and Clyde Tuggle, the senior vice president of The Coca-Cola Company. (Applause.)

CAROLYN MILES: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. And I want to give a special thank you to Liz Schrayer. Liz is part of the reason that I'm here tonight. (Applause.) And I think it takes a very strong leader to bring together the kind of coalition we have tonight, so I thank Liz for that.

I want to welcome you to the U.S. Global Coalition's Leadership (sic) 2012 annual tribute dinner. As Liz said, I'm the president and CEO of Save the Children. And I'm really delighted to co-chair tonight with my friend Clyde Tuggle. As you'll hear in a minute, Clyde's not exactly from these parts, but he is a veteran here in Washington anyway.

And it's a great privilege for us to join in tonight's celebration and to pay tribute to two of the evening's honorees, Senators Patrick Leahy and Senator Lindsey Graham, who are here at the front table. (Applause.)

So we welcome you to a night of celebration, not only for these two great Americans, but for our collective, renewed commitment to building a better, safer world and for using smart power. And we'll talk a lot about that tonight. As we begin the program, I invite you – I think many of you already have – to enjoy your first course.

CLYDE TUGGLE: Thank you, Carolyn. And I will just say that the distance between Atlanta and Washington is growing shorter and shorter with each passing day. It is a great honor for Coca-Cola to join in tonight's celebration and tribute, as well as to hear from two of our nation's most distinguished and dedicated public servants, General Colin Powell and Secretary Madeleine Albright. (Applause.) We are also delighted to welcome our many guests from Capitol Hill, the administration and representatives from embassies all over the world. Carolyn and I want to extend our deep appreciation to this evening's vice chairs, dinner committee and honorary congressional co-chairs.

MS. MILES: As I look around this magnificent hall, I'm struck by the very diverse audience that's really gathered here tonight. You know, it's not often in this town that you would have Save the Children standing up at the same podium with Coca-Cola, chairing an event

where we're surrounded by business, nonprofits and military leaders, not to mention Democrats, Republicans and independents, all in the same room.

As a founding member of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, Save the Children, like so many of the NGO and development professionals here tonight, knows that the United States is a global force for good. For nearly a century, we've seen it in the work that we do every day on the ground. Our work is the reflection of some of America's most cherished principles: compassion, equality and the belief in the inherent dignity and potential of all people. Whether it's fighting hunger, malaria, HIV/AIDS or reacting to an emergency around the world, for women and girls and all family members, or advocating for justice or rebuilding communities, we are eyewitnesses to the ever-changing impact of that small, very small, but mighty 1 percent of the federal government spending that goes to foreign assistance and to the international affairs budget. And we know that this work is not just the right thing to do; it's the smart thing to do.

I want to just bring one person into the room that's not here and her name is Madelizo (ph). She's a woman that I met on a recent trip to Malawi. She has probably experienced the greatest tragedy of any parent – she lost a baby during childbirth – but Madelizo (ph) went on to be a community health worker. She had another baby named Patience, and every day Madelizo (ph) goes and visits families and brings health care to those families. That's supported by the U.S. government foreign assistance program, and that's what this is all about: it's helping people help themselves. So thank you for supporting those efforts on behalf of Madelizo (ph) and her baby, Patience.

Clyde. (Applause.)

MR. TUGGLE: I speak on behalf of the 770,000 men and women who work in the Coca-Cola system in 206 countries around the world in simply saying how proud we are to be a part of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, along with hundreds, literally hundreds of businesses large and small. We at Coca-Cola couldn't agree more with Carolyn that the international affairs budget is a critical investment in our future. From a business perspective, there is simply no choice about whether to be engaged in the world. Today 95 percent of the world's population lives outside the United States, representing 80 percent of the world's purchasing power, and that number – that number is only going to grow.

Coca-Cola knows that helping developing countries emerge from poverty, establish rule of law and create stable market conditions is vital, vital for achieving a more prosperous future for the U.S. economy and for the citizens of all of those nations. And this is why we work in partnership with many, so many, of the NGOs and government agencies here tonight. That's why we are in the remotest part of India helping thirsty communities harvest rainwater, or in Bermuda providing microfinancing to women to help them start businesses to feed their families.

And that is why we are so delighted to join all of you here to honor two great champions on Capitol Hill, two gentlemen, truly, whose leadership embodies the principles of bipartisanship and distinguished public service that some fear are becoming a thing of the past in this great city.

MS. MILES: So we'd like to start our tribute, and it's my very distinct honor to begin this tribute to Senator Patrick Leahy. We want to recognize Patrick Leahy as one of the most thoughtful and effective leaders in our country, a tireless and passionate voice for America's engagement in the world, the senior senator from Vermont, Patrick Leahy. (Applause.)

The pictures – the pictures that you see on the screen are actually pictures that Senator Leahy has taken on his trips around the world. So he not only talks about these issues, but he goes out and he visits. And he witnesses what is happening in terms of foreign assistance around the world.

You know, lately Senator Leahy is getting some notoriety for something else, which is his cameo appearances in “Batman.” And I understand that this newest film, “Dark Knight,” he has actually a speaking role, so I'll be seeing that film, I think, tomorrow. I'll be looking for you.

But tonight we pay tribute not for “Batman,” but for his unrelenting role in support of America's development and diplomacy programs. For nearly a quarter of a century, Senator Leahy has served as a leader of the subcommittee that oversees America's foreign assistance programs. Senator Leahy's commitment to civil liberties, to the needs of the poor and victims of conflict, both home and abroad, has really known no bounds. He does vitally understand the importance of the development tools and the – and what diplomacy does for our world, and has championed this idea of smart power long before the term was even coined. As chairman of the State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, he has worked to protect and strengthen our international affairs programs. He has used his respected voice to defend and underscore the essential role these programs contribute to our own security, prosperity and our values as a nation. His efforts have literally saved lives and provided hope and opportunity to millions across this planet.

Senator Leahy, on behalf of the millions of Americans that our broad coalition here represents, it is the highest of honors to thank you for protecting and strengthening America's civilian agencies, and to honor you for your extraordinary leadership in making our world a better place. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in saluting Senator Patrick Leahy. (Applause, music playing.)

MR. TUGGLE: If I may – if I may read the inscription, because it is important, and it reads, “The U.S. Global Leadership Coalition salutes Senator Patrick J. Leahy for his vision, leadership and unwavering commitment to elevating development and diplomacy and strengthening the U.S. international affairs budget. Presented to the Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, July 17, 2012, Washington, D.C.”

Congratulations, Senator.

SENATOR PATRICK LEAHY: Thank you so much. (Applause.) Thank you.

You know, nice choice of music. (Laughter.) Thank you all very much. As Carolyn knows, I've long admired the work of Save the Children, but all of you – and I apologize for the

voice – but Liz and Clyde and members of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition (sic) board and so many of our friends, Secretary Albright, Secretary Powell. You know, Secretary Albright and Marcelle and I traveled to China back in the '70s when I was too young to know what I was doing, but fortunately she did and kept me out of trouble. And of course, my good friend Secretary Powell, who mentored me and worked with me over the years. And I wanted to wish you and Mrs. Powell, on August 25th of this year, a happy 50th wedding anniversary. (Applause.) How's that for knowing what's going on this – (laughter).

And my dear friend, Lindsey Graham, it is so good to be here with you. Lindsey and I come from opposite political backgrounds, but we have worked together; we've been partners on the Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations, as was Senator Mitch McConnell and Senator Judd Gregg. As Marcelle knows, we have worked so hard to make sure that we keep foreign aid out of partisan politics.

We've had a long tradition of bipartisanship on our subcommittee. It's served us well. It's rarely mentioned. With all the stories about how Washington is broken, this is one area that works very well. The mission of this coalition – coalition we recognize today – is to protect national security, to build economic prosperity, to strengthen humanitarian values. Lindsey, I think I can say safely for both of us that's one we share. (Applause.)

And in the United States Senate, both parties have worked together to project American diplomatic and development leadership at a time of severe budget pressures. Tim Recerf (ph) from my office, who heads the committee to – (inaudible) – they know how hard we work, because we understand we can't divorce ourselves from a world that's increasingly competitive. I'll also say it's a world that is increasingly dangerous – not just because of religious and ethnic intolerance and (terrorists ?), proliferation of nuclear weapons, but other threats, like climate change, unsustainable population growth, poverty, conflict – (inaudible) – parts of the Middle East and Africa when we know that we're probably going to fight more wars over water than oil in the coming generation.

I worry that, try as hard as we might, the United States is not responding as effectively as we should. In the next three to five decades, the world's population will grow by another 2 billion people. And as I mentioned before, wars will be fought not only around oil, but food and water.

I think we ought to all be working to prevent that, instead of wasting time arguing about whether to even fund family planning in the United Nations. Let's get real. (Applause.)

And I know this may come as a shock. I'm going to tell you a secret. This is highly classified. (Laughter.) But sometimes the House of Representatives doesn't always agree with what Senator Graham and I are doing. (Laughter.) Fortunately, there are some key Republicans and Democrats in the House. I see one, my partner from Vermont, Peter Welch here, who do work with us.

At the same time we're fighting for the necessary funds for diplomacy and development, we have to also recognize – and let's be honest about this – the money we get does not always achieve the results we want. There are many reasons for this. Often, we don't hold foreign governments accountable when they fail to perform. We've got to start saying: You want our help, you want our money? You've got to be accountable. Let's work together. (Applause.)

And let's stop worrying about a bureaucracy that says we have to worry about how we report on what we're doing. Let's just do it. That might make a lot more sense.

And not just to big organizations and contractors – look at the fact we have some wonderful men and women in the field – and you know many of them: Give them a free rein to do what they can do best. So the work by this coalition to highlight the importance of diplomacy and development as pillars of U.S. national security has not gone unnoticed. We're in this together, both from the defense side, State Department side, USAID. When top Pentagon officials praise the work of USAID's programs in Africa, as you know they do, you have all had a lot to do with that. When CEOs, Republicans and Democrats alike, come to Congress or write letters in support of our budget allocation, we see your hand in it. And trust me, Lindsey and I use those letters to line up votes.

Now, none of this is easy. How do you tell a farmer in Vermont why it matters to the United States what happens in Yemen or South Sudan? How do you convince an autoworker in South Carolina that investing in education and infrastructure in Egypt or Haiti is good for the United States? We know it is, but we have to get that word out. And how do you explain to voters why we should use their tax dollars so Lebanese and Pakistani students can study in American universities, even though everybody in this room knows it's in our best interests?

We're here tonight because we want the United States to be strong and respected around the world. We have troops fighting in Afghanistan, but they alone are not going to defeat terrorism. Our economy increasingly depends on foreign markets. But people in developing nations have to be able to buy what we want to sell. We're defending freedom of speech and religion, due process and women's rights – something we take for granted in this country. But they're under assault in ways none of us could have thought possible in the 21st century. Watch the horrific video of the Taliban shooting to death a woman. Watch these things and know that we have more to do. And we are facing challenges to our influence not seen since the Cold War.

Now, Marcelle and I are delighted to be at the same table as Secretary Albright and Secretary Powell. They've been outstanding defenders of the foreign service, but they've also been outstanding defenders of funding for foreign assistance. They've brought credibility to this. That's critically important. I want to thank the both of you for all the help you gave me during the years you were secretaries.

So that's – (applause) – but let me also thank the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition. You don't get thanks enough. Trust me. We use you every way we can on the Hill for our common goals. So this award means an awful lot. Thank you very, very much. (Applause.)

MR. TUGGLE: Thank you, Senator, for those inspiring words. And those words of bipartisan support, those words of cooperation really, in many ways, are the perfect preamble to the tribute to our next honoree. And it is my great honor to pay tribute to Senator Lindsey Graham, one of the more extraordinary champions in Congress for our nation's international affairs program.

Senator Graham has a well-deserved reputation as a leader willing to tackle the tough issues facing our nation. He is a recognized authority on defense and foreign policy, having built a distinguished career in the Air Force, and who is one of only three senators serving in the

National Guard or Reserves. His military background makes him one of the most compelling voices for why our nation must continue to invest in foreign assistance. As the new ranking member of the State, Foreign Operations Subcommittee, he has joined Senator Leahy in assuring America provides the leadership and resources that are so necessary to fostering a more peaceful and prosperous world.

From Iraq and Afghanistan to the unfolding events of the Arab Awakening, Senator Graham has never shied away from fighting to ensure that America has both the military and civilian tools necessary to keep America safe. Earlier this year, he led a group of senators to Africa to gain a greater appreciation for the link between our global health and economic development programs and our national interests.

Senator Graham, on behalf of our vast coalition, we thank you for your tireless leadership, for helping to keep America safe by ensuring a strong commitment to America's leadership in the world. With your efforts, there is no doubt our future is bright. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in thanking an outstanding champion, Senator Lindsey Graham. (Applause.)

MS. MILES: Let me again just read the inscription: The U.S. Global Leadership Coalition salutes Senator Lindsey Graham for his vision, leadership and unwavering commitment to elevating development and diplomacy and strengthening the U.S. international affairs budget. Thank you again.

SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM (R-SC): Thank you very much. Thank you all very, very much, appreciate it. (Applause.) I've got one goal in the world, it's every child can buy a Coke if they want to – or a Pepsi. (Laughter.) But a couple observations and we'll get on with hearing the real talent of the night, Colin and Madeline. The world is screwed up. I'm dying to hear how you would suggest to fix it. So – (laughs) – but I really appreciate both of you coming. And as Pat said, you all been great supporters of this account.

In terms of the award, I am confident I do not deserve the award. But I'm also confident I don't deserve half the crap I get, so it – (laughter) – kind of levels out I guess. (Applause.) So take it where you can get it. (Laughs.)

Senator Leahy mentioned the House. Kay Granger – Kay, are you here tonight? She is the chairman – (applause) – of the Foreign Ops Subcommittee, which is a hell of a lot harder than being in the Senate. So she's swimming with sharks over there. And I really appreciate her guts, for lack of a better word.

Pat Leahy, we cancel each other's vote out 99 percent of the time. Get this on the tape, because – in case this is played back home. (Laughter.) But I could not have asked for a better partner – and I hope to switch jobs with him next year and be chairman myself, but – (laughter) – but Pat has been involved with the account for years. Him and Tim are great to work with. And it really is tough here at home – South Carolina, Vermont, you name it. There are a lot of people out there in America hurting. We have high unemployment. We've got a lot of problems to solve here at home. And people are right to ask us about how we spend their money. But the

one thing about Senator Leahy, he has made it as easy as possible for a conservative Republican to support this account. And I really do appreciate that. (Applause.)

Now, the question needs to be asked, why would a Senator from South Carolina want to be the ranking member of the Foreign Aid Subcommittee? I ask myself that. If you have any ideas, pass them on to me. (Laughter.) Let me tell you what drove me to want to partner with Pat. I have been involved with the military, not nearly the record – you know, I've been a military lawyer. The only people that really ever wanted to kill me were my own clients. (Laughter.) But Colin Powell has been a hero for many years. But the highlight of my life has been wearing the uniform of our nation as an Air Force officer. And I know how hard it's been on our men and women in the military since 9/11.

But to our men and women in the State Department and USAID, you need – how about a round of applause for them? (Cheers, applause.) You face the same dangers as our men and women in uniform, and you're armed with something other than an M4. You're armed with the idea of what America represents. I think in many ways the men and women in this room tonight – business people, military leaders, the NGOs of the world – that you are al-Qaida's worst nightmare – (applause) – and you represent the best hope of mankind.

You know, if I do what Senator Thurman, my predecessor, was able to do, I'll have 46 more years to serve. (Laughter.) I'm going to miss y'all guys. (Laughs.) My first – I'll get married in 10 years and have my first child when I'm 68. (Laughter.) So I got a lot to look forward to. (Laughter.) But I don't really know what awaits me politically, but I do know this, that while I'm in the Congress and while I have the privilege to represent the great people of South Carolina – like Tony Beam – and I cannot tell you how important Tony Beam has been to Lindsey Graham. He is a Christian radio personality in Greenville, South Carolina. And when I go on his show, we have a very good discussion about why America should be involved in the world, and why it's OK for the foreign aid account to exist. And to Liz – Liz rocks. (Applause.) You do just a – you do a terrific job.

But the reason I wanted to be on this subcommittee and to be Pat's partner, I realize that we're not going to be able to kill enough terrorists to make the world a safer place. And I refuse to give the continent of Africa over to the communist Chinese. We're going to fight for Africa. (Applause.) We're going to create opportunity for American businesses in Africa. We're not going to exploit their resources; we're going to help their people. And one of my heroes – (applause) – and it will be to our benefit.

One of my heroes is George W. Bush. I'm sure he made his fair share of mistakes, but the one thing I can tell you above all else he got right was America's role in the world when it comes to Africa. So President Bush, thank you very much. (Applause.) You will be my role model in terms of how I engage this account.

Finally, it is 1 percent of the budget, but that's still \$50 billion. Do you know how long it takes for the average working person to generate enough taxes to send \$50 billion to Washington? For some people it takes – a lot of people all their lives. So, yes, it is 1 percent of the budget, but it is real money coming from hardworking people.

And here's what I believe about these people – liberal, conservative, moderate, vegetarian, libertarian – (laughter) – I believe that one thing that unites conservatives and liberals and moderates is the view of who we are as a people. And our goal is to explain to the American taxpayer that we take every dollar you send to us seriously when we spend it through the foreign operations account. And as Pat said, we need to hold governments more accountable. We need to hold our own government more accountable. And our USAID director has been a breath of fresh air. Thank you very much, Raj. (Applause.)

But here's the story Lindsey Graham is going to tell to the tea party, to the Chamber of Commerce. Ronald Reagan said: It is Americans – America's destiny to shape the future of the world, not have the world shape us. I believe that. I believe that it matters what happens in Afghanistan because 9/11, if nothing else, has taught us it matters. And Pat, when some young woman is being killed in a soccer stadium by a bunch of thugs, it's only a matter of time before that affects us.

So let's get involved. Let's stay engaged. And here's the story that I want to tell, that every dollar we spend will be managed as well as possible. We will make our fair share of mistakes, but the biggest mistake of all for America is to withdraw and turn the world over – (applause) – to people with the darkest vision of mankind.

To the NGOs here tonight, to the faith-based community, God bless you. Your works and deeds are being recorded as I speak, in heaven. To the American taxpayer, I can assure you that this 1 percent is doing a lot of good throughout the world, that there are babies alive today who would not have made it, except for America. There's clean water in places that have never known it before. There's a schoolhouse that exists because of the American people.

And to the American people, this will pay more dividends to our country in the future than any single thing we could do, because I do believe we've been blessed by God. And the way to stay in His good graces is to spend our money wisely in the cause of mankind. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MS. MILES: Thank you, Senator Graham. Thank you, Senator Leahy. I think I'm not going to mention my vegetarianism. (Laughter.) It seems to get lumped in with some other interesting things. But on behalf of everyone here tonight, we express our deep gratitude again to both Senators Leahy and Senators Graham for their leadership and support for our international affairs program.

I now want to invite everybody to enjoy dinner. We'll continue the program with Secretaries Albright and Secretary Powell in a little while. Thank you. (Applause.)

DAN GLICKMAN: Thank you. Welcome. And I want to welcome you all to this second half of the program. I happen to be privileged to be chairman of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition and it's a great honor to add my welcome and my congratulations to my friends Pat Leahy and Lindsey Graham for their awards tonight. I just – last year I visited

Tanzania and Mozambique. And I saw firsthand how America's programs in global health, agriculture and economic development are delivering real results on the ground.

I returned inspired by the power of this 1 percent investment. I'm going to repeat that – 1 percent investment and investment that's saving lives, keeping us secure and opening up America's markets around the world. I want to give you one anecdote. I was in Tanzania and I met with some government officials. And a man said how much he loved America and I said, well, tell me a little about this. And he said, well, you have three of the greatest people in the world from America – built on what Lindsey Graham said.

And I said, well, who are they? And he said: They're Bill Clinton, Barack Obama and George W. Bush. And I said – (applause). Go ahead, clap; it's good. At that time, it was last year. I said, well, I'm not sure I could find very many people in America that would say Obama, Clinton and Bush. And they said, well, because Clinton and what he had done in the Clinton Global Initiative and the foundation and what he had done for Africa; Obama because of the Feed the Future Initiative and because of his roots; and George W. Bush because what he did for the Global Fund for AIDS and Malaria.

And I got the real feeling that America has a secure place in the hearts of people in the developing world like no other country in the world. And I think building on what Lindsey and Pat said tonight, we have a real opportunity to sustain and continue that in the future.

One of the exciting USGLC initiatives this year has us on the campaign trail and not with a super PAC but with a nonpartisan effort called Impact 2012. Led by Madeleine Albright and Tom Ridge, Impact 2012 calls on candidates from Congress to the president to embrace a smart power foreign policy. With your help, we will add our voice district by district, candidate by candidate, educating future policymakers about the value of strong and effective foreign assistance. A key initiative in our journey to build a better, safer and more humane world and for a strong presence of America in that world as well.

Now, we have a lot of VIPs tonight and I want to welcome these people and ask you to hold your applause until I am finished because we have quite a few and I want to go through these fairly quickly. From the Senate, we have Senator Kelly Ayotte, Senator Chris Coons, Senator John Hoeven, Senator Kay Hagan. Did I miss anybody in the Senate who is here? Let's give them an applause; members of the Senate. (Applause.)

And from the House, we have my friend Howard Berman, my friend Sam Farr – actually, all of these are my friends – Jeff Fortenberry, Peter Welch and the chair of the House State, Foreign Ops Subcommittee, Kay Granger. Let's give them all an applause as well. (Applause.)

We are pleased to welcome ambassadors from over a dozen countries here. I would ask all of our ambassadors to stand up if they are still here. Please welcome, people – (applause) – our ambassadors. And we thank them very much for them being here. We have many friends from the administration who are charged with leading the international affairs

agencies. Deputy Secretary of State Tom Nides is here, Administrator of USAID Raj Shah is here, CEO of the Millennium Challenge Corporation Daniel Yohannes, President and CEO of OPIC – the Overseas Private Investment Corporation – Elizabeth Littlefield, Director of the U.S. Trade and Development Agency Lee Zach. Let's give them all a great round of applause. (Applause.)

So before I get the hook, I want to introduce – and it's my pleasure to welcome to the stage Ed Rapp, group president and CFO of Caterpillar, who told me that over two-thirds of their sales are outside the United States of America. They're one of the biggest exporters of any company that our country have. And Ed, it's a pleasure to have you here. And Ed will introduce our special guests. Thank you all very much. (Music plays.)

ED RAPP: Good evening. You know, it is indeed a pleasure for me to join you tonight and to welcome our distinguished guests, the former secretaries Albright as well as Powell. (Applause.)

I cannot think of two people that are better positioned to start a conversation on America's role in the world. One of the reasons that Caterpillar is really proud of our membership of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition is the nontraditional makeup of this group.

Just look around the room. You've got businesses, NGOs, faith-based organizations all coming together with a common agenda and truly making progress. I'm also proud of Caterpillar's own Bill Lane. You know, Bill – (applause) – Bill along with George Rupp serves as one of the co-presidents of the USGCL and I think it demonstrates our commitment to this organization.

You know, at Caterpillar, I lived and worked in Africa in my career and one of the things I saw firsthand is what we believe, that the road to progress begins with a road, period. And I can think of no organization that has a greater impact on that than USGCL. As we've heard tonight, America's leadership in the world is more critical today than perhaps ever. At Caterpillar, we have a front row seat as we manage the global business to see how this is unfolding. You have the growth in the emerging markets, the challenges in the developed parts of the world that are transforming the business landscape.

Now, a question you may ask is do you see these as threats or opportunities. And for us, it's clear. It is an opportunity if we engage on the global stage, as it is good for U.S. business and it is good for economic growth. It's simple. Investing in global development and diplomacy is just good business.

That's why we're especially honored tonight to welcome Secretary Albright and General Powell. These two dedicated public servants have served and they have committed their lives to America's engagement on the global stage, spending decades of leadership, they have been in the forefront of those on the world stage who embrace the importance of diplomacy, democracy and economic development.

They also exemplify the bipartisan spirit of collaboration that so many of us seek in our national leaders today. In this heightened political season, let us remind ourselves that we will not grow, we will not prosper unless we work together. That's what our speakers stand for. Through their extraordinary careers, they have truly helped build a better, a safer, a more prosperous world.

I know when I speak tonight, it's on behalf of all of you in expressing our deep appreciation to both of them not only for the public roles they have played in serving our great nation, but also for the steadfast support they have lent on behalf of the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition.

So ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a warm welcome for Secretaries of State Madeleine Albright, Colin Powell and our esteemed moderator tonight, Frank Sesno, the director of George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs. (Applause, music plays.)

FRANK SESNO: Well, what a pleasure it is to share this small, intimate, friendly gathering with two such amazing national servants who have done so much. I've had the opportunity to talk to both in many settings through my years at CNN and since. And so I'm very much looking forward to how we and you connect the dots this evening in terms of America's role in the world, making the case for diplomacy and development and where you see this all going.

Secretary Albright, though, I want to start – it's hot in Washington now. It's a strange season. You are famous for so many things, especially those pins you wear. Tell us about the pin you're wearing.

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT: Well, I'm wearing a frog tonight – either because we have to leap over the problems that plague this particular budget or to make sure that foreign assistance doesn't croak. (Laughter, applause.)

MR. SESNO: Where's your pin?

GENERAL COLIN POWELL: She has all the pins.

MR. SESNO: Secretary Albright, let's start with you –

MS. ALBRIGHT: And I have to say one of the reasons – when Colin and I were both on the Principles Committee and he would walk in there with all his medals and I was a mere mortal female civilian, I figured I needed some help. (Laughter, applause.)

MR. SESNO: A lot of medals and pins richly deserved and hard-earned. Secretary Albright, let's talk about what – and dig into this thing a little bit. You know, when you were secretary, there were serious efforts in Congress to cut back on the foreign affairs budget and agencies. There were some members of Congress who boasted about not having passports. That seems to be very different now. There seems to be a different tone. There

seems to be a different appreciation. A, do you share that perception; and B, if so, why? Why do you think that's happened?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, I think an awful lot does have to do with the people that we honored tonight, Senator Leahy and Senator Graham. I think that it makes a tremendous difference when you have leaders of the committee that can push everything forward and Congressman Kay Granger and I talked to Nita Lowey today. So I do think that the leadership is a very, very important part.

I have been fighting the battles of making sure that the foreign assistance budget or the international organization budget even gets through. I worked for Senator Muskie when he was chairman of the budget committee, and then I did congressional relations for the National Security Council during the Carter administration where I decided that the words "foreign" and "assistance" should never go together, that in fact it was an issue as to why would we give taxpayers, as Senator Graham said.

I do think that there is an agreement about the importance of American leadership. I think that that is a very important part. I think there is some disagreement about how American leadership is deployed and under what circumstances and what programs we really work on. But I think, thanks to the coalition – and Liz Schroyer who has been remarkable in this – I think that we have been pushing it. I'm not sure I fully agree that there is complete bipartisan agreement on how American leadership should be deployed. And therefore, we have to keep working in order to make sure that we see democracy, development and defense going together.

MR. SESNO: Secretary Powell, you certainly led both the State Department and the Defense Department. You made the case from both – from both places. And what's really interesting to think about is how so many military leaders have spoken out in this regard – whether it's Secretary Panetta recently, Secretary Gates before that, General Petraeus. Why do you think the military feels and expresses its feeling so strongly, so eloquently for this kind of expenditure?

GEN. POWELL: I think we've always felt that way. I think we've become more vocal in recent years.

MR. SESNO: Why?

GEN. POWELL: As we see the kinds of situations we've found ourselves in. I'd go back to the invasion of Panama in 1989 and work my way forward when we realized just having a military battle that you won is not the end of the game. Perhaps we should have done more at the beginning to avoid that battle in the first place – or, having won the battle, how do we then create the peace and preserve the peace.

And I think we have to be careful when we talk about these terms such as smart power or hard power or soft power. I'm reminded of a conversation I had with a former archbishop of Canterbury in 2003. You might have been there, Frank. I don't remember now. But it was on the eve of the Gulf War – the Second Gulf War. And the archbishop stood up and

said, well, General Powell, why don't we just use soft power? Why do we have to use hard power? And it was a critique of what we were getting ready to do. And the answer I gave him was that it was not soft power that rescued Britain from Hitler. It was hard power. And you have to have all of it. But when we won with hard power World War II, we then applied soft power – soft power in both Asia and in Germany and created democracies. And so the importance of this coalition – and what makes what we're doing here tonight so very, very important – is that we understand that we need it all. But we have been shortchanging the soft power which really translates into smart power portion of this, much too long.

Years I've been hearing this same thing. Only less than 1 percent goes to this. But it doesn't change. And until we have more people as informed as Lindsey Graham and Pat Leahy who understand that in the world we're living in and international environment where we're competing at so many different levels, and they're not so much military levels as they are levels of economics, levels of development, what we're doing to help people in parts of the world who are wondering: Is America there for us?

Until we start to invest in that part of the power equation, America is not meeting its values and its own standards to the rest of the world. (Applause.)

MR. SESNO: You said something very, very important just now, and it actually would be a great challenge to Senator Leahy and Senator Graham when they're doing their job. And that is we need it all. And America would say to you we can't afford it all. And that's the case that you then need to make, that this is an investment, that this is taking place in a changed world where borders mean different things and national security means different things. How hard is that to do?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, I think that when one puts the facts out there in terms of first of all that it is in our national security interest that countries are able to develop, that they are able – people are able to live a decent life, that our values are translated and that when something happens terribly in some country, it does come home to America. So I see it in many ways as a national security issue and sometimes it has to be argued on that basis – national security support.

Then, there are also a lot of constituencies in this country who see it differently. We've talked about the religious community. I think they have been – the faith-based community has been very supportive because they don't want to see people suffer and we have always talked about assistance to the poorest of the poor.

And I think you have to present it to the different constituencies in language that makes sense to them. It is not that much money. It really is not. I know Senator Graham was talking about how long it takes a taxpayer to be able to generate it. But the returns to America of people that can buy American goods or that have a sense of security and are able to be developed democracies I think is something that we can afford. We are a rich country. We are richer than anybody else and I think we have to make that argument very clearly.

MR. SESNO: But you put this in terms of investment, don't you?

GEN. POWELL: It is very – it is very affordable. One of the problems I had when I was chairman, it was always set up as a competition between defense spending and foreign assistance, and other State Department spending.

MR. SESNO: But when you say set up as a competition, you mean on the Hill or in the budget process?

GEN. POWELL: Yes, people always wanted to say you're taking money from defense and just wasting it at the State Department. It was only when I became secretary of State that I realized that that was idiotic. (Laughter.)

MS. ALBRIGHT: We used to have this discussion.

GEN. POWELL: I really –

MR. SESNO: I would have liked to have been there.

GEN. POWELL: I really knew it as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as well. Because I've often been called the reluctant general because I'm trying to see if we can find peaceful ways to avoid conflict. And I think we all should do that. And there are peaceful ways. But it takes investment. It takes working with nations that aren't on a democratic path. It takes investing in clean water – simple things, clean water, economic development and helping people come out of poverty so they see a better life. And we are the inspiration for that better life. This is how you avoid conflicts. I want to avoid conflicts. And if one comes, I want to make sure we know how to do it right. But I'd rather avoid it.

MR. SESNO: If we look at this audience and think about the conversation tonight, the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition and the work that's being done here, the message is clear. But there's a tremendous disconnect it seems with the public.

I was looking earlier in the recent poll – a Pew poll that says – and this is shocking – 83 percent of the American public say we should pay less attention to problems overseas and concentrate on problems here at home. Maybe the way that question was phrased puts that as a binary choice which it is not. But how do you – how do we address that?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, I think we have to be smarter in terms of explaining the problem and your previous profession doesn't really help. (Laughter.)

MR. SESNO: Whatever are you talking about?

MS. ALBRIGHT: I think that this is not such a simple subject that you can in a – breaking news, breaking news – explain why in fact it is so important. And I do think that we have a stake in having people understand that our security depends on security abroad, and that there isn't such a thing as far away; that it's all very close.

GEN. POWELL: That poll result has been used for years to suggest that the American people think, you know, 10, 20 percent of our budget is going to foreign assistance. And it's not. It's less than 1 (percent). But the world has also changed in the last 20 years. What are the Chinese doing? They're going around the world using their smart power, their soft power to secure their mineral resources, to secure farmland for food for the Chinese people. They're using their wealth. They're using their influence around the world to really challenge us. We still are the inspiration for the rest of the world. And if we're going to be the inspiration to the rest of the world, if this is what democracy is about, this is what human rights are all about, we've got to put our money behind it. And I think the case can be made to the American people that we are a wealthy country. We can afford this.

And one of the major changes with respect to the Pentagon and the State Department accounts – I think there is more realization now on the part of military commanders that we need to perhaps even give up part of our somewhat good budget at the Defense Department, even if it means sending it to the State Department for foreign assistance and supporting the State Department.

When we had these difficulties in Iran and Afghanistan recently, and they said, we need the State Department, we need AID, well, guess what. There isn't that much State Department. There isn't that much AID to send to these places. We ought to be doubling the size of the Foreign Service. We ought to be doubling –

MR. SESNO: Doubling the size of it?

GEN. POWELL: Doubling the size of the Foreign Service. (Applause.)
Doubling the size of USAID.

MR. SESNO: Doubling the size of USAID?

GEN. POWELL: Yeah.

MR. SESNO: This is not incremental. This is exponential.

GEN. POWELL: There is – no, there is so much – exponential. There is so much work to be done and not just for Afghanistan and Iraq. There is so many things we could be doing around the world right now to bring people out of disease, out of poverty. As we've been giving credit this evening, Madeleine's work with President Clinton and my work with President Bush – a lot has been done. But a lot more can be done to make this a better, safer world that will serve our interests.

MR. SESNO: When Senator Leahy was up here speaking, he spoke about accountability. And I actually should say for a moment I think we should recognize once again Senator Leahy and Senator Graham –

MS. ALBRIGHT: Yeah. (Applause.)

MR. SESNO: – for your accomplishment and your work.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Frank –

MR. SESNO: And I will throw in that when I was a young radio reporter in Vermont, in 1977, Senator Leahy was then making the case that his dairy farmers – I remember in the conversation that his dairy farmers in Vermont were selling products and the machine tool industry in Vermont was selling overseas.

MS. ALBRIGHT: But I think we were introduced by Caterpillar. They certainly in fact make money and do well by exporting products. And somebody on the other side has to buy them. And it's not an accident that a large number of people in this audience are businesspeople. They are doing what Benjamin Franklin said: Doing well by doing good. And the bottom line is, is that in fact that is the best part of the coalition that can sell this. (Applause.)

MR. SESNO: What Senator – what Senator Leahy spoke about was a degree of accountability to make this case. And I'd like to ask you both then how you feel and what you feel needs to be done to make this diplomacy, this investment that you want to double more effective going forward.

GEN. POWELL: Well, we should demand accountability. It's the taxpayers' money. Let's never forget that.

MR. SESNO: What does that mean, accountability? We talk about it.

GEN. POWELL: It means that the average citizen is paying taxes to send overseas to help these people. And therefore, we should expect from them non-corrupt governments, the rule of law, the rule of commercial law, and to act in ways that are sensible and appropriate for what they are receiving from us. And so there's no problem in my mind anyway of demanding the highest levels of accountability and sticking with the rule of law.

You know, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which I think was a major initiative of President George W. Bush's administration, said we will invest in those countries that have demonstrated that they are committed to the rule of law; they're going to end corruption and they have a sensible program to use this money. If people are wasting the money, to heck with it; we don't deserve to – we don't need to give them the money and the American people shouldn't expect us to give them the money.

MR. SESNO: Let me do what I enjoy doing so much, which is to put you on the spot a little bit.

You're secretary of state today. We have this fiscal cliff that we keep hearing about that we're facing. We may have sequestration of our military. We may have another downgrade of our debt. Who knows where this is going to go? But you have to go up on the Hill and make the case for doubling this – is what you argue – or for spending more. How would you do that today?

MS. ALBRIGHT: I think that I would make very clear that the security of the United States depends on the fact of us having friends around the world and countries that – where people are able to live a decent life and where, in fact, there is not an environment that terrorists can take advantage of. There is no direct line between poverty and terrorism. But it does not take a lot of imagination to think that people who are completely alienated from their societies are more recruitable.

And I think you have to make a very hard case. I think the suggestion that Colin makes is very good, that we need to have accountability in governments – harder said than done. You know, I mean, easier said than done in many ways because sometimes we have to give to countries that are on the verge of changing.

And I do think the corruption is the cancer of the whole operation. And the question is how in fact you get the institutional structures that make these things viable in countries. But I think we have to put it flat on the line that Americans are better off when other countries do not have people that are susceptible to being corrupted or taken over by terrorist organizations.

GEN. POWELL: I would also make the argument – (applause). The Cold War is over. There is no peer competitor out there with any intent or capability to threaten the continued existence of the United States of America. We're in a different kind of competition with others in the world right now. But we still are that nation that gives inspiration to the rest of the world, to people who are still striving for freedom and democracy.

And when I see what the Chinese are doing, for example – and they're not going to be our enemy. They've got too many of their own problems. But when I see what they're doing with their power, with their influence, with their soft power – not so much their hard power, their soft power – I would say to my friends in Congress we have got to be out there on that playing field.

People are looking to us. What are we doing to help them with poverty, with clean water? What are we doing to help them educate their children, getting access to the electronic revolution that is taking place? This is in our interest. It is an economic matter.

The most powerful political force at work today is economics, not the size of the army but who is creating the most wealth for their people. And we have to participate in the world and that world requires more investment in smart – the soft power part of smart power.

MS. ALBRIGHT: I also think we have to make an even larger argument. We are sitting in a building named for Ronald Reagan. And inside this building is the Wilson Institute – Woodrow Wilson. Is there anything more bipartisan than that combination? (Laughter.) So the bottom line is –

MR. SESNO: And one of the largest buildings in Washington, we should point out.

MS. ALBRIGHT: Right. But I think one of the issues here – you’re talking about the cliff. It’s more than foreign aid. We are completely bound up by the arguments that are going on in this city that are embarrassing to the position of the United States in the world. I am chairman of the board of the National Democratic Institute. We go and we talk about what democracy is about. And we say one of the major aspects of democracy is compromise. And they say, yeah, like you guys? So the bottom line is we haven’t –

MR. SESNO: And you say what?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, we’ve got a problem. (Laughter.) And the bottom line is, is that we have a huge issue in terms – and I agree with – our issue is what is our economic security, what does it depend on? And it depends on us straightening out the budget situation, and people have to pay taxes. (Applause.)

GEN. POWELL: Let me second that, because it’s one of my consistent themes these days. Washington cannot keep operating the way it has been.

And the simple message I give is if our Founding Fathers could come together in Philadelphia, 1787, and deal with some of the most remarkable issues, the most difficult issues imaginable. Yet in a couple of months, in a hot room, they could settle those differences through compromise – compromise which creates a consensus and create a nation and write a constitution – you’re telling me that the United States Congress can’t even figure out how to get out of the sequestration monstrosity? (Applause.)

MS. ALBRIGHT: It’s crazy.

MR. SESNO: It’s really remarkable. And I think most everybody in this room and most everybody who has traveled the world has had an experience like that someplace. I remember – and I will never forget this as long as I live – in the middle of near martial law Poland, as Poland was throwing off its communist yoke, I was in this restaurant with practically no food, and I was speaking English with another colleague. And kind of – a man heard me speaking English.

Clearly, you know, I was an American. From across the room, he reaches into his breast pocket of his kind of ratty shirt, pulls out an old American dollar bill, kisses this dollar bill and says, America is good, in this broken accented English. This is a country that does stand for something. This is about how it’s projected and how we follow through on that investment.

I want to ask you about something you both talked about and has been discussed a lot here, which is the role of the private sector. We’ve heard from several people from corporate America. Corporate America is making money overseas. Corporate America is growing overseas. It’s also partnering with government overseas. How should that work? How should that look? How important is that?

MS. ALBRIGHT: I think the private sector is essential because public-private partnerships are one of the best ways to move a process forward in terms of helping the country where – which we are trying to help in terms of investment. And also, if I might say so, American private sector companies in terms of their health policies, their labor policies, their approach to environmental issues – I discovered, when I was secretary of state, are really among our best ambassadors.

And so private-public partnerships are very important. And I am now heading something called the Partners for a New Beginning, that Secretary Clinton asked me to head – Muhtar Kent of Coca-Cola is a vice chair – as the sector of the private sector that really is able to do a lot of good in partnership with the government, both our government and the governments overseas. And there is a profit motive to doing it. I think corporate social responsibility works along with having good business. So I think it's vital.

GEN. POWELL: I couldn't agree more with Madeleine. The great wealth of our nation is in the private sector, not in the government. And it's the private sector that is spread throughout the world now, creating products in other countries, moving production facilities to other countries – not to get away from America outsourcing itself but to go to other markets.

MR. SESNO: But that's what a lot of people might say. That's part of the pushback, right?

GEN. POWELL: Yeah, but it's not accurate.

MR. SESNO: I see all this – I see this globalized world. I don't have a job. I may lose my job. This scares me, people will say.

GEN. POWELL: Of course it scares you. We're going through a period of transformation. But the reality is it is a global economic system we are in. There's no longer an American company that isn't also a global company. And we have to understand what this dynamic is all about.

And the real challenge we have is educating our population for what is a new economic system that we are living in. And if we don't do that – and we haven't talked about it – but we talk about what we're going to do in other countries. I'm telling you something, if we don't fix our education system here in the United States, we're going to get left behind. (Applause.)

MR. SESNO: So I mentioned at the outset that we're in the middle of this campaign season. I might ask you both if you miss it, if you'd like to be on the road campaigning.

MS. ALBRIGHT: I actually am. (Laughter.) I am trying to help everybody that believes in what this country is about, believes that our government can be functional and is willing to be in Congress and try to figure out how to get us out of this particular situation.

I think Colin – you know, by the way, it's very clear. We're very good friends and that we've done a lot of things together. And I think we both agree on the fact that we are wrapped around the axle at the moment and we need people that want to come to Washington to solve the problem, not create the problem.

MR. SESNO: And if you're campaigning today and you're speaking on behalf of this priority that we're discussing here tonight – American leadership, development and diplomacy – what does that campaign speech sound like?

GEN. POWELL: The campaign speech says, first and foremost, let's remember it's economic development that is the most powerful political force at work in the world today, not the size of the army. And what we have to do is fix our economy and do whatever that takes with government policies, fiscal policies and corporate policies. And it's really going to be fixed by America's businesses and corporations.

Secondly, we've got to do something with our immigration policy. We can't pretend that we are not a nation of immigrants. We always have been. It's been our greatest strength, and we don't understand the importance of fixing this problem that we have. (Applause.) We don't – we need to internalize that as of earlier this year, the majority of youngsters born in America are born of immigrant and minority families. And in one generation, the majority of all Americans will be of another so-called diverse culture.

And that's the way – but we're the only nation on Earth who can handle something like this. Europe can't do it. Only America has the tradition to handle something like that. So we have to prepare ourselves for that kind of a demography that's heading that way.

And third, we have to understand that education is key to our success. And education is not just pay teachers more, fix the schools. Education has to be driven down to prenatal time. It has to be driven down so that we all understand that education begins in a home – a home of loving people who bring a child into the world in an atmosphere of love and are prepared to give that child what's necessary to be successful in life and don't just blame teachers and schools. It's the entire community that has a responsibility. (Applause.)

MR. SESNO: A few years ago, six weeks before the last election, you gathered – the two of you – with three other former secretaries of State at the George Washington University for a conversation –

GEN. POWELL: I remember that.

MR. SESNO: – we enjoyed together. And I asked you at the time what was your advice to the next president; what was your comment, your message to the next president. And everybody had an answer. But you had the best one, and it was: Remember, you wanted this job. (Laughter.)

What is your message to the next president, to what we will face, what this country will face, thinking about this changing world, this more diverse world, this more globalized world?

MS. ALBRIGHT: Well, I think that – I'm looking at a sign there that says invest in our future. And I think that our next president, who is the same president that we have now – (applause) –

MR. SESNO: (Chuckles.) Or the other one who's running. (Laughter.)

MS. ALBRIGHT: But I basically believe that that is the message, that it is very important. I agree with Colin on education and that there has to be – there have to be explanations of why the policies are an investment in the future and not trying to undo the past, and that the issue here is how to make sure that America as always is looking forward. I do think that is our strength.

And so that would be my message, and that it is policies that really invest in our future across the board and our future depends on the stability and security of people in other countries. That is the hard message. It isn't just us. But we are all together in this and that we have to invest also in the future of other countries to make ourselves more secure.

MR. SESNO: And your message to the next president?

GEN. POWELL: You tried this last time, too, if you recall. (Chuckles.) My message – and what I try to do as I travel around the country and speak is talk about American values, talk about the unique place that America occupies on the world stage. The question I get all the time: Are we still number one? And my answer is not like we used to be. There's now a number two, three and four; and two, three and four used to be 15, 16 and 17.

But China has risen. Other nations are rising. I think that's terrific. It means they're bringing their people up out of poverty. But I tell all my audiences that we still are that – if I can use a Reaganesque expression – that shining city on a hill; that place that people look to for inspiration. And we must never lose that position.

So I would say to the next president, first and foremost, before we can fully occupy that shining place on a hill, we've got to fix our economy. Our people are unhappy. Our people are unhappy because the economy is not doing what we think it should do.

And the other thing I would point out to the president is somehow you've got to find a way to get beyond the political fighting that is taking place in this town where they have been out to whoever you are, go after the president in a very, very personal way, not just policies but for the purpose of destruction, not for the purpose of debating strong views pro and con, but for destruction.

We have got to get past this politics of destruction and we have got to also – Mr. President, I don't know how you do this, but you've got to figure a way to bring the American

media system under control so it is concerned with informing us and not just fighting for market share and the latest story of the day about what Britney Spears is doing. (Applause.)

MR. SESNO: I will join you in that. I think we need to tell this story. We need to tell it imaginatively, creatively, positively and responsibly. We need to engage America in the world, which is where it belongs. I'd like to thank – because we're going to bring this to a close now – General Powell, Secretary Albright, as always, for a thoughtful, candid and really remarkable conversation. Thank you both.

GEN. POWELL: We did it again, darling. (Applause.)

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the president and CEO of the International Rescue Committee and the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition's co-president, George Rupp.

GEORGE RUPP: What an extraordinary evening, starting with Lindsey Graham and Pat Leahy and concluding with Madeleine Albright and Colin Powell. I for one would be extremely happy to delegate to the four of you the management of our foreign assistance programs going into the future. It was a terrific set of presentations.

So I congratulate – on behalf of all of us, I congratulate again our honorees, Lindsey Graham and Pat Leahy. And I thank very much former secretaries of State Albright and Powell, and Frank Sesno for a remarkably candid and insightful discussion. Thank you very much for this very good program. (Applause.)

I'd like to thank as well this evening's co-chairs, Carolyn Miles of Save the Children and Clyde Tuggle for the Coca-Cola Company. Let's give them a round of applause. (Applause.)

Of course, none of this evening or our work throughout the year could be accomplished without the leadership of our board of directors, to a slight degree, and much more our fabulous professional team – led by Liz Schroyer, whose collective skill, talent and dedication make a difference each and every day. So let's hear it for those colleagues. (Applause.)

While we all know that the year ahead will certainly have its challenges, to put it gently, we can also be confident that with support and leadership in this room and around the country, we will advance in our shared journey to build a better, safer, more prosperous and more just world.

You will find on your places a brand new set of – I don't know what to call them – nice, cardboard overlays that tell the story about what happens with just 1 percent of our budget. I urge you to take that along and study it carefully and share it with all of your friends.

I also thank you for being part of this wonderful evening. And you'll be relieved to know I bid you good night. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

(END)