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taken a position, which is the long-held position of U.S. Governments, and that is, Japan should have a seat. Beyond that, I've made no commitment, except this: that we're for U.N. Security Council reforms, and that I'm willing to listen to good ideas. And Angela brought up some good ideas today. And so——

Q. [*Inaudible*]

President Bush. It's up to her to tell you. I don't like to put words in leaders' mouths. I don't particularly like it when people put words in my mouth, either, by the way, unless I say it. But she can tell you what she came up with.

But I will tell you that it intrigued me, and my—as I said—listen, I stood up in front of the U.N. and said precisely what I'm telling you now, that we're openminded. There's a good non-answer for you. [*Laughter*]

Chancellor Merkel. Well, from my side, the people who know me, know me as a person who is sort of success-oriented, in the sense that I don't think one ought to comment each step on the way towards a success. But the message that I received today, and that was a very heartening message, was that the President and the administration of the United States are interested in the reform of the U.N. Security Council. And in this overall complex of issues that relates to that, they will also, obviously, be of interest who will then be the members of that reformed Security Council.

I, for me personally, see this issue of a Security Council reform to be a very important one. But what is also important, obviously, is to try to enlist the support of the other very important countries who are members of the Security Council, and hear particularly those countries that have veto powers in the Security Council, to see to it that they have also a great interest in seeing the Security Council reformed.

So in this overall context, it has certainly been a good message that I heard today, that there is also an interest in that here. I found this with the President today. And now we will have to keep an eye on further steps to be taken along the way in order to achieve that goal. We will try and find allies for this cause. And again, it is in Germany's interest, as I said previously in public, to have a permanent seat on the Security Council. We will not call on each and every country that we talk to, to comment on each and every step along the way. We're going to continue to work towards reform. And I think it is of the essence that we have heard here today. And this is why this was such an important message, that is not only in the interests of Germany, but it is also an interest that was explained to us here and clearly stated by the U.S. administration.

President Bush. Yes. I'm now going to go feed the Chancellor a hamburger. [*Laughter*] Right here in Crawford, Texas. No, well, I mean back over there. Thank you all.

Chancellor Merkel. Obviously, for me, as a person who originally came from Hamburg——

President Bush. Yes.

Chancellor Merkel. ——it's even more important. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Hamburger.

Thank you.

Chancellor Merkel. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:45 a.m. at the Bush Ranch. In his remarks, he referred to Joachim Sauer, husband of Chancellor Merkel; President Pervez Musharraf and former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan; President Hu Jintao of China; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. Chancellor Merkel referred to European Union Foreign Minister Javier Solana Madariaga; and Prime Minister Fuad Siniora of Lebanon. Chancellor Merkel spoke in German, and her remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at American Legion Post 121 in Waco, Texas

November 11, 2007

Thank you. Clayton, thanks for inviting me. I'm really honored to be here with you. Congressman Edwards, thank you for your eloquence and your very moving remarks. Members of the Texas State Legislature, it's good to see you again. Distinguished mayors, thank you all for being here. Proud veterans and families of the fallen, it is a privilege to spend this Veterans Day with you and to join you in honoring four sons of the great State of Texas who gave their lives in freedom's cause.

The young men we remember today did not live to be called veterans. They died in a distant land fighting terror, spreading freedom, and protecting their fellow citizens from danger. The valor and selfless devotion of these men fills their families with immeasurable pride. Yet this pride cannot fill the hole in their loved ones' aching hearts or relieve the burden of grief that will remain for a lifetime. In their sorrow, these families need to know and families all across our Nation of the fallen need to know that your loved ones served a cause that is good and just and noble. And as their Commander in Chief, I make you this promise: Their sacrifice will not be in vain.

I know all the veterans gathered here and across the Nation feel a special bond with our fallen soldiers and their families. Many experienced the heartbreak and tragic losses of war. Our veterans know that—what it's like to lose a brother on the field of battle. And many of them recall the determination they felt when a beloved comrade fell—the determination to pick up the mantle, to carry on the fight, and to complete the mission.

That's precisely what today's generation of soldiers is doing in the war on terror. Since the attacks of September the 11th, 2001, more than 2 million Americans have stepped forward to put on our Nation's uniform, and during that same period, 1.5 million American troops have made the courageous decision to reenlist and to stay in the fight. These men and women saw the future the terrorists intend for our country, and they said with clear voices, "Not on my watch." America is blessed to have such brave defenders. They are tomorrow's veterans, and they're bringing pride to our country.

Their service is noble, and it is necessary. The enemies who attacked us 6 years ago want to strike our country again, and next time, they hope to kill Americans on a scale that will make 9/11 pale by comparison. By fighting this enemy in foreign lands, the men and women of our Armed Forces are helping to ensure we do not have to face them in our own land. And by spreading the hope of liberty to nations that have not known it, our troops are helping to defeat the ideology of the terrorists and secure a future of peace for generations to come.

As veterans, you have confidence in freedom's cause because you have seen with your own eyes the power of liberty to transform nations and secure the peace. The men and women gathered before me took an oath to defend America, and you upheld that oath with honor and decency and valor. You humbled tyrants, liberated continents, and freed millions from unspeakable oppression. And because of your service and sacrifice, the world has been transformed in once unimaginable ways. Today, across Europe and Asia, former adversaries in war have become allies in the cause of peace. And in towns and villages on both continents, there are still men and women who talk of the day when the Americans arrived to free them from tyranny.

I thank our Nation's veterans for the fine example that you have set for our country. I thank you for your courage and your patriotism and your devotion to duty. I thank you for standing up for the men and women of our Armed Forces. And I thank you for all you do to support the families they leave behind during this time of war.

May God bless and keep all who have made the ultimate sacrifice. May God bless and keep our brave and honored veterans. May God bless those who are in harm's way. And may God continue to bless our Nation. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Clayton Hueske, commander, American Legion Post 121.

Remarks Following a Lunch Meeting With Business and Community Leaders in New Albany, Indiana

November 13, 2007

Listen, I want to thank you all for joining me. Somebody told me Sam serves good food, and they're right. And it's good to be here in southern Indiana.

I was sitting with business leaders, civic leaders, community activists. I was listening to the concerns of the folks down here. I appreciate the spirit of entrepreneurship that exists. I'm glad people are working. I understand we got to deal with some of the issues, like high gasoline prices.