Linguistic features in political speeches
- how language can be used to impose certain moral or ethical values on people

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Abstract

The topic of this essay is the way in which strategies of persuasion in political speeches can be used to impose certain moral or ethical values on people. The aim of the study is to elucidate implicit statements in the language of politics seeing that political speeches are not primarily prosperous because they are correct or true, instead, it may be more dependent on how valid the arguments seem. Two speeches during the American presidential campaign of 2008 are analyzed: one speech by the Democratic president candidate Mr. Barack Obama and one by the Republican candidate Mr. John McCain. The audience is American military veterans and the speeches concern the American forces in Iraq. The method of analysis was to locate expressions where linguistic choices seem to have been made in order to convey certain views. The following rhetorical strategies were analyzed: metaphors, metonymies, analogies, pronouns, the active or passive voice of transitive verbs, sound-bites, three-part lists and contrastive pairs. It is argued in this essay that both speakers use rhetorical strategies to convey their ideas of morality and their views of the war in Iraq. McCain’s main argument is that the war in Iraq is right and should continue while Obama argues that the war in Iraq is wrong. However, war in itself is not wrong, hence the right war ought to be fought somewhere else according to Obama. The conclusion to be drawn from this study is that it is important to be aware of how politicians use rhetorical strategies in order to convince an audience of the rectitude of war.
# Table of Contents

1 Introduction.........................................................................................................................1  
  1.1 Language influences of political speeches.................................................................1  
  1.2 Aim...............................................................................................................................1  
  1.3 Method and material.....................................................................................................2  

2 Background.........................................................................................................................3  
  2.1 Politicians and rhetoric...............................................................................................3  
  2.2 Metaphors....................................................................................................................3  
  2.3 Metonymies..................................................................................................................4  
  2.4 Analogies.....................................................................................................................5  
  2.5 Pronouns, voice and sound-bites................................................................................6  
  2.6 Three-part lists and contrastive pairs.........................................................................7  

3 Presentation and Analysis...................................................................................................9  
  3.1 Remarks by John McCain to the Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) April 7, 2008. ................................................................................................................9  
    3.1.1 Metaphors................................................................................................................9  
    3.1.2 Metonymies and analogies......................................................................................11  
    3.1.3 Pronouns, voice and sound-bites.........................................................................12  
    3.1.4 Three-part lists and contrastive pairs.................................................................14  
  3.2 Remarks of Senator Obama: A Sacred Trust Kansas City, MO August 21, 2007. .......................................................................................................................................16  
    3.2.1 Metaphors..............................................................................................................16  
    3.2.2 Metonymies and analogies....................................................................................17  
    3.2.3 Pronouns, voice and sound-bites.......................................................................18  
    3.2.4 Three-part lists and contrastive pairs.................................................................20  
  3.3 Comparison between the speeches..............................................................................21  

4. Summary and Conclusion.................................................................................................24  

List of references.................................................................................................................25  

Appendix 1 John McCain's speech.......................................................................................26  

Appendix 2 Barack Obama's speech....................................................................................32
1 Introduction

1.1 Language influences of political speeches

Citizens of democratic countries have the option to go to the ballot boxes on election days and vote for one person or one party. Whether their decision goes along with a political conviction or not, it is most likely based on communication through language. Charteris-Black (2005) states that “[w]ithin all types of political system, from autocratic, through oligarchic to democratic; leaders have relied on the spoken word to convince others of the benefits that arise from their leadership” (Charteris-Black 2005: 1).

By studying language in circumstances where all its functions and variations are taken into consideration, it is possible to learn more about how perceptions, convictions and identities are influenced by language. In political speeches during election campaigns, ideas and ideologies need be conveyed through language so that they are agreed upon by the receivers as well as by others who may read or hear parts of the speech afterwards in the media. Words and expressions are used or omitted to affect meaning in different ways. Moreover, political speeches are composed by a team of professional speech writers, who are educated in the use of persuasive language. Adding rhetorical devices to a pre-composed speech may be of crucial importance to election results. A political speech is not necessarily a success because of correctness or truth, rather it may be a matter of presenting valid arguments (Beard 2000: 18).

This essay will look at how two American presidential candidates try to accomplish persuading an audience to support their political opinions. Are there words or expressions suggesting that a speaker may wish to emphasize certain views and policies while concealing others? Are there inflections or paragraphs appearing as if they were picked out selectively in order to affect meaning? More specifically, how do they use language to make the audience assent? The controversial topic is intended for pointing out their need of persuasiveness and the impact linguistic choices may have because of the context (Charteris-Black 2005: 4).

1.2 Aim

The aim of this study is to examine and expose implicit statements in the language of politics and to detect examples of linguistic strategies that impose moral or ethical values on people.
1.3 Method and material

Two speeches during the American presidential campaign of 2008 were studied: one speech by the Democratic president candidate Mr. Barack Obama and one by the Republican candidate Mr. John McCain. When the speeches were made, both candidates were running their campaigns for one of the world's most powerful positions. Disregarding the reasons why they strove for power, this study looked at how they attempted to communicate leadership and obtain credit with the use of language.

Each speech concerned the American forces in Iraq and addressed American military veterans. The speeches were chosen because the topic and the audience place the two candidates juxtaposed and contrasted in a number of ways. To begin with, the forthcoming President of the USA will determine whether American forces should be retained in or withdrawn from Iraq. In addition, the President is also Commander in Chief. Thus, the outcome of this election has implications for the citizens of the USA and certainly for this audience. These listeners have actually been in Iraq or on other foreign missions, and they may be asked to go there or elsewhere again. Therefore, the arguments needed more validity than if they were presented to an audience unacquainted with the issue.

The method of analysis was to locate words, sentences or paragraphs where it appeared as if linguistic choices had been made to depict ideas and concepts in certain ways. The following rhetorical strategies were analyzed: metaphors, metonymies, analogies, pronouns, the active or passive voice of transitive verbs, sound-bites, word-repetition, three-part lists and contrastive pairs. Further strategies were excluded in order to limit the essay. The speeches were analyzed separately as well as comparatively.
2 Background

2.1 Politicians and rhetoric

Charteris-Black (2005) argues that successful speakers, especially in political contexts, need to appeal to attitudes and emotions that are already within the listeners. When the listeners perceive that their beliefs are understood and supported, the speaker has created connections to the policy that they wish to communicate. When putting forward arguments a speaker has to communicate at an emotional level and take standpoints that seem morally correct. Furthermore, the listener must perceive that the arguments are relevant for the issue. This cannot be done solely by lexical means although linguistic performance is the most important factor (Charteris-Black 2005: 10).

According to Charteris-Black (2005), the effect of rhetorical strategies in political speeches is often a result of them being combined. Therefore, it is as interesting to look at the interaction of various strategies as it is to look at each one separately (Charteris-Black 2005: 11). Jones and Wareing (1999) argue that the ability to convey the message that speaker and listener want the same thing plays a decisive role in the process of establishing an ideology (Jones & Wareing 1999: 34). To achieve a sense of congruence between audience and speaker, politicians often make use of symbols to foster national unity (Ball & Peters 2000: 81).

2.2 Metaphors

Metaphors are linguistic symbols which give concrete labels to abstract ideas. This is possible because of the perceived similarity between objects and concepts as regards particular features that one wants to convey. The SUNSHINE of a smile is an example of a metaphor, where it is understood that a smile brings out the same feelings of warmth and well-being as sunshine does.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) hold that the conceptual system of human beings is metaphorical. Metaphors are not merely linguistic instruments. They actually permeate perception, thought and behavior (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 3). Common metaphors in politics come from the domains of sports and war. Simultaneously, political campaigns can be seen as actions of war, although the military actions are in the shape of arguments. In Western societies, the two...
concepts 'argument' and 'war' are generally understood as being closely connected in spite of the fact that they are different types of matters (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 5).

When talking about real war, however, there are a number of conventions that limit what can be said, hence the usage of language plays a decisive role (Lakoff 1991). Lakoff (1991) states that a whole system of metaphors was used to justify the first war in the Gulf. First and foremost, THE STATE AS A PERSON metaphor was at work, where the state was conceptualized as a person, the land-mass its home, economic wealth its well-being and strength its military force. In this sense, WAR can be presented as a fight between two people fitting the scenario of THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor, including an evil villain, who has committed a crime, an innocent victim and an honorable hero. Lakoff (1991) argues that former President Bush used two variants of this FAIRY TALE structure to explain the situation in the Gulf. The first was a Self-Defence Setting, where Iraq was the villain and the US was the hero, the US and other industrialized nations were the victims and the crime was a death threat to the economic health of these nations. The second explanation was a Rescue Setting, where Iraq was the villain, the US the hero, Kuwait was the victim and the crime was kidnap and rape. The latter eventually became the government's moral justification of going to war, since the American people did not accept the first explanation, because it traded lives for oil (Lakoff 1991).

Lakoff (1991) stresses the importance of looking systematically not only at what metaphors represent, but at what they conceal. Hidden in THE STATE AS A PERSON metaphor are the economic, religious and class divergences within a country. The two metaphors WAR IS POLITICS (WITH ADDITION OF VIOLENCE) and POLITICS IS BUSINESS hide ethical and moral aspects, because war is presented solely in its political or financial meanings, where "costs" are government costs for weapons, military salaries, training, health care, life insurances and "gains" are the objectives of a government's policy. The WAR IS VIOLENT CRIME metaphor reveals different types of gains and costs. In this definition, "gains" are lives or freedom from oppression and "costs" are suffering, injuries and death (Lakoff 1991).

2.3 Metonymies

A metonymy is when an idea or a concept is replaced by a single word or feature that is connected to it. The foundation of metonymies is conceptual as is also the case with
metaphors (Gibbs 1993: 259). They can be useful in political speeches as they reduce or increase responsibility. For instance, using the metonymy The White House instead of the President's name reduces the President's personal responsibility (Beard 2000: 26). In contrast, the personal responsibility is increased by using a ruler of a state's name when referring to the government or all the citizens in a country. Subsequently, “[t]he boundary between leader and nation is removed so that the views of the leader become the voice of the nation” (Charteris-Black 2005: 175). During World War II, Churchill served as a metonymy for a righteous and heroic Britain (Charteris-Black 2005: 35). In both Gulf crises the name Saddam Hussein was often used to refer to Iraq. Lakoff (1991) calls this THE RULER STANDS FOR THE STATE metonymy, where one person gets the role of the villain fitting THE FAIRY TALE metaphor (Lakoff 1991). According to Charteris-Black (2005), when the government of George W. Bush formulated a response to the September 11 attacks, the THE RULER STANDS FOR THE STATE metonymy was used and contributed in justifying what eventually led to the invasion of Iraq in April 2003. This was rendered possible in part by connecting the abstract noun terrorism with the proper noun Iraq as “Iraq was specifically picked out as the prototype of a state that 'sponsored terrorism!’” (Charteris-Black 2005: 175). Additional reinforcement was made by comparing Saddam Hussein with Adolf Hitler.

2.4 Analogies

Analogies, where contemporary situations are compared with historical events or myths are common features in political speeches. Ideas and concepts are intended to be clarified in an analogy by comparing them with supposedly well-known phenomena (Beard 2000: 27). Analogies may be used to support an argument, if, for instance, real examples or precedents are close in time or if it is an extremely sensitive issue (Charteris-Black 2005: 4). Charteris-Black (2005) claims that during the Civil Rights movement, a characteristic of Martin Luther King's speeches, was drawing analogies between the situation of the African Americans and the oppression of the Hebrews in Egypt (Charteris-Black 2005: 68). In these analogies, King managed to merge biblical time with present time and create a moral vision comprising all Americans in a new American national identity free from ethnic segregation. In King's speeches, biblical situations served as prototypes for contemporary circumstances, including the messianic myth of King himself (Charteris-Black 2005: 61). This illustrates how powerful the use of analogies can be. Moreover, according to Lakoff (1991), the American government described the first Gulf crisis by analogy with World War II and Saddam Hussein as an
abominable and insane fascist analogous to Hitler. However, there is no evidence that Saddam Hussein was irrational, nor that Kuwait was an innocent victim. Kuwait and Kuwaitis had profited from the war between Iran and Iraq. Moreover, Kuwait had drilled oil from Iraqi territory, while holding oil prices down by overproducing oil, further complicating the stressed economic situation in Iraq, which was on the verge of bankruptcy. The rich Kuwait imported cheap labor from other Moslem countries and its government was an oppressive monarchy. Consequently, the country was disapproved of by many Arabs. Elements like these were concealed when Kuwait was presented as an innocent victim and Saddam Hussein/Iraq as an evil villain (Lakoff 1991).

2.5 Pronouns, voice and sound-bites

Linguistic elements are clearly not used for clarification reasons only, on the contrary, they may be used to conceal elements in a situation. As is also the case with metonymies, the use of pronouns may tell us a lot about how much responsibility a speaker wants to assume for an idea. Pronouns are words substituting for nouns or noun phrases (Beard 2000: 24). The first person singular pronoun I, for instance, clearly declares who is responsible while the first person plural pronoun we makes the status of responsibility more unclear (Jones & Wareing 1999: 46). First person plural pronouns in the introduction of a speech aim at an appeal to the sharing of interests between speaker and audience (Charteris-Black 2005: 4). According to Charteris-Black (2005), the first person plural pronoun was effectively taken into use by Winston Churchill when he described Britain's military politics as if they were his personal views (Charteris-Black 2005: 34). Furthermore, to what degree a speaker wants to be related to various ideas may also be shown by putting sentences in the active or passive voice. The active voice demands an actor, or an active subject, while the actor does not have to be mentioned in a sentence with passive voice (Beard 2000: 30). Charteris-Black (2005) exemplifies this when he quotes Bill Clinton using the passive voice of the transitive verb tear in the statement: “All over the world people are being torn asunder by racial, ethnic and religious conflicts that fuel fanaticism and terror” (Charteris-Black 2005: 125). In this quote, the responsible actors are not animate but “racial, ethnic and religious conflicts”. In a later speech, Clinton combined the first person plural possessive pronoun our, with the active voice of the same transitive verb. “Our purpose must be to bring together the world around freedom and democracy and peace and to oppose those who would tear it apart” (Charteris-Black 2005: 125). In this statement the 'tearing apart' is done by animate actors, 'those who'. Thus, in
both statements it is implicitly stated that the ones who are responsible for the 'tearing apart' and 'tearing asunder' are others than Clinton himself and that the ones who 'must' do the 'bringing together' include himself.

The two statements are interesting because they could serve as sound-bites as well. A sound-bite is a short piece from a speech usually sent to media so that it can be reported as quickly as possible. The sound-bite is chosen because it will sum up the content of a longer paragraph in fewer words, suitable for a headline (Beard 2000: 37). The words (lexis) and the word-order (syntax) in sound-bites are usually adjusted by the speech writers or politicians in ways to make them suit each other. Consequently, the arguments are conveyed in sound-bites because the sound-bites are easy to memorize. Sound-bites communicate clarity and self-confidence, especially significant in issues like war, where a leader must find ways to persuade the audience to support a particular policy. A sound-bite in conjunction with the pronoun we communicates unity within the party as well as unity with the audience (Charteris-Black 2005: 5-6).

2.6 Three-part lists and contrastive pairs

In order to be persuasive, political speeches concerning real war need to communicate righteousness. Jones and Wareing (1999) argue that "repeating certain phrases contributes towards making the ideas contained in them seem 'common sense'" (Jones & Wareing 1999: 39). In long speeches word-repetition can be used to hold the speech together, but also to emphasize moral values (Beard 2000: 39). A particular variant of repetition is the so-called three-part lists, when new ideas or pieces of information are presented in three parts (Beard 2000: 38). According to Charteris-Black (2005), the first part is supposed to initiate an argument, the second part emphasizes or responds to the first and the third part is a reinforcement of the first two and a sign that the argument is completed, assisting the audience by suggesting when it is appropriate to applaud. The three parts are significant in speeches, because they follow a traditional social behavior in the western world (Charteris-Black 2005: 6). Furthermore, in Western societies the number three is an important cultural element: the Holy Trinity, the Three Kings and Lucky Number Three, to mention just a few. Famous three-part quotes are the motto from the French Revolution liberté, égalité, fraternité and Churchill's blood, sweat and tears (even though Churchill actually said blood, toil, tears and sweat). Jones and Wareing (1999) refer to Goodman, who notes the redundancy of
“‘triads, threes and eternal triangles’ in cultures from all around the world” (Jones & Wareing 1999: 44). Presenting statements in groups of three is particularly appealing, thus, political speakers use three-part lists to augment their arguments.

In addition, contrasts or antithesis are used to point out a difference between two ideas or a difference in time; as in between then and now by stating what something is and then contrasting it with what it is not (Beard 2000: 39). Charteris-Black (2005) argues that a rhetorical strategy of President George W. Bush has been to describe the US as synonymous with the civilized world in contrast to Iraq and sometimes also other Arab countries. The latter are instead portrayed as associated with terrorism and so-called outlaw regimes. The implicit statement is that the US and the civilized world operate according to a legal and righteous law in contrast to other nations which are linked to criminal actions (Charteris-Black 2005: 181ff). A similar rhetorical strategy can be found in Bill Clinton's second statement, quoted above. Furthermore, this statement illustrates how a three-part list freedom and democracy and peace in interaction with a contrastive pair Our purpose [...] bring together the world (We + positive verb) - those who tear it apart (They + negative verb) communicate a morally correct standpoint and how righteousness can be stressed by stating its opposite. This exemplifies the importance of ethics, if a leader wants to convince a people of the rectitude of going to war.
3 Presentation and Analysis

The presentation is divided into three main sections. First, each speech is analyzed separately and then there follows a comparison of the two speeches. In each section quotes exemplifying the rhetorical strategies presented in chapter two are analyzed and discussed. However, both speakers often combine two or more strategies. Therefore, one quote may be parsed from the point of view of more than one strategy. In order to limit the essay, the examples of rhetorical strategies are restricted in number.

3.1 Remarks by John McCain to the Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) April 7, 2008.
Full speech available in Appendix 1.

3.1.1 Metaphors

The main rhetorical strategy used by McCain is metaphors and the main metaphorical concept that underlies many of his arguments is what Lakoff (1995) calls THE STRICT FATHER MORALITY. Lakoff (1995) argues that this view of morality derives from a common conservative ideal model of what a family should be. According to this view, the parent knows what is best for the child. Morality has to be taught to the child by punishing immoral behavior and praising moral behavior. Subsequently, the ideal family model is extended to concern nations where the parent is equivalent to the leader of the nation, or one nation is understood as the leader of other nations (Lakoff 1995).

The first quote is an example of THE STATE AS A PERSON and THE STATE IS A LEADER metaphor; “...our nation showed its strength, and its deep sense of global responsibility.” In this quote, the U.S. is presented as if it is a person who has strength and a sense of morality, similar to the way a person has muscles and a mind. This sense of morality stretches as far as around the world. Consequently, THE STATE AS A PERSON metaphor is extended and becomes THE STATE IS A LEADER metaphor. In addition, the nation is not just a leader of its citizens; it is a global leader, THE USA IS THE MORAL LEADER metaphor.

The next quote reveals the speaker's view of Iraq. “Our goal is [...] an Iraq that can stand on its own...” Iraq is portrayed as an immature person who needs to be brought up in order to stand
on its own in the same fashion as a child needs to be disciplined according to THE STRICT FATHER MORALITY. McCain claims in this statement that the goal of the occupation is independence of the occupied. Implicit values are manifested in this assertion as if independence is a natural outcome of oppression and obedience. In addition, it is a certain kind of independence, one that complies with the occupier's (the U.S. government) demands.

The specific demands are the safety and security of the U.S. This can be understood from the next quote; “...America's future security [...] keep our country safe.” The war is explained as keeping America safe from being attacked. However, there are no comments on how America was threatened by Iraq in the first place. The speaker relies on unspoken presuppositions that America was threatened by an Iraqi government who might have been in possession of nuclear weapons, who might have had intimate contacts with terrorists, hostile towards the U.S. and who might have been involved in the September 11 attacks. In actuality, this information has never been confirmed.

However, it fits THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor as do the following arguments that America is in fact helping Iraq; “...to protect another people's freedom and our own country from harm. [...] ...and helping another people achieve peace and self-determination.” The implicit statement in these quotes is that, along with THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor, the American soldiers are heroes who are helping the Iraqi citizens who are victims of the evil villain: first Saddam Hussein and his government, then his supporters who are terrorists and insurgents. The peace that is to be achieved refers to a peace among the Iraqi people. Although there were protests by groups of Iraqi citizens against their regime, there was not a civil war in Iraq when the American government gave the orders to attack Iraq. The self-determination that McCain wishes the new government of Iraq and the Iraqi citizens to attain derives from THE STRICT FATHER MORALITY. According to this view, moral strength is achieved through self-discipline to act morally and self-denial of immoral behavior (Lakoff 1995).

In the following quote THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor is combined with a JOURNEY metaphor and additionally stressed by a three-part list; “...we have before us a hard road. But it is the right road. It is necessary and just.” Here, McCain conveys an assurance of the action (war) to be purposeful, similar to the way a journey has a destination. The purpose is of a particular kind, it is a good and moral purpose and therefore the actors (America/the American soldiers) are heroes.
To portray the war as if it is a gamble brings about thoughts of winning or losing money. While money represents a form of security, gambling represents a form of excitement. This is an example of the *GAMBLE* metaphor in combination with the *USA IS THE MORAL LEADER* metaphor and a three-part list. “Our most vital security interests are at stake in Iraq. The stability of the entire Middle East, [...] is at stake. The United States’ credibility as a moral and political leader is at stake.” In addition, if something is *at stake*, there have already been bets placed. Therefore, a withdrawal will result in losing these bets and as long as you stay in the game there are chances of winning. The gambling excitement overshadows the fact that the bets that are placed are real lives and not just lives of soldiers, but lives of ordinary people who may never have wanted war of any kind, not between nations and not within their nation.

### 3.1.2 Metonymies and analogies

McCain does not use metonymies to a great extent in this speech. However, one is the recurring name of the military General Petraeus. “By giving General Petraeus [...] the time and support necessary to succeed in Iraq...” The general's name personifies the American forces and brings to mind a fatherly figure that marches along with loyal followers towards victory (success in Iraq). Simultaneously, it reduces the President's responsibility and conceals the fact that the American forces are soldiers trained to kill with weapons and bombs.

Charteris-Black (2005) argues that Winston Churchill became a metonymy for Britain during World War II (Charteris-Black 2005: 34). However, when McCain uses Winston Churchill's name in the speech, the implication is that he wants to persuade the audience that this war is analogous to World War II. “‘Never despair,’ Winston Churchill once said. And we did not despair. We were tested, and we rose to the challenge.” According to Charteris-Black (2005), Churchill created a heroic myth with rhetorical means in which Britain and its allies were presented as forces of good in opposition to Germany which was referred to as forces of evil. The principal argument in Churchill's myth was “that Britain was not fighting purely for national self-interest but was the embodiment of forces of good that would rescue mankind in general from tyranny and barbarism” (Charteris-Black 2005: 34). McCain wants the audience to feel that they are forces of good and the war in Iraq is rescuing the world from evil, similar to how the world was “saved” during World War II. The analogy suits the *FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR* metaphor.
An example of a subtle analogy to previous wars is presented in the following quote: “We could retreat from Iraq and accept the horrible consequences of our defeat.” The argument is that a retreat from Iraq is negative. It draws an analogy to earlier wars and defeats in history which have had horrible consequences for the losers. Without mentioning a particular war or time, it brings to mind the debated retreat from the first Gulf war. McCain proposes that a retreat equals a defeat and does not leave open to discussion whether a retreat could be more beneficial to both countries than a maintaining of the occupation. Furthermore, the analogy conceals the possibility that a withdrawal from Iraq can be seen as an attempt to stop the violence and to put an end to the suffering of numerous people. Another war that comes to mind is the Vietnam War and Iraq has also been described as another Vietnam. This analogy reinforces McCain's personal involvement in that he was in fact wounded in Vietnam himself.

3.1.3 Pronouns, voice and sound-bites

In the following quote the first person singular pronoun, I, works in combination with the analogy to the Vietnam War: “I know the pain war causes. I understand the frustration caused by our mistakes in this war. And I regret sincerely the additional sacrifices imposed on the brave Americans who defend us.” In addition, the three-part list is framing the argument so that the listener understands that the sentences belong together. The first I, draws attention to the fact that the speaker himself was wounded in the Vietnam War. The second I, reinforces the mutual understanding between speaker and audience. The Vietnam War was also much debated, just as the war in Iraq is and has been. After returning home, the soldiers were seen as heroes by some while others saw them as killers. The third I, summarizes the first two in a punch line that appeals to the emotions of the audience.

The following quote further exemplifies how the use of first person pronouns denotes personal experience and involvement. “From June 2007 through my most recent trip last month, sectarian and ethnic violence in Iraq has been reduced by 90 percent. Civilian deaths and deaths of coalition forces fell by 70 percent.” In this example, the first person possessive pronoun, my, is evidence that the speaker himself has actually been in the war zone and by the words most recent, it is understood that he has been there more than once. The omission of a source hints that the information is pure facts and not someone’s interpretation of certain data. The implicit message is that the American forces are not involved in the so-called sectarian and ethnic violence. However, no evidence is presented in the speech that supports the claim that the presence of the American forces in Iraq in actuality has caused a decrease in violence. The
first person pronoun emphasizes personal involvement and responsibility that is supposed to give credit to the speaker as a leader.

Similar to pronouns, the voice of transitive verbs may be useful when speakers want to indicate to what degree they want to be connected with an idea. Transitive verbs are mainly put in the active voice throughout the speech. The difference between the active and the passive voice involves not only the verb phrase but also the clause as a whole. The following example focuses on the clause as a whole and not on the active voice of the transitive verb bring. “Four years of a badly-conceived military strategy had brought us almost to the point of no return.” The actor of the sentence is not an animate object but instead it is four years of badly-conceived military strategy. The construction of this sentence allows the speaker to implicitly criticize President George W. Bush who was responsible for this military strategy. In addition, it is implicitly stated that the war should continue until it is won. The phrase the point of no return suggests that there are no other options, at least not any good ones. The pronoun us refers to America or the American forces. In this quote, it seems as if the Americans, including the speaker, are victims of the military strategy, when in fact they are the ones who are acting it out and the speaker supports a continuance.

The next quote contains the passive voice of the transitive verbs tell and lead and omission of the agent. “Many […] had their tours extended longer than they were initially told. Others […] returned to combat sooner than they had been led to expect.” The omission of the agent makes it possible to avert focus from who is responsible for the action (war). Implicitly, it is suggested that the villain (Saddam Hussein and terrorists in Iraq) is responsible for the war, since it was stated before that America is in Iraq by reason of altruism. Many and others refer to the soldiers. They are portrayed as passive victims of the action.

The picture that McCain presents of the soldiers as being passive victims of the war goes along with the main argument of the speech which can be summarized by the following sound-bites; “...we must put the nation's interests before our own ambitions. [...] ...our country's interests before every personal or political consideration.” The sound-bites include the first person plural pronoun, we, and the possessive pronoun, our, suggesting a sharing of interest between the speaker and the listeners. The nation is presented with THE STATE AS A PERSON metaphor as if America were a person who has interests and as if the government and the citizens of America were one entity. In this case the nation/person is the parent in accordance with THE
STRICT FATHER MODEL, and since the parent knows what is best for the family (the country), these interests should come before the interests of the children (the citizens). McCain argues that the war is a factual situation that must be dealt with by the ones who know best (the American government) and not as a situation that can or should be debated or questioned.

3.1.4 Three-part lists and contrastive pairs

The argument that the war in Iraq is a factual situation that ought to be fought and won under any circumstances is repeated throughout the speech. This section exemplifies arguments in favor of the war conveyed using three-part lists and contrastive pairs.

The American people deserve the truth from their leaders. They deserve a candid assessment of the progress we have managed to make in the last year in preventing the worst from happening in Iraq, of the very serious difficulties that remain, and of the grave consequences of a hasty, reckless, and irresponsible withdrawal.

In the first three-part statement progress is contrasted with what would happen if it were not to be allowed, namely very serious difficulties and grave consequences. This indicates that the war is a positive development in opposition to a withdrawal, which is negative and in fact irresponsible. In the next three-part list the same argument is put forward in an appeal to the altruism of the audience, stating that a withdrawal is equivalent to abandonment. “Instead of abandoning Iraq to civil war, genocide, and terror, and the Middle East to the destabilizing effects of these consequences, we changed strategies.” Note also that the names Iraq and the Middle East occur in the same sentence as civil war, genocide, and terror, as if they naturally belong together. In the following quote, however, words with connotations to altruism and compassion are combined with the first person plural pronoun we, as if this is a natural combination. In addition, the rhetoric in this quote has a repeated word pattern similar to Martin Luther King’s famous “I have a dream” speech.

We owe them compassion, knowledge and hands-on care in their transition to civilian life. We owe them training, rehabilitation and education. We owe their families, parents and caregivers our concern and support.

The quote consists of three statements containing three-part lists held together by repetition of the first person plural pronoun we and the verb owe. According to Salkie (1995), coherence can be achieved by repeating key words. There are two methods to classify a key word. One is that a paragraph could lose its sense if a key word was not repeated. Another is that key words are usually included if the paragraph were to be summarized (Salkie 1995: 4). In this quote the key words are we owe. The first person plural pronoun, we, indicates (yet again) that the American government and its citizens are one entity, corresponding with the arguments in the
sound-bites. Lakoff (1995) argues that the idea of owing something to someone else is a metaphorical concept in the minds of human beings where human interaction is conceptualized as transactions and morality is understood in terms of *accounting* (Lakoff 1995). The argument in this quote is that the military veterans have given something to their country when they risked their lives and health in order to protect America. Hence, America is obliged to pay for this gift, according to the ideas of *moral accounting*.

In the next quote, the past is contrasted with the present. In addition, it is a contrastive pair of defeat and success. “*But there is no doubt about the basic reality in Iraq: we are no longer staring into the abyss of defeat, and we can now look ahead to the genuine prospect of success.*” The argument is put forward that there was a time before when the war in Iraq was about to fail and failure is analogous to falling into a precipice, whereas now there is a high probability of a favorable outcome. Simultaneously, the war is represented as if it has the figure of a person who used to look down, giving an image of a depressed body expression, but now it looks forward and the image of a prosperous and excited person comes to mind. These images conceal the real situation in Iraq which is fear, poverty and suffering for numerous people.

The last quote is a contrastive pair combined with a three-part list and the first person singular pronoun *I*.

> I hold my position on Iraq *not because* I am indifferent to the suffering caused by this war but *because* I detest war, and believe sincerely that should we fail in Iraq we will face an even sterner test in the very near future, an even harder war, with even greater sacrifice and heartbreaking loss than we have suffered over the last five years.

This is a convincing line of argument, where the impression is that the speaker is truly expressing both personal and strong convictions, conceived by rhetorical strategies such as the first person singular pronoun *I*. Moreover, it presents an image of the speaker as if he is willing to take risks, even the risk of losing the possibility of becoming President. This is a highly valued trait, according to the *GAMBLE* metaphor. In addition, it suggests the firm and well considered policy which a leader of authority is assumed to have, corresponding to THE STRICT FATHER MORALITY. This view of morality supports the main argument of the speech that American citizens (children) should follow the one who knows best (McCain). However, McCain is not the only candidate who claims to know best as the following section will show.

Full speech available in Appendix 2.

3.2.1 Metaphors

The metaphors that underlie many of Obama's arguments are based on what Lakoff (1995) argues is a common liberal view of the family summarized in the Nurturant Parent Morality. According to this view, each child will learn to know what morality is from being loved, cared for and cared about by parent or parents as well as by teachers, peers and the community. The Nurturant Parent Morality produces adolescents and adults who participate voluntarily in the community and who are jointly responsible for communal matters (Lakoff 1995).

Therefore, when Obama uses the State as a Person metaphor, as exemplified in the first quote, the particular kind of person he refers to corresponds to this view of the family. “America will be there for you just as you have been there for America.” Here, America is pictured as a person who has a morality which is based on ideas of fairness, an equitable person. In the second quote, the State as a Person metaphor is extended to the State as a Family metaphor. “Because America’s commitment to its servicemen and women...” According to this metaphor, America can make commitments in the same way as a family member can make commitments to other members of the family. The next quote uses the State as a Family metaphor, with the implication that there is a tie that links together the country with the military veterans, in a way similar to how the members of a family are linked together. “When we fail to keep faith with our veterans, the bond between our nation and our nation's heroes becomes frayed.” Obama argues that a nation functions in the same way as a family does. The idea that a nation can keep faith with its citizens derives from the Nurturant Parent Model.

In the following quote America is presented as someone who both speaker and audience ought to identify with. “That's not America. That's not who we are.” Should this person (America) behave in ways that do not comply with people's convictions, it ought to result in an identity crisis rather than only in a crisis of confidence. In the next quote the first person plural pronoun we, refers to the American citizens, the speaker included. “We had a chance [...] to bring this country together with unity of effort and purpose.” The argument uses the State as a Family metaphor in proposing that the citizens of America had the opportunity to bring this country together just
as family members are supposed to keep a family together, corresponding to THE NURTURANT PARENT MORALITY. Obama argues further that the family (America) and the audience (military veterans) has a history to be proud of.

We know that the America we live in is the legacy of those who have borne the burden of battle. You are part of an unbroken line of Americans who have thrown off the tyranny of a King; who held the country together and set the captives free; who faced down fascism and fought for freedom in Korea and Vietnam; who liberated Kuwait and stopped ethnic cleansing in the Balkans; and who fight bravely and brilliantly under our flag today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Here, THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor is combined with two three-part lists, to point out that America and its armed forces have rescued the world on several previous occasions. The argument is that the hero, in accordance with this metaphor, is America and the American soldiers (and, as a consequence, the audience).

3.2.2 Metonymies and analogies

Soldiers wear uniforms and Obama refers to the American soldiers by using the uniform as a metonymy. “But we know that the sacred trust cannot expire when the uniform comes off.” This is a vivid metonymy to this audience, since the uniform is a symbol of their identity. It appeals to their self-concept which mostly operates at an unconscious level in the mind. It can be understood that when the uniform comes off refers to when the soldiers return to civilian life. These people know from experience how they are treated when they wear the uniform in contrast to when they are civilians. Many military veterans have witnessed to the difficulty and anxiety of returning to civilian life after foreign missions, not merely on account of physical injuries but also of psychological post stress symptoms.

In the previous example Obama used a metonymy to refer to the audience. In another statement he uses a metonymy to refer to the enemy; “... a threat can come from a pile by the side of the road, a seemingly friendly face in the crowd, or a mortar lobbed into a base.” The enemy is pictured as a friendly face representing a pleasant facial expression of a stranger who may in fact be a smiling madman or an unpredictable assassin, hiding anywhere one goes.

There are few metonymies in Obama's speech. The ones that can be found are not there to alter the case of responsibility, as metonymies often do, instead they seem to aim at evoking the emotions of the audience. It seems as if this is also the case with the main analogy “A Sacred Trust”. This sound-bite and likewise title of the campaign keeps the speech together. It brings about ideas of his campaign as if it is a holy mission of confidence. It draws an implicit
analogy to the Civil Rights movement and the campaign of Martin Luther King. It raises the status of the campaign to a virtually divine level and implies that a president is entrusted with a solemn responsibility towards the citizens similar to the responsibilities a preacher would have towards his parishioners. It could be argued that this analogy is Obama's main rhetorical strategy. Repeating words such as faith, sacred and trust together with a rich use of three-part statements result in a rhythm in his speech analogous to Martin Luther King's speeches.

One analogy addresses the audience as if they were linked to the soldiers who first organized the military veterans. “Over 100 years ago, a handful of veterans from the Spanish-American war came together in places like a tailor shop in Columbus, Ohio”. The argument goes that when Obama is the leader, the veterans will be heard, analogous to the way they began to be heard after that war. However, the Spanish-American war has more similarities with the contemporary situation than the organization of the military veterans. During the Spanish-American war, the citizens of the U.S. were led to believe that their nation supported a Cuban insurgence toward the Spanish regime. In reality, political and economic conflicts were the real reasons behind the war. During this time, the American press attacked the Spanish regime in Cuba aggressively and when there was an accidental explosion that sank an American naval ship in Havana, it was reported in the U.S. as a Spanish attack. Consequently, the American opinion was all for going to war against Spain. There are similarities to the September 11 attacks, even though they were not accidents, and to the behavior of the government of George W. Bush and media reports of both Gulf wars. The implicit argument is that the Spanish-American war was wrong as is also the war in Iraq.

3.2.3 Pronouns, voice and sound-bites

Obama proposes a different approach to the situation (war) in Iraq using the first person singular pronoun I. “That's why earlier this month, I laid out a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy.” The implication is that Obama is willing to take personal responsibility for his war strategy. However, he provides references to sources in support of his arguments. “I will act with proper regard for the costs and consequences of action, based on the advice of military commanders...” By outlining the military commanders, the responsibility becomes shared. Moreover, it appeals to the audience by revealing that the speaker has confidence in their leaders. There is a frequent use of the first person singular pronoun I, and the possessive pronoun my, in Obama's speech. The choice of pronouns increase personal responsibility, as stated before. Subsequently, the presented policies seem to be his personal views as well as
the views of the nation.

In contrast, the use of the passive voice of transitive verbs seems to depersonalize responsibility and point out the complexity of causes when it comes to the vast problems in the world. “A new age of nuclear proliferation has left the world's most deadly weapons unlocked by more and more countries, with thousands of weapons and stockpiles poorly secured all over the world.” By using the passive voice of the transitive verb unlock, the actor in the sentence, more and more countries, becomes the agent. According to this assertion, it is the rapid growth of nuclear knowledge that is causing the insecurity in the world, not the upper echelons of governments. Responsibility is equally involved in the following quote where the transitive verb mark is put in the passive voice. “The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been marked by repeated and unpredictable deployments.” The statement puts forward THE WAR IS A PERSON metaphor as if the wars are the victims when the real victims are human beings.

It is argued that the speaker is not against war, only against certain people's definition of the enemy. This is exemplified by the following quote. “One reason to stop fighting the wrong war is so that we can fight the right war against terrorism and extremism.” This sentence works well as a sound-bite in that it concisely sums up the main argument of the speech. It uses THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor combined with a contrastive pair. This metaphor is appealing to this audience, since it promotes their occupation and justifies their participation in wars. The contrast between the right and the wrong war reveals that the speaker is not against war in general but merely against the war in Iraq. The next quote presents the sound-bite in a three-part list: “That's not right. That's not keeping our sacred trust. We must not leave these men and women behind.” The quote defines the national identity according to what kind of morality it should have. Implicitly, it is a religious morality, tentatively Christian morality. Obama wants to convey that he knows what is wrong. Therefore, he must also know what is right. That is why his campaign is a sacred trust and not just a political campaign.

3.2.4 Three-part lists and contrastive pairs

It is repeated throughout the speech that Obama's campaign is a sacred trust. This message is implicitly suggested in the following quote, where the speaker makes use of three-part lists to state examples of problems from all over the world.

Killing fields in Rwanda, Congo and Darfur have offended our common humanity and set back the world's sense of collective security. Weak and failing states from Africa to central Asia to the Pacific
Rim are incubators of resentment and anarchy that can endanger those countries and ours. An assertive Russia and a rising China remind us - through words and deeds - that the primacy of our power does not mean our power will go unchallenged.

THE NURTURANT PARENT MORALITY is manifested in phrases such as our common humanity and collective security. Concurrently, the position of America as a superpower is appointed in the primacy of our power. This power is threatened by weak and failing states. It is implicitly suggested that those are causing the conflicts and wars around the world. In spite of the world's sense of collective security, the implication is that America is superior to other nations. The following contrastive pair is based on the conceptual metaphors THE STATE AS A PERSON and THE USA IS A MORAL LEADER. “I see an America that is the strongest nation in the history of the world - not just because of our arms, but because of the strength of our values, and of the men and women who serve.” Here, Obama puts forward his personal commitment to the vision of America as a leader of the world on account of its high morality (values) corresponding to THE NURTURANT PARENT MORALITY in contrast to being an authoritarian leader (arms).

In the next quote, a three-part list is combined with the third person plural pronoun they to define what the enemy is like. “They distort Islam. They hate America. They kill man, woman and child.” This statement includes THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor. Obama proposes that others are the villain, others are the ones that hate, not we. The fact that all participants in a war kill and destroy people's lives is concealed. Furthermore, THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor is used in the next quote. This time, the pronoun they refers to the military veterans, implicitly the audience. “They have done everything we have asked of them. They have won every battle they have fought. They have built schools and trained battalions.” Here, Obama appeals to the audience's perceptions of acting as heroes and helping another people.

The following quote contrasts physicality (limb) versus morality (pride) where the latter is of higher value, along with THE NURTURANT PARENT MORALITY. Additionally, it is supported by THE FAIRY TALE OF A JUST WAR metaphor. “Young men and women who may have lost a limb or even their ability to take care of themselves, but will never lose the pride they feel for serving their country.” Obama celebrates the audience's patriotism and self-sacrifice. He argues that they will never lose the pride in serving their country, similar to the way martyrs do in spite of personal suffering. This argument goes along with Obama's main argument of the speech that it is not wrong to fight a war as long as it is fought for the right purpose (the sacred trust).
3.3 Comparison between the speeches

There is a distinction between how the two speakers utilize rhetorical strategies. This section will compare how each speaker makes use of the linguistic strategies that were studied in this essay.

Concerning metaphors, both speakers make use of THE STATE AS A PERSON metaphor. However, Obama’s speaks of a different kind of person than the one McCain describes in his speech. The nation/person that Obama describes is one who the audience will want to identify with and who has fairness and empathy as the values of highest priority based on THE NURTURANT PARENT MORALITY. McCain describes the American nation/person as a leader of authority and the Iraq nation/person as an immature child based on THE STRICT FATHER MORALITY. Moreover, both speakers use THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor in a similar way. However, they define who the villain is differently. Obama uses the metonymy a friendly face to describe the villain as an unidentified terrorist hiding in the crowd while McCain asserts that Iraq is the villain.

When McCain uses a metonymy it concerns responsibility. His main metonymy, General Petraeus, reduces the government’s responsibility for the war. It can be argued, however, that neither a friendly face nor General Petraeus are metonyms at all. A friendly face may just as well be an example of a figurative language and the name of General Petraeus may be used to indicate a closeness or friendship between him and McCain.

McCain draws analogies to World War II, Vietnam War and the first Gulf War. Obama uses analogies differently. Religious connotations occur repeatedly in his speech. It can be argued that Obama’s main rhetorical device is the analogy to the Civil Rights movement, which is frequent throughout the speech, often in subtle nuances by reiterating expressions such as the sacred trust and keep faith with analogous to the words preachers could use during religious sermons.

The choice of pronouns may be useful when the matter of liability can be questioned. McCain scarcely uses the first person singular pronoun I when the issues regard responsibility. Obama’s frequent use of the first person singular pronoun I contributes to make his speech seem personal although it is political. He is careful to refer to sources in support of his
arguments while McCain omits the sources and prefers to use the first person plural pronoun we, when presenting war strategies. Altogether, McCain uses less first person singular pronoun I, than Obama. The occasions when McCain uses this pronoun are when he emphasizes personal involvement. Neither McCain nor Obama uses the passive voice of transitive verbs to a great extent. As exemplified before in sections 3.1.3 and 3.2.3, when they do use the passive voice of transitive verbs, they avoid stating who is responsible for the action in the sentences.

It can be argued that the frequent use of metaphors in both speeches is because they are somewhat difficult to criticize in the media. Because most metaphors are conceptual they are hard to pinpoint in a few lines. Media is often limited by space or time. Discussing metaphorical concepts is quite complex and needs more space than a newspaper article may provide. The scarcity of metonymies and the passive voice of verbs may be because the speeches are written, co-written or edited by professional speech-writers who are much aware of the double meaning that this usage of language reveals. It is possible that strategies such as these are refrained in order to convey the politics and avoid criticism from the media.

A summary of Obama’s arguments is in the sound-bite that his campaign is a sacred trust and so is the right war. He wants to persuade the audience that there is a right war in contrast to a wrong one. He uses three-part lists and contrastive pairs to put stress on THE FAIRY TALE OF THE JUST WAR metaphor. McCain uses three-part lists and contrastive pairs to emphasize that the war in Iraq has undergone progress. The words progress and success are repeated throughout his speech. Furthermore, he uses contrastive pairs and the conceptual GAMBLE metaphor to distinguish success from defeat. The implicit statement is that McCain asserts that the war in Iraq should continue until America wins or that the American forces will stay in Iraq until it is asserted that no acts of reprisal will take place in the future. McCain’s arguments can be summed up in the sound-bite that the audience should put the nation’s interest before personal ones. The implicit message is that the citizens of America should likewise submit to the government.

The main difference between the speeches is the divergence of opinion on morality that underlies the arguments. McCain’s main argument is that the war in Iraq is right and should continue. Most of his arguments are based on THE STRICT FATHER MORALITY. Obama argues from the point of view of THE NURTURANT PARENT MORALITY that the war in Iraq is wrong.
and the right war ought to be fought somewhere else. People who feel comfortable with a
president who refuses further debates about the war in Iraq and who claims that once a nation
(person) has entered a war (game/journey), it has to stay in it until it is won (reached its
destination), will find McCain's arguments more convincing. On the contrary, people who
oppose or at least want more debate about the war in Iraq will probably find Obama's
arguments more convincing. Both candidates use as many rhetorical strategies as the other but
Obama refers to sources in support of his arguments and his frequent use of the first person
singular pronoun / makes his speech seem more honest. Therefore, his speech is likely to be
conceived as more convincing.
4. Summary and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine and expose implicit statements in the language of politics and to point out examples of linguistic strategies that impose moral or ethical values on people. Chapter one consisted of an introduction where the topic language influences of political speeches was briefly described. The second chapter presented an overview of the rhetorical strategies that were studied in the essay. The strategies that were analyzed were metaphors, metonymies, analogies, pronouns, the active or passive voice of transitive verbs, sound-bites, three-part lists and contrastive pairs. Chapter three outlined a presentation and analysis of each speech followed by a comparison of the two speeches. The presentation exposed an emphasis on strategic use of metaphors, pronouns, three-part lists and contrastive pairs in both speeches and a scarcity of metonymies and the passive voice of transitive verbs. The analysis revealed some implicit statements that, it could be argued, impose certain moral values on the audience. The conclusion to be drawn from this study is that linguistic divergences between how different speakers present their arguments and their views are possible to discern. These differences reveal attitudes of various kinds, such as what more precisely are their priorities as far as war is concerned. To summarize, being aware of how politicians use rhetorical strategies in order to convince an audience of the rectitude of war is of high importance. As the main findings of this study revealed, the principal disparity between McCain's speech and Obama's speech is their implicit views on morality, THE STRICT FATHER MORALITY and THE NURTURANT PARENT MORALITY. These views are never argued openly although conveyed as a basis for justifying each speaker's arguments for or against the war in Iraq compared to the war against terrorism.
List of references

Primary sources

McCain, John. 2008-04-07. Remarks By John McCain To The Members Of The Veterans of Foreign Wars

Obama, Barack. 2007-08-21. Remarks Of Senator Obama to The Members Of The Veterans Of Foreign Wars

Secondary sources


Appendix 1

Remarks by John McCain to the Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
April 7, 2008

ARLINGTON, VA -- U.S. Senator John McCain will deliver the following remarks as prepared for delivery to the members of the National VFW Headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri, at 9:45 a.m. CST:

Thank you. It is an honor to be here today. I'm always grateful to be in the company of Americans who have had the burden of serving our country in distant lands, and the honor of having proved your patriotism in difficult circumstances. Your example is a constant reminder to Americans that we have obligations to our country that are greater than our personal ambitions, and that our self-respect will owe more to how faithfully we keep those obligations than any other success we achieve in life. Among those obligations is to debate honestly issues that involve America's future security because so many Americans have sacrificed everything to keep us secure. All that is asked of the rest of us is that we do not dishonor their sacrifice by treating the cause they served so bravely as an opportunity to argue without wisdom; to divide us without care for the consequences; to advance our individual or partisan interests at the expense of America's security.

At the beginning of last year, we were engaged in a great debate about what to do in Iraq. Four years of a badly-conceived military strategy had brought us almost to the point of no return. Sectarian violence in Iraq was spiraling out of control, life had become a struggle for survival, and a full-scale civil war seemed almost unavoidable. Al Qaeda in Iraq was on the offensive. Entire Iraqi provinces were under the control of extremists and were deemed all but lost. Faced with the prospect of defeat, we had two fundamental choices. We could retreat from Iraq and accept the horrible consequences of our defeat. Or we could change strategies and try to turn things around. It was, I believe, a critical moment in our nation's history, and a time of testing for our nation's political leadership.

In the year that has passed, our nation showed its strength, and its deep sense of global responsibility. Instead of abandoning Iraq to civil war, genocide, and terror, and the Middle East to the destabilizing effects of these consequences, we changed strategies. We sent to Iraq additional troops, many of them on their third or fourth tour, and a great, seasoned general to lead them, with a battle plan that, at long last, actually addressed the challenges we faced in Iraq.

Within six months, the men and women who have made such enormous sacrifices for the rest of us dramatically turned around the situation in Iraq. From June 2007 through my most recent trip last month, sectarian and ethnic violence in Iraq has been reduced by 90 percent. Civilian deaths and deaths of coalition forces fell by 70 percent. The dramatic reduction in violence has opened the way for a return to something approaching normal political and economic life for the average Iraqi. Political reconciliation is occurring across Iraq at the local and provincial grassroots level. Sunni and Shi'a chased from their homes by terrorist and sectarian violence are returning. The "Sons of Iraq" and Awakening movements, where former Sunni insurgents have now joined in the fight against Al Qaeda, continue to grow.

Iraq's political order is also evolving in hopeful ways. Four out of the six laws cited as
benchmarks by the U.S. have been passed by the Iraqi legislature. A law on amnesty and a law rolling back some of the harsher restrictions against former employees of the Iraqi government have made it possible for Iraqis to find genuine reconciliation. They should also encourage both Sunni and Shi'a to feel they have a stake in Iraq's future. The legislature has devolved greater power to local and provincial authorities, where much of the real work of rebuilding Iraqi society is taking place. Much more needs to be done, and Iraq's politicians need to know that we expect them to show the necessary leadership to rebuild their country. For only they can.

The job of bringing security to Iraq is not finished. Iraqi forces recently battled in Basra against radical Shi'a militias, supported by Iran, a fight that showed both the progress made by the Iraqi security forces -- a year ago, they could not have carried out such operations on their own -- and the continuing need for coalition support. The situation in southern Iraq remains unsettled. There continues to be a significant flow of money and weaponry from Iran into Diyala Province, Baghdad, Basra and elsewhere in support of the Iranian-backed Special Groups, the Jaysh al Mahdi, and the Badr Organization. Sunni terrorists and insurgents continue to maintain bases in Mosul and elsewhere in Ninewah Province.

But there is no doubt about the basic reality in Iraq: we are no longer staring into the abyss of defeat, and we can now look ahead to the genuine prospect of success. Success in Iraq is the establishment of a generally peaceful, stable, prosperous, democratic state that poses no threat to its neighbors and contributes to the defeat of terrorists. It is the advance of religious tolerance over violent radicalism. It is a level of security that allows the Iraqi authorities to govern, the average person to live a normal life, and international entities to operate. It is a situation in which the rule of law, after decades of tyranny, takes hold. It is an Iraq where Iraqi forces have the responsibility for enforcing security in their country, and where American troops can return home, with the honor of having secured their country's interests at great personal cost, and helping another people achieve peace and self-determination.

Today these goals are within reach. "Never despair," Winston Churchill once said. And we did not despair. We were tested, and we rose to the challenge. Some political leaders close their eyes to the progress that the surge has made possible, and want only to argue about the past. We can have that debate. I profoundly disagree with those who say we would all be better off if we had left Saddam Hussein in power. Americans should be proud that they led the way in removing a vicious dictator and opening the door to freedom, stability, and prosperity in Iraq and across the Middle East.

But the question for the next President is not about the past, but about the future and how to secure it. Our most vital security interests are at stake in Iraq. The stability of the entire Middle East, that volatile and critically important region, is at stake. The United States' credibility as a moral and political leader is at stake. How to safeguard those interests is what we should be debating.

There are those who today argue for a hasty withdrawal from Iraq. Some would withdraw regardless of the consequences. Others say that we can withdraw now and then return if trouble starts again. What they are really proposing, if they mean what they say, is a policy of withdraw and re-invade. For if we withdraw hastily and irresponsibly, we will guarantee the trouble will come immediately. Our allies, Arab countries, the UN, and the Iraqis themselves will not step up to their responsibilities if we recklessly retreat. I can hardly imagine a more imprudent and dangerous course.
Over the past year, the counterinsurgency strategy of General Petraeus has been based on the premise that establishing greater security in Iraq is indispensable to advancing political reconciliation and economic reconstruction; to making diplomatic progress in the region; and to preparing the Iraqi military to assume its responsibilities to defend the sovereignty of Iraq and the authority of its elected government. Should the United States withdraw from Iraq before that level of security is established those goals will be infinitely harder if not impossible to attain. Al Qaeda in Iraq will proclaim victory and increase its efforts to provoke sectarian tensions in Iraq into a full scale civil war that could descend into genocide and destabilize the Middle East. Iraq would be a failed state that could become a haven for terrorists to train and plan their operations. Iran's influence in Iraq -- especially southern Iraq -- and throughout the region would increase substantially and encourage other countries to seek accommodation with Tehran at the expense of our interests. These likely consequences of America's failure in Iraq would, almost certainly, require us to return to Iraq or draw us into a wider and far costlier war.

The American people deserve the truth from their leaders. They deserve a candid assessment of the progress we have managed to make in the last year in preventing the worst from happening in Iraq, of the very serious difficulties that remain, and of the grave consequences of a hasty, reckless, and irresponsible withdrawal. If we are honest about the opportunities and the risks, I believe they will have the patience to allow us the time necessary to obtain our objectives. That honesty is my responsibility, and it is also the responsibility of Senators Obama and Clinton, as well as Democratic and Republican leaders in Congress. Doing the right thing in the heat of a political campaign is not always the easiest thing. But when 4000 Americans have given their lives so that America does not suffer the worst consequences of our failure in Iraq, it is a necessary thing. In such a grave matter, we must put the nation's interests before our own ambitions.

The fact is, we now have a great opportunity, not only to bring stability and freedom to Iraq, but to make Iraq a pillar of our future strategy for the entire region of the greater Middle East. If we seize the opportunity before us, we stand to gain a strong, stable, democratic ally against terrorism and a strong ally against an aggressive and radical Iran.

Over the next 18 months, Iraq will conduct two landmark elections -- for provincial governments and for the national government. On my most recent trip to Iraq, I met dozens of shopkeepers, workers, city council officials and others, who want Iraqis from all backgrounds to elect local leaders charged with making decisions that reflect the needs and desires of the local populations -- not the preferences of Baghdad elites. If we sustain the current progress, those elections can be held in relative freedom and security for the first time since the fall of Saddam. We should welcome a larger United Nations role in supporting the elections under the capable leadership of its Special Envoy, Steffan de Mistura, who is already playing a key role in mediating disputes in areas like Kirkuk.

Throughout this period, we must continue to help the Iraqis protect themselves against the terrorists and the insurgents. We must press ahead against the radical Shi'ite militias and the Iranian-backed Special Groups, and support the Iraqi government's efforts to defeat them. We must continue to support the Sunni volunteers of the Iraqi Awakening as they stand up to Al-Qaeda in Iraq, especially in the ongoing battle for Mosul. And we must continue to build the capacities of the Iraqi Security Forces so that they can play an increasingly strong and neutral role in suppressing sectarian violence.
All this will require that we keep a sufficient level of American forces in Iraq until security conditions are such that our commanders on the ground recommend otherwise. It also means we must increase levels of reconstruction assistance, so that Iraq's political and economic development can proceed in the security that our forces and Iraqi Security Forces provide. Above all, it means we must once again reject, as we did in early 2007, the calls for a reckless and irresponsible withdrawal of our forces just at the moment when they are succeeding.

Economic progress is essential if the security gains in Iraq are to be sustained. The once silent and deserted markets have come back to life in many areas, but high unemployment rates continue to fuel criminal and insurgent violence. To move young men away from the attractions of well-funded extremists, we need a vibrant, growing Iraqi economy. The Iraqi government can jump-start this process by using a portion of its budget surplus to employ Iraqis in infrastructure projects and in restoring basic services. The international community should augment Iraqi efforts by broadly enhancing the proven success of microfinance programs to spur entrepreneurship at local levels throughout the country and Iraq's Arab neighbors should invest in regional stability by using the fruits of their oil exports to directly invest in Iraq. As these efforts begin to take hold in Iraq, it will be -- as in all countries -- the private sector that creates the vast majority of jobs and propels the growth that will end reliance on outside aid.

I do not want to keep our troops in Iraq a minute longer than necessary to secure our interests there. Our goal is an Iraq that can stand on its own as a democratic ally and a responsible force for peace in its neighborhood. Our goal is an Iraq that no longer needs American troops. And I believe we can achieve that goal, perhaps sooner than many imagine. But I do not believe that anyone should make promises as a candidate for President that they cannot keep if elected. To promise a withdrawal of our forces from Iraq, regardless of the calamitous consequences to the Iraqi people, our most vital interests, and the future of the Middle East, is the height of irresponsibility. It is a failure of leadership.

I know the pain war causes. I understand the frustration caused by our mistakes in this war. And I regret sincerely the additional sacrifices imposed on the brave Americans who defend us. But I also know the toll a lost war takes on an army and on our country's security. By giving General Petraeus and the men and women he has the honor to command the time and support necessary to succeed in Iraq we have before us a hard road. But it is the right road. It is necessary and just. Those who disregard the unmistakable progress we have made in the last year and the terrible consequences that would ensue were we to abandon our responsibilities in Iraq have chosen another road. It may appear to be the easier course of action, but it is a much more reckless one, and it does them no credit even if it gives them an advantage in the next election.

We all respect the sacrifices made by our soldiers. We all mourn the losses they have suffered in this war. But let us honor them by doing all we can to ensure their sacrifices were not made in vain. Let us show an appropriate humility by recognizing that so little is asked of us compared to the burdens we imposed on them, and let us show just a small, but significant measure of their courage, resolve and patriotism by putting our country's interests before every personal or political consideration.

War is a terrible thing. You know that better than most; you who have borne the heartache and deprivations of war so that our country might be secure in its freedom. I hold my position on
Iraq not because I am indifferent to the suffering caused by this war but because I detest war, and believe sincerely that should we fail in Iraq we will face an even sternest test in the very near future, an even harder war, with even greater sacrifice and heartbreaking loss than we have suffered over the last five years.

It is every veteran's hope that should their children be called upon to answer a call to arms, the battle will be necessary and the field well chosen. But that is not their responsibility. It belongs to the government that called them. As it once was for you, their honor will be in their answer not their summons. Whatever we think about how and why we went to war in Iraq, we are all -- those who supported the decision that placed them in harm's way and those who opposed it -- humbled by and grateful for their example. We know how little has been asked of others compared to their service, and the terrible sacrifice made by those who have not returned to the country they loved so well. They now deserve the distinction of the best Americans, and we owe them a debt we can never fully repay. We can only offer the small tribute of our humility and our commitment to do all that we can do, in less trying and costly circumstances, to help keep this nation worthy of their sacrifice.

The sacrifices made by veterans deserve to be memorialized in something more lasting than marble or bronze or in the fleeting effect of a politician's speeches. Your valor and devotion to duty have earned your country's abiding concern for your welfare. And when our government forgets to honor our debts to you, it is a stain upon America's honor. The Walter Reed scandal recalled, I hope, not just government but the public who elected it, to our responsibilities to the men and women who risked life and limb to meet their responsibilities to us. Such a disgrace is unworthy of the greatest nation on earth. As the greatest leaders in our history, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, instructed us, care for Americans who fought to defend us should rank among the highest of national priorities.

Those who have borne the burden of war for our sake must be treated fairly and expeditiously as they seek compensation for disability or illness. We owe them compassion, knowledge and hands-on care in their transition to civilian life. We owe them training, rehabilitation and education. We owe their families, parents and caregivers our concern and support. They should never be deprived of quality medical care and mental health care coverage for illness or injury incurred as a result of their service to our country.

As President, I will do everything in my power to ensure that those who serve today and those who have served in the past have access to the highest quality health, mental health and rehabilitative care in the world. The disgrace of Walter Reed must not be forgotten. Neither should we accept a situation in which veterans are denied access to care due to great travel distances, backlogs of appointments, and years of pending disability evaluation and claims. I believe that we should give veterans the option to use a simple plastic card to receive timely and accessible care at a convenient location through a provider of their choosing. I will not stand for requiring veterans to make an appointment to stand in line for substandard care of the injuries you have suffered to keep our country safe. Whatever our commitments to veterans cost, we will keep them, as you have kept every commitment to us. The honor of a great nation is at stake.

As we meet, in Iraq and Afghanistan, American soldiers, Marines, sailors and airmen are fighting bravely and tenaciously in battles that are as dangerous, difficult and consequential as the great battles of our armed forces' storied past. Many of them have had their tours extended longer than they were initially told. Others who had already served two or three tours returned
to combat sooner than they had been led to expect. It is a sad and hard thing to ask so much more of Americans who have already given more than their fair share to the defense of our country. Few of them and their families would have greeted the news without feeling greatly disappointed, and without offering a few well deserved complaints in the direction of those of us who have imposed on them this additional hardship. Then they shouldered a rifle and risked everything -- everything -- to accomplish their mission, to protect another people's freedom and our own country from harm.

It is a privilege beyond measure to live in a country served so well by such selfless patriots. God bless and protect them.
Appendix 2

Remarks of Senator Obama: A Sacred Trust Kansas City, MO August 21, 2007

Thank you, Commander Kurpius, for that introduction and for your leadership, and let me acknowledge the incoming National Commander George Lisicki. I want to thank all of the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States of America for inviting me here today. I'm glad to see Rich Coombe, the State Commander for Illinois. And let me say a word of acknowledgment to the 90,000 Illinoisans who are VFW members.

To America's veterans, our country must speak with one voice: we honor your service, and we enter into a sacred trust with you from the moment you put on that uniform. That trust is simple: America will be there for you just as you have been there for America.

As a candidate for the presidency, I know that I am running to become Commander-in-Chief - to safeguard this nation's security, and to keep that sacred trust. There is no responsibility that I take more seriously.

We know that the America we live in is the legacy of those who have borne the burden of battle. You are part of an unbroken line of Americans who threw off the tyranny of a King; who held the country together and set the captives free; who faced down fascism and fought for freedom in Korea and Vietnam; who liberated Kuwait and stopped ethnic cleansing in the Balkans; and who fight bravely and brilliantly under our flag today in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Keeping faith with those who serve must always be a core American value and a cornerstone of American patriotism. Because America's commitment to its servicemen and women begins at enlistment, and it must never end.

Without that commitment, I probably wouldn't be here today. My grandfather - Stanley Dunham - enlisted after Pearl Harbor and went on to march in Patton's Army. My mother was born at Fort Leavenworth and my grandmother worked on a bomber assembly line. After my grandfather stood up for his country, America stood by him. He went to college on the GI Bill, bought his first home with help from the Federal Housing Authority. Then he moved his family west to Hawaii, where I was born, and where he and my grandmother helped raise me. He is buried in the Punchbowl, the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, where 776 victims of Pearl Harbor are laid to rest.

I knew him when he was older. But I think about him now and then as he enlisted - a man of 23, fresh-faced with a wise-guy grin - when I see young men and women signing up to serve today. These sons and daughters of America are the best and bravest among us. And they are signing up at a time when the dangers that America faces are great.

Since the end of the Cold War, threats from distant corners of the world increasingly pose a direct danger to America. Killing fields in Rwanda, Congo and Darfur have offended our common humanity and set back the world's sense of collective security. Weak and failing states from Africa to central Asia to the Pacific Rim are incubators of resentment and anarchy that can endanger those countries and ours. An assertive Russia and a rising China remind us - through words and deeds - that the primacy of our power does not mean our power will go unchallenged. A new age of nuclear proliferation has left the world's most deadly weapons unlocked by more and more countries, with thousands of weapons and stockpiles poorly...
secured all over the world. At the dawn of the 21st century, the threats we face can no longer be contained by borders and boundaries.

That is the lesson of 9/11. We will never forget the 3,000 Americans killed on 9/11 - more than we lost at Pearl Harbor. The threat did not come from a dictator, a state, or an empire - it came from stateless terrorists. These violent extremists are a small minority in the Muslim world. They distort Islam. They hate America. They kill man, woman and child. And they seek a repressive caliphate that would resemble Afghanistan under the Taliban.

Our brave young men and women have signed up to make these burdens their own. They have come face to face with the threats of the 21st century, and they have been asked to bear an evolving and ever-increasing load. Peacekeeping missions. Intelligence gathering. Training foreign militaries. Earthquake and tsunami relief. Fighting with Afghan allies to topple the Taliban. Persevering in the deserts and cities of Iraq. The U.S. military has answered when called, and the verdict on their performance is clear: through their commitment, their courage, and their capability they have done us all proud.

What we need is civilian leadership that lives up this service. We had a chance to deliver a decisive blow to the Taliban and al Qaeda and to bring this country together with unity of effort and purpose. Instead, we went to war in Iraq - a war that I opposed - with no plan for how to win the peace, shifting our focus, straining our military, splitting our country, and sacrificing our global standing.

I want to be clear. Our troops have performed brilliantly in Iraq. They have done everything we have asked of them. They have won every battle they have fought. They have built schools and trained battalions. I know there are honest differences about the next steps that we should take. And the truth is - there are no good options.

All of our top military commanders recognize that there is no military solution in Iraq. And no matter how brilliantly and bravely our troops and their commanders perform, they cannot and should not bear the responsibility of resolving grievances at the heart of Iraq's civil war. No military surge can succeed without political reconciliation and a surge of diplomacy in Iraq and the region. Iraq's leaders are not reconciling. They are not achieving political benchmarks. The only thing they seem to have agreed on is to take a vacation. That is why I have pushed for a careful and responsible redeployment of troops engaged in combat operations out of Iraq, joined with direct and sustained diplomacy in the region. And that is why I will continue to push the President to change our policy.

One reason to stop fighting the wrong war is so that we can fight the right war against terrorism and extremism. And my judgment - based in part on the clear findings of the National Intelligence Estimate - is that the most direct terrorist threat to our homeland comes from al Qaeda operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

That's why earlier this month, I laid out a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. That plan has five elements. First, we need to end the war in Iraq and focus on the terrorists in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and I would re-enforce our mission in Afghanistan with at least two brigades. Second, we need to develop our capabilities to take down terrorist networks and secure nuclear weapons. Third, we need to dry up support for extremism, because we cannot win the long war unless we win more hearts and minds in the Muslim world. Fourth, we need to restore our values, because as the counter-insurgency manual reminds us, torture sets back
our mission to keep the people on our side. And fifth, we need to protect our homeland by setting common sense priorities.

In laying out this strategy, I am guided by the understanding that there is no more awesome responsibility that is placed in a President's hands than protecting our country and our security. I believe that this strategy is one that we must pursue, guided by the principle that we must act swiftly and strongly against clear and imminent threats to our security. I will act with proper regard for the costs and consequences of action, based on the advice of military commanders and with a clear statement of purpose and policy to the American people. Because a President can choose to go to war, but the country must be prepared to sustain it. That depends upon knowing why we are fighting, what clear goal we are fighting for, and how we plan to win the peace.

And as we implement this comprehensive strategy, and phase out of Iraq and bolster our mission in Afghanistan, I believe we can then focus on rebuilding our military and taking better care of our servicemen and women. In an Obama Administration, I will ensure that America goes to war with the armed forces it needs. Our troops should not be over-stretched. We need to ensure that our ability to respond to threats around the world is never compromised. And I will always respect - and not ignore - the advice of military commanders. But I will also make clear that when I am President, the buck will stop in the Oval Office.

We know our troops will answer the call. But we must issue that call responsibly. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been marked by repeated and unpredictable deployments. Aircraft bound for home have been turned around. Soldiers and Marines have served two, three or four tours. Retention rates of West Point graduates are approaching record lows. We need to keep these battle-hardened majors and captains so they can become tomorrow's generals. We need predictable rotations. We need to deploy troops at an appropriate state of readiness.

I will add 65,000 soldiers and 27,000 Marines to relieve the strain on our ground forces. I will maintain our technological edge and invest in the capabilities we need to succeed in the missions of the 21st century. That means training for critical languages like Arabic, for civil affairs, and for increased Special Forces. And I will heed the call for greater civilian capacity. Our troops, trained for war, are serving as water and electricity experts in Baghdad and agricultural advisors in Kandahar. The finest military in the world needs civilian partners who can carry out critical missions. We need to strengthen and integrate all aspects of American might.

And this is not just about programs and policies. It's about people. Part of our sacred trust with the men and women who serve is also providing the equipment they need. We've had troops deploying to Iraq who had to buy life-saving equipment on-line. That's not America. That's not who we are. As President, I will ensure that every service-member has what they need to do the job safely and successfully.

And the strain of service is great in a place where a threat can come from a pile by the side of the road, a seemingly friendly face in the crowd, or a mortar lobbed into a base. Just the other day we learned there were at least 99 suicides in the Army last year - the most in a quarter century.

To keep our sacred trust, I will improve mental health screening and treatment at all levels: from enlistment, to deployment, to reentry into civilian life. No service-member should be
kicked out of the military because they are struggling with untreated PTSD. No veteran should have to fill out a 23-page claim to get care, or wait months - even years - to get an appointment at the VA. We need more mental health professionals, more training to recognize signs and to reject the stigma of seeking care. And to treat a signature wound of these wars, we need clear standards of care for Traumatic Brain Injury.

We also need to provide more services to our military families. Let me thank the VFW for helping families with everything from repairs and errands to calling cards that bring a loved one nearer. Efforts like Operation Uplink make a huge difference. You are filling in some of the painful spaces in peoples' lives. And anyone who has visited our military hospitals has seen wonderful spouses who don't see visiting hours as part-time. That's why I passed a bill to provide family members with a year of job protection, so they never have to face a choice between caring for a loved one and keeping a job.

I have also fought to improve shameful care for wounded warriors. I led a bipartisan effort to improve outpatient facilities, slash red tape, and reform the disability review process - because recovering troops should always go to the front of the line, and they shouldn't have to fight to get there.

But we know that the sacred trust cannot expire when the uniform comes off. When we fail to keep faith with our veterans, the bond between our nation and our nation's heroes becomes frayed. When a veteran is denied care, we are all dishonored. It's not enough to lay a wreath on Memorial Day, or to pay tribute to our veterans in speeches. A proud and grateful nation owes more than ceremonial gestures and kind words.

Caring for those who serve - and for their families - is a fundamental responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief. It is not a separate cost. It is a cost of war. It is something I've fought for as a member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. And it is something I will fight for as President of the United States.

It's time for comprehensive reform. When I am President, building a 21st century VA to serve our veterans will be an equal priority to building a 21st century military to fight our wars. My Secretary of Veteran's Affairs will be just as important as my Secretary of Defense. No more shortfalls - it's time to fully fund the VA medical center. No more delays - it's time to pass on-time VA budgets each and every year. No more means testing - it's time to allow all veterans back into the VA. I will immediately reverse a policy that led the VA to turn away nearly 1 million middle and low-income veterans since 2003.

The VA will also be at the cutting edge of my plan for universal health care, with better preventive care, more research and specialty treatment, and more Vet Centers, particularly in rural areas.

I will revamp an overburdened benefits system. The VFW has done a remarkable job helping more than 120,000 veterans a year navigate the broken VBA bureaucracy, but you shouldn't have to do it alone. I will hire additional workers, and create an electronic system that is fully linked up to military records and the VA's health network.

One of the most admired principles of the U.S. military is that no one gets left behind. Yet too often America does not keep faith with this principle. On any given night, more than 200,000 veterans are homeless. We're already hearing about hundreds of homeless Iraq War vets.
That's not right. That's not keeping our sacred trust. We must not leave these men and women behind. My principle will be simple: zero tolerance. Zero tolerance for veterans sleeping on the streets. I've fought for this in the Senate, and as President I'll expand housing vouchers, and I'll launch a new supportive services housing program to prevent at-risk veterans and their families from sliding into homelessness.

I'll also keep faith with America's veterans by helping them achieve their dreams. We need a G.I. Bill for the 21st century. An Obama Administration will expand access to education for our veterans, and increase benefits to keep pace with rising costs. All who wear the uniform of the United States are entitled to the same opportunity that my grandfather had under the G.I. Bill.

And our sacred trust does not end when a service-member dies. The graves of our veterans are hallowed ground. When men and women who die in service to this country are laid to rest, there must be no protests near the funerals. It's wrong and it needs to stop.

Over 100 years ago, a handful of veterans from the Spanish-American war came together in places like a tailor shop in Columbus, Ohio. At the time, America had no medical care, no pensions for its returning warriors. Folks could raise their voice, but Washington didn't listen. So these men banded together and started a movement. They cared for each other and made the case for their rights. They founded local organizations all across this country. In 1915 there were 5,000 members. Today, you have nearly 2 million members.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars represents the best of America - the courage to fight for our country abroad, and coming together at home for a cause.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once remarked that "To fight out a war, you must believe something and want something with all your might."

The Americans who fight today believe in this country deeply. And no matter how many you meet, or how many stories of heroism you hear, every encounter reminds you that they are truly special. That through their service, they are living out the ideals that stir so many of us as Americans - pride, duty, and sacrifice.

Some of the most inspiring are those you meet at places like Walter Reed Medical Center. Young men and women who may have lost a limb or even their ability to take care of themselves, but will never lose the pride they feel for serving their country. They're not interested in self-pity, but yearn to move forward with their lives. And it's this classically American optimism that makes you realize the quality of person we have serving in the United States Armed Forces.

I know all of us don't agree on everything. I have heard those of you who disagree with me. I want you to know that I respect the views of all who come to this hall today. I will listen to them as a candidate, and I will listen to them as President. And I will be clear that whatever disagreements we have on policy, there will be no daylight between us when it comes to honoring these men and women who serve, and keeping faith with our veterans. This is not a partisan issue. This is a moral obligation. This must be a beachhead for bringing our country together.

Some like to say this country is divided. But that is not how I choose to see it. I see a country
that all of us love - a country that my grandfather served, and that my father crossed an ocean to reach. I see values that all of us share - values of liberty, equality, and service to a common good and a greater good. I see a flag that we fly with pride. I see an America that is the strongest nation in the history of the world - not just because of our arms, but because of the strength of our values, and of the men and women who serve.

As President Franklin Roosevelt said in his final inaugural: "The Almighty God has blessed our land in many ways. He has given our people stout hearts and strong arms with which to strike mighty blows for freedom and truth. He has given to our country a faith which has become the hope of all peoples in an anguished world." With that strength comes great responsibility - to join our strength with wisdom, and to keep that light of hope burning as a beacon to the world. And there is no responsibility greater than keeping faith with the men and women who serve, so that our country serves them as well as you have served us. Let that be our calling. And let history find us never wanting.

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