

The decades ahead will bring more hard choices for our country, and there are some guiding principles that should shape our course. While our Nation is safer than it was 7 years ago, the gravest threat to our people remains another terrorist attack. Our enemies are patient and determined to strike again. America did nothing to seek or deserve this conflict. But we have been given solemn responsibilities, and we must meet them. We must resist complacency. We must keep our resolve, and we must never let down our guard.

At the same time, we must continue to engage the world with confidence and clear purpose. In the face of threats from abroad, it can be tempting to seek comfort by turning inward. But we must reject isolationism and its companion, protectionism. Retreating behind our borders would only invite danger. In the 21st century, security and prosperity at home depend on the expansion of liberty abroad. If America does not lead the cause of freedom, that cause will not be led.

As we address these challenges and others we cannot foresee today, America must maintain our moral clarity. I've often spoken to you about good and evil. This has made some uncomfortable. But good and evil are present in this world, and between the two there can be no compromise. Murdering the innocent to advance an ideology is wrong every time, everywhere. Freeing people from oppression and despair is eternally right. This Nation must continue to speak out for justice and truth. We must

always be willing to act in their defense and to advance the cause of peace.

Eight years ago, on a cold January morning, I stood on the steps of the United States Capitol, placed my hand on the Bible, and swore a sacred oath to defend our people and our Constitution. On that day, I spoke of "our Nation's grand story of courage and its simple dream of dignity." Next week, my term of service will come to an end, but that story and that dream will continue.

On Tuesday, Laura and I will join all Americans in offering our best wishes to President Obama, his wife Michelle, and their two beautiful girls. And later that day, we will return to the love of family and friends in Texas. I will depart office proud of my administration's record, and I will spend the rest of my life grateful for the opportunity to have served as President of the greatest nation on Earth.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 a.m. on January 16 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 16, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Malia and Natasha "Sasha" Obama, daughters of President-elect Barack Obama. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Selection of Alan C. Lowe as Director of the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum

January 19, 2009

We are very pleased that Alan Lowe has been selected by the National Archives and Records Administration as the director of the George W. Bush Presidential Library

and Museum. Alan is a talented and experienced professional and will be an outstanding director of the Library. We look

forward to working with him and the National Archives to build a world-class Presidential library and museum that will be an important resource for scholars and the general public.