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gave a hint of things to come during an interview with a New York newspaper. He said, "In the battle between democracy and totalitarianism, the latter adversary will without question win and will control the world. The era of democracy is finished, the democratic system bankrupt."

In fact, the war machines of Imperial Japan would be brought down—brought down by good folks who only months before had been students and farmers and bank clerks and factory hands. Some are in the room today. Others here have been inspired by their fathers and grandfathers and uncles and cousins.

That generation of Americans taught the tyrants a telling lesson: There is no power like the power of freedom and no soldier as strong as a soldier who fights for a free future for his children. And when America's work on the battlefield was done, the victorious children of democracy would help our defeated enemies rebuild and bring the taste of freedom to millions.

We can do the same for the Middle East. Today, the violent Islamic extremists who fight us in Iraq are as certain of their cause as the Nazis or the Imperial Japanese or the Soviet Communists were of theirs. They are destined for the same fate.

The greatest weapon in the arsenal of democracy is the desire for liberty written into the human heart by our Creator. So long as we remain true to our ideals, we will defeat the extremists in Iraq and Afghanistan. We will help those countries' people stand up functioning democracies in the heart of the broader Middle East. And when that hard work is done and the critics of today recede from memory, the cause of freedom will be stronger, a vital region will be brighter, and the American people will be safer.

Thank you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:46 a.m. at the Kansas City Convention and Entertainment Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gary Kurpius, outgoing commander-in-chief, and George J. Lisicki, incoming commander-in-chief, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Robert E. Wallace, executive director, Veterans of Foreign Wars Washington Office; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Minister of Defense Yuriko Koike of Japan; and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq.

Statement on the Federal Budget

August 23, 2007

Today's deficit estimate release by the Congressional Budget Office is good news for American taxpayers. Like the estimates put forward by the Office of Management and Budget, it shows that our Government is on a path to meeting the goal I set forth of putting the budget into surplus by 2012. Balancing the budget requires keeping the economy strong, keeping tax rates low, and keeping spending in check.

Through tax relief, we cut taxes for American families and reduced tax rates on dividends and capital gains, energizing small businesses to invest and expand. And since we lowered these important tax rates, the economy has created more than 8 million jobs, increased wages, and grew tax revenues that will lead to a surplus.

Continued spending restraint is a critical element for accomplishing a balanced budget. I again urge Congress to pass spending bills by the end of the fiscal year without wasteful earmarks, without raising taxes, and in regular order—one at a time and on time. Congress has an opportunity to rise to the occasion and work with my administration to accomplish a balanced budget without raising taxes, and I hope they will do so upon their return to Washington in September.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.