

5-12-07- Ted Koppel @ UCLA
Captioning by Sharene Ramirez

(VIDEO).
(MUSIC).

RABBI CHAIM SEIDLER-FELLER: I AM THE RABBI AND DIRECTOR OF UCLA HILLEL, A COSPONSOR OF THE DANIEL PEARL MEMORIAL LECTURE. UNFORTUNATELY, I AM RECOVERING FROM BACK SURGERY AND CANNOT GREET YOU IN PERSON. DESPITE THE FACT THAT I AM ONE OF TED KOPPEL'S FANS, AND AN OBSESSIVE NIGHTLINE WATCHER.

MORE FROM THE POINT. AS YOU WILL HEAR FROM MY FRIEND, JUDEA PEARL, WE ARE HERE TO BE INSPIRED BY TED KOPPEL AND REMEMBER DANIEL PEARL. HE WAS A GRAND HUMANIST, A COMMITTED UNIVERSALIST. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT IN ORDER FOR OUR WORLD TO MOVE FORWARD, WE WOULD HAVE TO LEARN TO TRANSCEND OUR NARROW PAROCHIAL INTERESTS.

AND HE UNDERSTOOD DEEPLY THAT HIS UNIVERSAL WORLD VIEW WAS NURTURED BY HIS JEWISH BACKGROUND. AND VALUES OF TRADITION.

SO TOO IS OUR SPEAKER A HUMANIST WITH A UNIVERSAL VISION THAT IS ALL EMBRACING, AND HE TOO HAS DRAWN AT THE WELL SPRING OF THE JEWISH TRADITION. WE ARE ACTUALLY PROUD OF YOUR APPEARANCE MR. KOPPEL AND THANK YOU FOR MAKING THIS EVENING POSSIBLE.

LET ME RETURN FOR A MOMENT TO WHERE I BEGAN, TO THE SHABBAT. THE SHABBAT DAY IS WAINING AS WE SIT IN ANTICIPATION. WHAT THE SHABBAT ANTICIPATES IS A DREAM WORLD. IT IS A TASTE OF THE WORLD TO COME WHERE THE DIVINE UNITY IS SO OVERWHELMING THAT EVERYONE COMPREHENDS AND HAS INTERNALIZED THE

SENSE THAT ALL HUMANS ARE NATURALLY, AND SPIRITUALLY INTERRELATED AND INTERCONNECTED.

IS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THIS CONJUNCTION THAT THE LEGACY OF DANIEL PEARL WILL BE REALIZED. SHABBAT SHALOM TO YOU ALL -- FOR A WORLD THAT IS TOTALLY AND TRULY SABBATICAL. AND TRULY AT PEACE. ENJOY THE EVENING, THANK YOU.

(APPLAUSE).

>> WELCOME ALL TO THE 5TH ANNUAL PEARL MEMORIAL LECTURE ON JOURNALISM AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. I AM JUDEA PEARL, AND I AM GLAD TO MAKE THIS EVENING POSSIBLE. YOU AND YOUR STAFF, THE COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCES, AND YOUR STAFF, THE MODERATOR PATT MORRISON, AND OF COURSE OUR SPEAKER TED KOPPEL AND HIS WIFE GRACE ANNE.

I SHOULD REALLY CALL YOU DR. KOPPEL. IF I AM NOT MISUNDERSTOOD, YESTERDAY, YOU RECEIVED AN HONORARY DEGREE.

TED KOPPEL: (INAUDIBLE).

>> USC (APPLAUSE).

JUDEA PEARL: YOU DISCOVER THAT TED IS SMARTER THAN MOST OF THE FACULTY. (LAUGHTER) (APPLAUSE).

WATCH OUT FOR UCLA NEXT DR. KOPPEL. AND DELIGHTED TO SEE SO MANY FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES, AND SUPPORTERS, AND SECRET SUPPORTERS OF THE DANIEL PEARL FOUNDATION. A PECULIAR BUNCH OF OPTIMISTS THAT BELIEVE WORKING TOGETHER CAN CHANGE THE WORLD AND MAKE THE WORLD BETTER. LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, 10 YEARS AGO. LOS ANGELES SENT ONE OF ITS YOUNGSTERS TO REPORT FROM THE MIDDLE EAST. FROM THERE, HE ROAMED THE ROADS WITH HIS FIDDLE AND LAPTOP AND STARTED TO ASK ABOUT THE HUMAN FACE OF THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE NEWS.

THIS YOUNG MAN IS NO LONGER WITH US TODAY, BUT HIS SPIRIT OF CURIOSITY, HUMANITY, AND INTEGRITY KEEPS ON INSPIRING HIS PEACE.

RUTH AND I ARE HONORED TODAY BY 2 CHAMPIONS OF THAT SPIRIT, TED KOPPEL, WHOSE INTEGRITY, AND THE TOPIC HE CHOSE FOR THIS LECTURE TONIGHT SO CLOSELY MIRRORS THE WORK OF DANIEL. THANK YOU, TED.

BY HONORING DANNY, YOU HONOR A COMMUNITY OF COMMITTED JOURNALISTS WHO RISK THEIR LIVES ON A DAILY BASIS SO THAT WE CAN VIEW THE WORLD FROM A NEW PRISM OF TRUTH.

YOU HONOR A UNIQUE SOCIETY. A SOCIETY THAT BREEDS THOUSANDS OF (INAUDIBLE) EVERY YEAR. AND FROM WHICH DANNY INHERITED HIS HUMOR, OPEN-MINDEDNESS -- AND THIS SOCIETY IS FUELED BY INQUISITIVENESS, UNITED BY PRINCIPALS, AND CONSTANTLY GOVERNED BY HARD INTROSPECTION.

I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE THE FLOOR NOW TO PROFESSOR PAT O'BRIAN, THE EXECUTIVE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE, WHO JOINS US IN COSPONSORING THIS LECTURE SERIES. (APPLAUSE).

PAT O'BRIAN: WELL IT HAS BEEN A REAL PRIVILEGE FOR ME AS EXECUTIVE DEAN HERE AT UCLA OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE TO PARTNER WITH HILLEL AND THE DANIEL PEARL FOUNDATION TO MAKE THIS EVENING POSSIBLE. AND IT IS BEEN A PERSONAL PRIVILEGE FOR ME TO WORK WITH JUDEA PEARL, AND RUTH PEARL IN ENVISIONING NOT ONLY THIS EVENING, BUT THE FUTURE OF THE PEARL MEMORIAL LECTURES.

I ALSO HAVE THE DISTINCT PLEASURE TONIGHT OF INTRODUCING OUR MODERATOR FOR THE EVENING, PATT MORRISON. (APPLAUSE).

IF YOU CAN LISTEN TO A RADIO, WATCH A TELEVISION, OR READ A NEWSPAPER IN THIS TOWN, YOU KNOW WHO PATT MORRISON IS. SHE IS A COLUMNIST AND

WRITER OF THE L.A. TIMES. SHE HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF 2 L.A. TIMES REPORTING TEAMS THAT WON THE PULITZER PRIZES FOR COVERAGE OF EVENTS LIKE THE 1992 RIOTS, AND THE CITY'S 1994 EARTHQUAKE. SHE HAS HER OWN DAILY PROGRAM ON 89.3 KPCC. AND SHE IS A FREQUENT COMMENTATOR.

SHE WON 5 EMMIES ON KCET. AND 4 GOLDEN MIKE AWARDS. IN 2000, SHE RECEIVED THE JOSEPH QUINN AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT. THE FIRST TIME IN A QUARTER CENTURY THAT A WOMAN RECEIVED THAT AWARD. (APPLAUSE).

IN 2001, SHE WAS NAMED ONE OF THE WOMEN OF THE YEAR, WOMEN WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, AND I THINK YOU CAN PICK JUST ABOUT ANY YEAR IN PATT MORRISON'S PROFESSIONAL LIFE, AND BE ABLE TO DESIGNATE HER FOR THAT SAME AWARD, A WOMAN WHO MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

SHE IS A COMMENTATOR OF ALL ASPECTS OF LOS ANGELES LIFE, POLITICS, SOCIETY, ECONOMIC LIFE, THE INTELLECTUALIZE, AND CULTURAL FERMENT OF THIS CITY. SHE HAS WRITTEN ABOUT EVERY ISSUE FROM THE L.A. RIVER TO THE POLITICS OF DOWNTOWN L.A. AND I JUST LEARNED AS MANY OF YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW, SHE IS ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF A BEST SELLING NEW BOOK, A WORK ON FICTION, EDITED BY DENISE HAMILTON CALLED LOS ANGELES NOIR.

AND HER CONTRIBUTION TO THAT NOIR IS ON BEVERLY HILLS. (LAUGHTER). SO YEAH, I AM RUNNING OUT AND BUYING IT. IT IS A REAL HONOR AND PRIVILEGE TO WELCOME PATT MORRISON WHO WILL WELCOME OUR SPEAKERS. (APPLAUSE).

PATT MORRISON: THANK YOU WITH THAT, YOUR 15 PERCENT CHECK WILL BE IN THE MAIL AFTER THE AMAZON.COM BOOM.

I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU IF YOU WOULD TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES, BLACKBERRIES, WHATEVER INCARNATION YOU HAVE. YOU ARE HERE BECAUSE YOU

WANT TO HEAR TED KOPPEL, AND YOU WANT TO HEAR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

I AM REMINDED OF A YOUNG LADY BEING PRESENTED TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND. AND JUST AS SHE STARTED TO DROP HER CURTSY, HER CELL PHONE RANG, AND THE QUEEN SAID YOU BETTER ANSWER IT, IT MIGHT BE SOMEONE IMPORTANT. (LAUGHTER).

I HAVE TO TELL YOU HOW TOUCHED AND HONORED I WAS WHEN MRS. PEARL CALLED ME AND ASKED ME TO MODERATE THIS EVENT. AND SHE WAS ASTONISHED IN THE SPEED WHICH I ANSWERED AND THE -- HAD THERE BEEN ANY EINSTEINIAN TIME TO THE EMOTION, I WOULD HAVE ANSWERED BEFORE SHE HAD EVEN ASKED.

I NEVER MET DANIEL PEARL, BUT HE IS OF COURSE A COLLEAGUE AND MEMBER OF MY FRATERNITY, JUST AS OUR CUBICALS WOULD HAVE BEEN SIDE BY SIDE IN OUR OFFICE.

WE JOURNALISTS ARE PROUD OF OUR CALLING. IT IS A CALLING, LIKE MEDICINE, AND MANY OTHER PROFESSIONS YOU PURSUE.

WE FEEL WHAT WE DO IS AS VITAL TO THE FUNCTION OF DEMOCRACY AS ANYTHING IN THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF. AND THE FOUNDING FATHERS SURE THOUGHT SO, BECAUSE THEY MADE IT THE FIRST OF THE AMENDMENTS.

WE SOMETIMES RISK AND LOSE OUR LIVES TO DO IT. MANY OF MY COLLEAGUES LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE LINE OF DUTY. AND 2 CLOSE FRIENDS OF MINE HAVE JOINED DANIEL PEARL. ONE IN CENTRAL AMERICA, AND ONE IN IRAQ. IT IS ONLY WHEN THE JOURNALIST'S LIFE IS LOST, MANY TIMES, THE VIEWING PUBLIC AND READING PUBLIC IS REMINDED HOW IMPORTANT IT IS WHAT WE DO.

TED KOPPEL IS A BELIEVER IN THIS CALLING AND A SUPERB PRACTITIONER IN OUR CRAFT. HE IS THE MANAGING EDITOR ON THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL.

IN ABOUT HALF WAY THROUGH THE 4 DECADES PLUS HE SPENT WITH ABC, HE BECAME A HOUSEHOLD NAME AND A HOUSEHOLD FACE. WHEN HE INVENTED THE GENRE THAT BECAME KNOWN AS NIGHTLINE, EARLY IN 1979 AND 1980, WHEN YOU UNDERTOOK NIGHTLINE, WHICH HE RETIRED FROM IN 1995 AFTER A QUARTER CENTURY OF IT.

HE IS AN AWARD WINNING JOURNALIST. YOU HAVE ONLY TO CHECK THE LIST TO SEE (INAUDIBLE) 40 EMMYS -- 34 MORE THAN MINE. (LAUGHTER).

AND I CAN TELL YOU HERE, IT IS A SECRET NO LONGER, MY SECRET PASSION FOR TED KOPPEL, FOR HIS PASSIONATE AND HUMANE JOURNALISM, HIS INTEGRITY, AND HIS COURTEOUS BUT PROBING WAY OF ASKING QUESTIONS; THE IMMACULATE USE OF LANGUAGE. AND THERE IS ONE OTHER THING THAT CEMENTED MY AFFECTIONS; WHEN I WAS IN COLLEGE HE WENT TO CHINA. AND (INAUDIBLE) AND I LOVED THIS, AND I REMEMBER IT SO WELL, I CAN DO IT WITH MY EYES CLOSED. YOU ARE A GRAND OLD WALL, YOU ARE A LONGSTANDING WALL -- -- (INAUDIBLE) (LAUGHTER).

MAYBE ONE OF YOU CAN LINE UP AT THE MICROPHONES AFTERWARDS AND ASK HIM TO FINISH THE REST OF IT, AND IF HE CAN'T, I SURELY CAN.

TED KOPPEL WAS MENTIONED IN A SIMPSON'S EPISODE. HOMER WAKES UP AND SAYS I THINK I HATE TED KOPPEL -- NO, I FIND HIM WITTY AND INFORMATIVE. MR. KOPPEL. WE SECOND THAT.

TED KOPPEL: WELL, WE MIGHT AS WELL GET THE SERIOUS STUFF OUT OF THE WAY FIRST. THE ENTIRE STORY IS THIS; IN 1972, WHEN RICHARD NIXON, AND WE HAD JUST PASSED THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF RICHARD NIXON'S TRIP TO CHINA. AND WHEN HE WENT OUT TO THE GREAT WALL THERE WAS WHAT WE IN OUR BUSINESS CALL A POOL. IN OTHER WORDS, WHEN YOU CAN'T HAVE ALL OF THE REPORTERS THERE, YOU SEND HALF A DOZEN REPORTERS REPRESENTING NEWSPAPERS, TELEVISION,

PHOTOGRAPHERS, AND ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THAT POOL WAS MY COLLEAGUE WHO WALKED UP TO PRESIDENT NIXON AT THE WALL, SHOVED A MICROPHONE IN HIS FACE AND SAID MR. PRESIDENT, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE WALL? (LAUGHTER).

AND PRESIDENT NIXON, WHO REALLY WAS A VERY SMART FELLA, BUT NOT LONG ON SMALL TALK (LAUGHTER) SAID, WELL, ONE CAN ONLY SAY UPON LOOKING AT THIS WALL THAT THIS IS TRULY A GREAT WALL. (LAUGHTER).

AND SO ON THE PLANE FROM BEIJING DOWN TO SHANGHAI, I SAT THERE THINKING SOMEBODY COULD HAVE DONE BETTER (LAUGHTER). AND SO I WROTE THAT SONG. AND SINCE YOU WERE KIND ENOUGH TO RAISE THE SUBJECT, SINCE YOU WERE INDELICATE ENOUGH TO RAISE THE SUBJECT (LAUGHTER), I AM GOING TO SING IT FOR YOU NOW. (APPLAUSE).

IT GOES SOMETHING LIKE THIS; IN FACT IT GOES EXACTLY LIKE THIS. IT IS A GRAND OLD WALL, IT IS A LONGSTANDING WALL WHEN SURPRISE FOR ITS SIZE AND ITS AGE. IT DID JUST REWARDS TO THE MONGOL WHORES, DROVE THE COOLOTS (PHONETIC) AWAY IN A RANGE. FROM BEIJING TO THE SEAS, IT HAS SAVED THE CHINESE TO THE DAYS OF THE (INAUDIBLE) FROM MING TO HAN AND ON AND ON. WITH A GREAT WALL YOU CAN'T GO WRONG. (APPLAUSE).

WELL, JUDEA, THERE GOES THE TONE OF THE EVENING. (LAUGHTER). I MAY AS WELL TELL YOU THAT JUDEA AND I HAD A DEAL, WHICH HE WAS DELICATE ENOUGH NOT TO MENTION, BUT I WILL, JUST IN CASE ONE OR TWO OF YOU MAY HAVE BEEN AT THE USC CONVENTION YESTERDAY.

I SAID FINE, I WILL COME, I WILL BE PROUD TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EVENING, BUT I KNOW HOW LONG IT TAKES ME TO WRITE A NEW SPEECH. AND I CAN'T WRITE A NEW SPEECH, SO I WILL GIVE YOU NOT IDENTICAL, BUT

MOST OF THE USC SPEECH. AND THEN I AM GOING TO TALK A LITTLE MORE INFORMALLY ABOUT OUR INDUSTRY, PATT'S AND MINE, AND DANIEL'S. AND THEN WE WILL ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE. WE WILL TALK TO ONE ANOTHER.

AMONG OTHER THINGS, SINCE I AM AT UCLA, I MUST POINT OUT YESTERDAY, I BORROWED A LINE THAT JACK KENNEDY USED ON THE OCCASION OF RECEIVING AN HONORARY DOCTORATE AT YALE. AND SINCE MY WIFE GRACE AND I MET AT STANFORD, OH, 47 YEARS AGO -- LONG TIME, I USED THAT LINE AT USC YESTERDAY SAYING THAT I THOUGHT I NOW HAD THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS. I HAD A DEGREE FROM USC, AND AN EDUCATION FROM STANFORD (LAUGHTER). (APPLAUSE).

ONE OTHER QUICK STORY I WANT TO TELL YOU, YEARS AGO THE LATE JAMES MICHENER RECEIVED A PHONE CALL AND THE CALLER SAID, MR. MICHENER, AND HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF AND IDENTIFIED THE ORGANIZATION HE REPRESENTED. HE SAID WE WOULD LIKE TO HONOR YOU WITH OUR ANNUAL PRIZE FOR THE GREATEST LIVING AMERICAN AUTHOR. AND MICHENER EXCUSED HIMSELF FOR A MOMENT AND WENT TO CHECK HIS SCHEDULE, AND CAME BACK A MINUTE OR TWO LATER. BUT SAID I AM VERY SORRY, I ALREADY HAVE A PREEXISTING ENGAGEMENT ON THAT EVENING. AND THERE WAS A LONG PAUSE. AND THEN THE CALLER SAID, WELL, CAN YOU THINK OF ANOTHER GREATEST LIVING AUTHOR? (LAUGHTER).

AND MICHENER SAID SURE, WHAT ABOUT MALER, OR (INAUDIBLE)? NO. THE CALLER SAID NO, WE ALREADY TRIED THEM. (LAUGHTER).

SO RUTH, JUDEA, I DON'T KNOW WHO TURNED YOU DOWN FIRST, BUT HERE I AM. (LAUGHTER).

A FRIEND OF MY DAUGHTER HAS WRITTEN A BOOK, IT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN A FEW MONTHS, AND I PREDICT THAT IT WILL GET A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION. THE AUTHOR RECEIVED A HEART TRANSPLANT ALMOST 20

YEARS AGO. SHE MAY IN FACT BE TODAY THE LONGEST SURVIVING HEART TRANSPLANT PATIENT IN THE COUNTRY. MEDICINE'S MIRACULOUS GIFT TO A YOUNG WOMAN WHO WOULD HAVE DIED WELL BEFORE HER 25TH BIRTHDAY.

YOU KNOW HOW AUTHORS LIKE TO PICK A QUOTE OR TWO THAT THEY SLIP IN AFTER THE TITLE PAGE? AMY CHOSE A QUOTE FROM THE OLD (INAUDIBLE) HE TOO WAS A JOURNALIST. AND A GREAT ONE, A SATIRIST, AND A SOCIAL CRITIC OF GREAT REKNOWN MORE THAN 60 YEARS AGO. HE WAS ALSO SOMETHING OF A MISANTHROPE. AS LONG AS YOU WERE NOT THE TARGET, IT WAS FUNNY AS HELL. HE WROTE IT TAKES SO LITTLE TO MAKE LIFE UNBEARABLE, A PEBBLE IN THE SHOE, A COCKROACH IN THE SPAGHETTI, A WOMAN'S LAUGH. (LAUGHTER).

A LITTLE BIT OFF KEY, ISN'T IT? BUT I THOUGHT THAT I HAD JUST SAID THAT THAT WAS A BOOK BY A WOMAN WHO'S LIFE THIS PAST 18 YEARS WAS MEDICINE'S GIFT, A BLESSING OF SCIENCE. I DID SAY THE PART ABOUT MEDICINE'S GIFT, YOU CAN DESCRIBE IT AS MIRACULOUS, BUT THAT WAS MY ADJECTIVE. AMY WOULD DISAGREE. HERS HAS BEEN SUCH A DIFFICULT AND PAINFUL LIFE. SO DIFFICULT AND PAINFUL, SHE HAS CONSIDERED SUICIDE MORE THAN ONCE.

IF A PEBBLE IN THE SHOE CAN MAKE LIFE UNBEARABLE, A SUCCESSFUL HEART TRANSPLANT IT TURNS OUT CAN BE INFINITELY HARDER TO BEAR. IT TAKES SO LONG, WE LIVE AFTER ALL IN AN AGE OF INSTANT COMMUNICATION AND DWINDLING PATIENCE. PERHAPS BECAUSE WE LEARN OF EVERYTHING SO QUICKLY, IT IS ONLY THE RAREST OF TRAGEDIES THAT ENGAGES OUR ATTENTION OVER TIME.

THAT'S WHAT MADE THE RECENT SCANDAL AT REED HOSPITAL POSSIBLE. WE LIKE TO CELEBRATE QUICKLY AND GET ON WITH OUR LIVES, EVEN IF OUR HEROES CANNOT GET ON WITH THEIRS.

SO THE DEGREE THAT WE LINGER OVER A DISASTER -- (INAUDIBLE) THINK ANNA NICHOLE SMITH.

DANIEL'S STORY? YESTERDAY'S NEWS. TO BE FRANKLY BLUNT WITH YOU, I DIDN'T WANT TO DO THIS SPEECH. I PUT DANIEL PEARL BEHIND ME. HIS MOTHER AND FATHER OF COURSE, HAVEN'T, COULDN'T. AND JUDEA HAS BEEN ASKING ME TO COME HERE AND TAKE PART IN THIS EVENING, WHAT IS IT NOW? 2 OR 3 YEARS? 3. I JUST DIDN'T FEEL I COULD TURN HIM DOWN AGAIN. IT TAKES SO LITTLE TO MAKE LIFE UNBEARABLE; PEBBLE IN THE SHOE.

WHERE DOES THE MURDER OF A SON FIT ON THAT SCALE? WHAT OBLIGATION DO WE HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE IF NOT ABSORB EVEN THE TINIEST FRACTION OF ANOTHER PERSON'S PAIN?

MOST PEOPLE, IT TURNS OUT HAVE AN ALMOST INFINITE CAPACITY TO TOLERATE OTHER PEOPLE'S SUFFERING. AS LONG AS IT DOES NOT INTRUDE TOO MUCH ON THEIR OWN LIFE. THE PEBBLE IN MY SHOE INEVITABLY WEIGHS MORE ON THE UNBEARABILITY SCALE THAN HER DIVORCE OR HER CANCER.

THE MILLIONS OF WAR DEAD INCOMPARABLE. MY PEBBLE TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER FAMINE, EPIDEMICS, AND A WIDE VARIETY OF NATURAL DISASTERS, GIVEN ONLY THAT THEY ARE NOT HAPPENING IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD. INDEED, WE HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO VIEW DISASTER THROUGH THE WRONG END OF AN EMOTIONAL TELESCOPE. WE SHOWED OUR SOLIDARITY WITH NEW YORKERS BY T SHIRTS, AND HURRICANE KATRINA, BY JAZZ FEST.

WE RAISED SOME BILLIONS OF DOLLARS, WITH INSTITUTIONAL EMPATHY GENERATED ON AMERICAN IDOL. THE LATE GEORGE BURNS WAS ONCE ASKED THE SECRET OF GREAT COMEDY. THE SECRET OF GREAT COMEDY HE SAID IS SINCERITY. IF YOU CAN FAKE THAT YOU HAVE GOT IT MADE. (LAUGHTER).

WE AMERICANS HAVE BECOME SPECIALISTS IN PATRIOTISM OF FLAGS PASTED TO OUR LAPELS. WE PERMIT OURSELVES TO BE ROUSED TO THE HEIGHTS OF RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION OR THE SPECTACLE OF SOMEONE

BURNING THE AMERICAN FLAG, FORGETTING THAT YOU CAN SAFEGUARD FREEDOM EVEN IF YOU VIOLATE THE SYMBOL. THE DANGER LIES IN SAFEGUARDING THE SYMBOL ONLY TO VIOLATE THE FREEDOM IT REPRESENTS.

THE WAR ON TERROR, A LEGITIMATE CAMPAIGN. THE THREAT IS REAL. THE DANGER THAT SOME DAY TERRORISTS MAY USE A BIOLOGICAL CHEMICAL OR A NUCLEAR DEVICE IS UNAMBIGUOUS. BUT EVEN AS THAT DANGER WAS USED TO JUSTIFY THE INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN AND THEN IRAQ, AMERICANS WERE ENCOURAGED TO GO ON WITH THEIR NORMAL LIVES, PUT IT BEHIND US.

THERE ARE I AM SURE AMONG YOU SOME PEOPLE THAT HAVE FAMILY MEMBERS AND CLOSE PERSONAL FRIENDS SERVING IN AFGHANISTAN OR IRAQ. FOR YOU, THE WAR IS A DAILY REALITY. THE ACTUAL BURDEN OF THAT WAR WAS BORN OF THE 170 THOUSAND MEN AND WOMEN IN COMBAT. BUT THE REST OF US, WE PAY NO ADDITIONAL TAXES TO FUND THE WAR. WE SUFFER NO PERSONAL DEPRIVATION -- WE ARE IN A NATION IN DEEP DENIAL WHILE OUR MILITARY IS BEING DEPLETED AND EXHAUSTED. SYMBOLS ARE IMPORTANT, BUT ONLY WHEN THEY REFLECT REALITY.

THE REALITY OF AMERICA TODAY IS AN ADMINISTRATION THAT PROCLAIMS A COMMITMENT TO FREEDOM AND THE CONSTITUTION, EVEN THOUGH IT WHITTLES AWAY AT BOTH. WITHOUT EVER ACKNOWLEDGING THE COST OF THE REGION.

THE REALITY OF AMERICA TODAY IS AN ADMINISTRATION THAT CONSIDERS POLITICAL LOYALTY TO THE PRESIDENT, AN ADEQUATE SUBSTITUTE FOR EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCE.

THE REALITY OF AMERICA TODAY IS A POLITICAL SYSTEM SO HEAVILY MORTGAGED TO SPECIAL INTERESTS, SO DEPENDENT UPON HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN CONTRIBUTIONS THAT THE ACTUAL INTERESTS

OF THE OFTEN (INAUDIBLE) AMERICAN PUBLIC ARE LOST IN THE SHUFFLE.

THE REALITY OF AMERICA TODAY IS 47 MILLION PEOPLE WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE, 2 MILLION MEN AND WOMEN IN PRISON, MOST OF THEM FOR DRUG RELATED CRIMES. THE REALITY OF AMERICA TODAY IS A BUSINESS COMMUNITY SO INTOXICATED BY STOCK PRICES AND DOW JONES INDUSTRIAL AVERAGE.

AND LET US NOT FORGET OUR COLLEAGUES.

WHO MAKES UP THE MEDIA? WE ARE MORE DIVERSE, MORE FRAGMENTED THAN WE HAVE EVER BEEN. THE TOOLS OF OUR TRADE, THE MICROPHONES, CAMERAS, MINTING PRESSES ARE BY VIRTUE OF THE INTERNET MORE ACCESSIBLE THAN EVER BEFORE. EVERYONE AND ANYONE CAN COMMUNICATE TO THE WORLD. ALTHOUGH MUCH OF WHAT IS COMMUNICATED ON THE INTERNET UNDERGOES VERY LITTLE EDITING. AND IN SOME CASES NO EDITING AT ALL. FACT AND FICTION, TRUTH AND LIES, LIBEL AND SLANDER, ALL BUT UNCONTROLLABLE. THAT THE INTERNET DESIGNED LONG AGO TO SURVIVE A NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST IS MEANT TO BE UNCONTROLLABLE.

THE NEWS MAGAZINES AND JOURNALISTS HAVE BEEN LARGELY ABSORBED MEGA CORPORATIONS WHOSE INTERESTS, I MENTIONED EARLIER; DOW JONES, QUARTERLY EARNINGS -- AND YET EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, I ATTEND AN AWARDS CEREMONY FOR AN ASPECT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY. AND IT NEVER FAILS, I AM BLOWN AWAY BY THE EXCELLENCE AND SHEER BRILLIANCE OF MANY OF THE ENTRIES. BUSINESSMEN AND WOMEN WHO SWIM AGAINST THE TIDE CREATE NEW PRODUCTS WHO PUT THE INTERESTS OF THEIR WORKERS AND CUSTOMERS AT LEAST AHEAD OF THEIR OWN IF NOT EQUAL TO THEIR OWN.

BECAUSE I AM A JOURNALIST, I HAVE ACCESS TO PEOPLE I WOULD OTHERWISE NEVER MEET. JUSTICES OF THE U.S. SUPREME COURT, PROFOUNDLY CARING PEOPLE.

CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS, HARD WORKING MEN AND WOMEN DEDICATED TO THE WELFARE OF THEIR CONSTITUENTS.

I HAVE COVERED MORE THAN A DOZEN WARS. I HAVE SPENT MORE TIME THAN MY FAMILY WAS MEANT TO ENDURE IN COMBAT WITH AMERICAN TROOPS.

THIS MILITARY NOW, BATTERED AND BRUISED, STRESSED AND OVERTAXED AS IT IS, THE BEST I HAVE EVER SEEN. THE MID LEVEL OFFICERS IN GENERAL, CAPTAINS, MAJORS, LIEUTENANTS, TRULY FIRST CLASS.

SO WHAT IS HAPPENING? ON AVERAGE, AMERICA IS IN DEEP TROUBLE, OUR IMAGE AROUND THE WORLD IS MORE TARNISHED THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN. A POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM SUFFERING FROM MEETING QUARTERLY EARNINGS' PROJECTIONS. OUR HEALTH SYSTEMS BUCKLING UNDER MEDIOCRE (INAUDIBLE). ON AVERAGE, THINGS ARE NOT GOOD. BUT REMEMBER WHAT MARK TWAIN SAID ABOUT AVERAGES; TAKE A MAN AND PUT ONE OF HIS FEET IN BOILING WATER AND THE OTHER IN ICE. AND ON AVERAGE, HE IS COMFORTABLE. (LAUGHTER).

AND SO WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO DO IN A LESS FORMAL FASHION IS JUST FOR A FEW MINUTES IS TO REFLECT ON MY OWN INDUSTRY. AND WHAT HAPPENS HAPPENED TO IT IN THE -- AS I SAID, ALMOST 50 YEARS SINCE I FIRST JOINED ABC. WELL, I JOINED ABC BACK IN 1963. SO COMING UP ON 45 YEARS.

WHEN I FIRST JOINED ABC, WHEN I WENT TO VIETNAM IN THE MID 1960S, WE STILL USED FILM IN THOSE DAYS. WHERE WE SHOT A STORY OUT IN THE FIELD, WE WOULD TAKE THAT STORY, I WOULD DO A NARRATION ON ANOTHER PIECE OF FILM, WE WOULD PUT IT ALL IN A SACK, HAND IT TO SOME MARINE THAT WAS HEADED FROM (INAUDIBLE) TO SAIGON. AND IN SAIGON, I WOULD HAVE ONE OF MY COLLEAGUES MEET THE PACKAGE, AND THEY WOULD HOLD IT OVER NIGHT. BECAUSE THERE WEREN'T ANY FLIGHTS GOING OUT IN THE AFTERNOON.

AND THE NEXT MORNING PUT IT ON A FLIGHT TO TOKYO, AND THEN TRANSFERRED HERE TO LOS ANGELES. AND A MOTORCYCLE COURIER WOULD PICK IT UP AT THE AIRPORT, TAKE IT IN TO ABC, AND AT ABC, THE FILM WOULD BE PROCESSED. AND THAT WOULD TAKE 2 OR 3 HOURS. AND AFTER IT WAS PROCESSED, IT WOULD BE EDITED. AND ONLY AFTER IT WAS EDITED COULD IT BE PUT ON THE AIR. TIME LAPSE BETWEEN THE TIME THAT WE SHOT THE STORY, WROTE THE STORY, NARRATED THE STORY, AND THE TIME IT WENT ON THE AIR, 2 AND A HALF TO 3 DAYS.

WHEN YOU ARE WRITING A STORY THAT ISN'T GOING TO BE SEEN OR HEARD FOR 2 AND A HALF, 3 DAYS, YOU FIND YOURSELF LOOKING FOR CONTENT. YOU FIND YOURSELF LOOKING FOR A LITTLE MORE SUBSTANCE. SOMETHING THAT WILL GIVE THAT STORY AN IMPORTANCE THAT IS GOING TO SURVIVE EVEN THAT RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME.

4 YEARS AGO WHEN MY COLLEAGUE AND I EMBEDDED WITH THE THIRD INFANTRY DIVISION IN IRAQ, WE CARRIED WITH US THE CAPACITY TO BROADCAST INSTANTANEOUS, LIVE. THAT IS THE WAY IT IS THESE DAYS. THE AMOUNT OF TIME THAT ELAPSED FROM THE COVERAGE OF THE STORY TO THE TIME YOU BACK HERE IN THE UNITED STATES WOULD SEE IT, 2 AND A HALF SECONDS. THE TIME THAT IT TAKES THAT ELECTRONIC SIGNAL TO MAKE IT UP TO THE SATELLITE AND THEN BACK UP AGAIN TO A RECEIVING STATION OUT TO ALL OF THE HOMES IN AMERICA, THE TECHNOLOGY HAS CHANGED. BUT SO HAVE THE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES. THEY HAVE CHANGED IN THE NEWSPAPER BUSINESS, AND SURELY CHANGED IN OURS.

I WANT TO TAKE YOU BACK THE DAY THAT THAT CHANGE FIRST BEGAN. IT WAS BACK IN 1968, IT WAS A HELL OF A YEAR. SOME OF YOU HERE WILL REMEMBER THAT, WHO ARE AS OLD AS I AM.

THAT WAS THE YEAR WHEN LYNDON JOHNSON DECIDED NOT TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT. THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT BOBBY KENNEDY WAS SHOT AND KILLED HERE IN LOS ANGELES. THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS KILLED, LEADING TO OUTRAGE IN THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY AROUND THE COUNTRY. RIOTS THROUGHOUT AMERICA. THAT WAS THE YEAR OF THE RIOTS IN CHICAGO DURING THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION, IF YOU REMEMBER THAT.

SO IT IS PROBABLY NOT TOO EXCITING THAT THE EVENT I WILL REFER TO NOW DOESN'T LOOM LARGE IN YOUR MEMORY. 1968 WAS THE YEAR THAT A NEW TELEVISION PROGRAM WAS LAUNCHED. IT WAS SOMETHING ENTIRELY NEW, NOTHING LIKE IT HAD EVER BEEN ON THE AIR BEFORE. IT WAS A TELEVISION NEWS MAGAZINE CALLED 60 MINUTES. THE FIRST YEAR OR TWO, NOTHING MUCH HAPPENED. IT DID, IT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS. BUT AFTER 2 OR 3 YEARS, IT BEGAN TO DO SOMETHING THAT NO TELEVISION NEWS PROGRAM HAD EVER DONE IN THE HISTORY OF THE INDUSTRY, IT TURNED A PROFIT.

(LAUGHTER).

IT MADE MONEY.

NOW THAT WAS PROBABLY THE WORST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO OUR INDUSTRY. (LAUGHTER). BECAUSE WHEN THE FOLKS OVER AT ABC AND NBC SAW THAT THE PEOPLE AT CBS WERE MAKING MONEY ON A NEWS PROGRAM, THEY TURNED TO THEIR NEWS DIVISIONS AND SAID WHY THE HELL CAN'T YOU DO THAT? SO 60 MINUTES BEGAT 20/20. AND 20/20 BEGAT PRIMETIME LIVE. AND THAT BEGAT DATELINE. THERE WAS A BIBLICAL SPREE OF BEGAT (LAUGHTER) THAT WENT ON IN OUR INDUSTRY.

AND AS CABLE -- AS CABLE CAME INTO OUR INDUSTRY, AND SATELLITE TELEVISION, AS THE 3 NETWORKS WITH WHICH I GREW UP FRAGMENTED AND EXPANDED INTO 30 OUTLETS, 50 OUTLETS. AS THE

INTERNET CAME ON LINE, WE FOUND THAT WE HAD FEWER AND FEWER VIEWERS.

AND YET THE DEMANDS WERE JUST AS EXPENSIVE AS THEY HAD EVER BEEN, IN FACT THE NEW TECHNOLOGY MADE IT MORE EXPENSIVE. SO WE STARTED TURNING TO THOSE MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE WHO BROUGHT IN THE MOST MONEY. IT GRIEVES ME TO SAY THAT THERE ARE VERY FEW OF THEM HERE IN THE AUDIENCE TONIGHT, THEY FALL INTO THE OH ROUGHLY, 18 TO 25 DEMOGRAPHIC.

IF YOU ARE AN ADVERTISER IN TELEVISION TODAY, YOU WILL PAY 3 TO 5 TIMES AS MUCH MONEY FOR A COMMERCIAL ON A PROGRAM THAT REACHES THAT DEMOGRAPHIC, THE 18 TO 25, 30 YEAR OLD DEMOGRAPHIC AS YOU WILL FOR A PROGRAM THAT DELIVERS TO PEOPLE OF THE AGE OVER 50. LET ME SAY THAT AGAIN; THREE TO FIVE TIMES AS MUCH MONEY.

SO WITH THE NETWORKS FACING THE KIND OF COMPETITION THEY ARE FACING TODAY, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS HAPPENING? THEY ARE LOOKING FOR MORE AND MORE OF THAT YOUNGER DEMOGRAPHIC. THE REASON I LEFT ABC A YEAR AND A HALF AGO IS VERY SIMPLE, WE WERE COMING UNDER MORE AND MORE PRESSURE THAT WOULD APPEAL TO THE YOUNGER DEMOGRAPHIC. AND THE ASSUMPTION WAS NEVER THE ASSUMPTION THAT I AND MY COLLEAGUES HAD. WE FELT WE COULD ALSO REACH YOUNG PEOPLE BY TREATING THEM WITH INTELLIGENCE. BY TREATING THEIR INTELLIGENCE WITH RESPECT.

THAT IS NOT THE WAY THE INDUSTRY FEELS. THEY FEEL UNLESS YOU GIVE THEM LIGHTER, FROTHIER MATERIAL, THEY WILL NOT WATCH THE PROGRAM. SO BY THE TIME YOU PUT THOSE 2 THINGS TOGETHER, THE NEW TECHNOLOGY WHICH HAS SPEEDED UP THE PROCESS, AND THE NEW ECONOMY WHICH REQUIRES THAT WE TURN TO THAT YOUNGER DEMOGRAPHIC, YOU HAVE THE WHOLE APPROACH TO THAT JOURNALISM, FOCUSING DOWN MARKET. AND THAT I AM AFRAID IS ALSO REFLECTED IN

OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM. IT IS REFLECTED IN THE AMOUNT OF MONEY THAT IS SPENT -- FIRST OF ALL, TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT ALL OF YOU WANT. LEADERSHIP HAS TURNED INTO, MAYBE PATT, YOU WILL REMEMBER THE QUOTE -- YOU SEEM TO REMEMBER THINGS EXTREMELY WELL. THERE IS THIS WONDERFUL QUOTE FROM CHURCHILL, WHICH HE SAYS SOMETHING LIKE THE MAN WHO IS DOWN ON HIS KNEES WITH HIS EAR TO THE GROUND AND HIS FINGER IN THE AIR IS HARDLY IN A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP. (LAUGHTER).

SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

THAT'S WHERE OUR LEADERS ARE TODAY. THEY ALL HAVE THEIR REAR ENDS STICKING IN THE AIR AND THEIR EAR TO THE GROUND AND THEIR FINGER IN THE AIR. THEY ARE DOING POLLS, AND TESTING. AND THEY HAVE GROUPS THAT ARE TESTING TO FIND OUT WHAT IT IS THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WANTS TO HEAR. AND THEN TURNS AROUND AND TRIES TO GIVE IT TO THEM.

IT WOULDN'T BE THAT BAD IF IT REALLY TRIED TO GIVE "IT" TO THEM. WHAT IT TRIES TO GIVE IS THE IMPRESSION OF THE WILLINGNESS TO GIVE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WHAT IT WANTS.

FOR A BUSINESSMAN TODAY TO COME UP WITH A 5-YEAR-PLAN THAT MIGHT REQUIRE SOME LOSSES OVER THE FIRST YEAR OR TWO, BUT LEAD TO A GENUINE EXPANSION OF THE INDUSTRY 3 YEARS DOWN THE ROAD, 4 YEARS DOWN THE ROAD, WHAT BOARD? WHAT SHAREHOLDERS HAVE THE PATIENCE TO ENDURE THAT TODAY?

SO I MUST CONFESS, AND WE CAN USE THIS AS OUR TRANSITION INTO YOUR QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS. WHEN I SAY COMMENTS, LET ME BE (LAUGHTER) EVEN IF I WERE PREPARED TO PUT UP WITH SPEECHES ON YOUR PART, PAT WOULDN'T (LAUGHTER). SHE AS I UNDERSTAND, UNDERNEATH THAT CHARMING EXTERIOR, A TRULY VICIOUS

WOMAN WHO WILL CUT YOU OFF WITHOUT ANY REGARD TO YOUR WHITE HAIR (LAUGHTER).

WE HAVE A MICROPHONE HERE, AND A MICROPHONE THERE, WE CAN ALSO, IF YOU ARE INCAPABLE OF MOVING, I THINK WE HAVE A MOVEABLE MICROPHONE AND CAN BRING THAT TO YOU. AND AS ONE OTHER ASPECT OF THIS THAT I WOULD LIKE TO RAISE FOR YOU, AND THAT IS IF I HAVE SAID ANYTHING TO TICK YOU OFF, PLEASE DON'T GULP IT DOWN, LET ME KNOW. I HAVE NO TROUBLE AT ALL WITH RECEIVING INVECTIVE ON YOUR PART. I WILL BE OUT OF HERE TONIGHT ANYWAY. (LAUGHTER).

MALE: BUT I WON'T.

TED KOPPEL: TRUE.

>> WHAT DO YOU THINK OF NIGHTLINE SINCE YOU LEFT?

TED KOPPEL: HONESTLY, I DON'T WATCH IT VERY OFTEN. (LAUGHTER). (APPLAUSE).

>> I KNOW YOU SAID ON YOUR LAST NIGHT THERE, GIVE THEM A CHANCE.

TED KOPPEL: I STILL FEEL THAT, LOOK, FROM THE TIME I HAVE SEEN IT, I STILL HAVE A LOT OF FRIENDS WHO WORK ON THE PROGRAM. AND THEY ARE GOOD, COMMITTED JOURNALISTS, BUT THEY ARE NOW DOING WHAT MY COLLEAGUES AND I WHO LEFT TO GO AND DO SOMETHING ELSE AT DISCOVERY REFUSED TO DO, AND THAT IS BRING IT DOWN TO A SOMEWHAT LIGHTER, FROTHIER LEVEL.

AND YOU SEE WHAT HAS HAPPENED AT NIGHTLINE IS THE NOTION THAT THE AMERICAN TELEVISION VIEWING AUDIENCE IS PREPARED TO PUT UP WITH HALF AN HOUR, IT REALLY NEVER WAS A HALF HOUR. IT WAS 22 MINUTES BY THE TIME YOU TOOK THE COMMERCIALS OUT. BUT THE NOTION THAT YOU HAVE AN ATTENTION SPAN THAT LASTS FOR 22 WHOLE MINUTES, AND WE COULD SPEND 22

MINUTES ON ONE SUBJECT DOWN THE DRAIN. YOU KNOW, THEY DO 3 OR 4 OR 5 STORIES.

AND YOU KNOW, THEY STILL DO THEM VERY WELL. AND YOU KNOW, SOME OF THE STORIES TO WHEN THEY DEVOTE 6 OR 7 MINUTES, THAT IS STILL 4 MINUTES LONGER THAN YOU WILL GET ON THE EVENING NEWS.

SIT THERE, IF YOU WANT TO HAVE SOME FUN ONE NIGHT. DOESN'T MATTER, CBS, NBC, ABC, WATCH ONE OF THEIR IN DEPTH STORIES (LAUGHTER). INSTEAD OF A MINUTE 15, IT WILL GO A MINUTE 37, OR A MINUTE 40.

FEMALE: MICROWAVE DINNERS TAKE LONGER.

TED KOPPEL: TASTES BETTER. (LAUGHTER). SO IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY, REFER BACK TO WHAT I SAID AT THE END, THAT IS WHY. THE INDUSTRY -- LOOK, WHEN I FIRST JOINED ABC IN 1963, I THINK THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE NEWS DIVISION WAS PROBABLY AROUND 10 MILLION DOLLARS. YOU CAN'T GET KATIE COURIC FOR 10 MILLION DOLLARS NOW.

THESE DAYS THE BUDGET FOR ONE OF THE MAJOR NEWS -- ANNUAL BUDGET, SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 750 TO A MILLION TO A BILLION DOLLARS.

THEY HAVE TO MAKE THAT MONEY BACK. THEY ARE EXPECTED TO TURN A PROFIT. I RAMBLED ON, DOES THAT PRETTY MUCH ANSWER YOUR QUESTION?

>> THAT'S GREAT, MAYBE THE LAST THING I SAY, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT THE STATE OF NEWSPAPERS?

TED KOPPEL: NO. (LAUGHTER).

PATT MORRISON: WE ARE GOING TO GO BACK AND FORTH. AND I WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU CAN HEAR THE QUESTIONS.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR COMING, I AM ABOUT TO GRADUATE IN A COUPLE OF MONTHS, AND WHEN I THINK BACK TO THE EVENTS THAT HAVE DEFINED MY COLLEGE CAREER, THEY ARE FAIRLY VIOLENT EVENTS. VIRGINIA

TECH, THE WAR IN IRAQ, ALL OF THE CASUALTY MEMBERS OF IRAQ COMPARED TO VIETNAM. SEEMS PRETTY VIOLENT.

AND I AM WONDERING HOW YOU AS A REPORTER CONTEXTUALIZE WHAT IS GOING ON TODAY IN TERMS OF HISTORY OR BIAS IN AMERICA? IS THIS AN AMERICAN THING GOING ON? DO I HAVE MORE TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN LIFE?

TED KOPPEL: THE GOOD THING IS IT IS NOT AN AMERICAN THING. AND YES YOU HAVE A LOT MORE TO LOOK FORWARD TO.

YOU WERE BORN IN A CENTURY -- I WAS BORN MUCH EARLIER IN THAT CENTURY, WHICH PROBABLY SAW THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE RAISED HIGHER AND TO A GREATER LEVEL OF BRUTALITY THAN THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE HISTORY OF MAN. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN GREATER CRUELTY'S BUT NEVER A TIME WHEN GREATER VIOLENCE OR MORE PEOPLE WERE MURDERED.

WHETHER WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE 6 MILLION WHO DIED IN THE HOLOCAUST. OR WHETHER WE ARE TALKING -- I HAVE NEVER SEEN DIFINITIVE FIGURES, BUT HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE KILLED IN STALIN'S SOVIET UNION? OR MAU'S REVOLUTION AND THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD? 30 MILLION? 50 MILLION? AFTER A WHILE, IT DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE ANYMORE, DOES IT? THE MIND IS INCAPABLE OF ABSORBING ALL OF THAT.

SO AS TERRIBLE AS THE EVENTS ARE THAT YOU REFERENCED, AS TERRIBLE AS A SINGLE EVENT IS THAT HAS BROUGHT US HERE TODAY, IF YOU ARE UNDER THE ILLUSION THAT YOU ARE LIVING IN A MORE VIOLENT TIME THAN YOUR PREDECESSORS, READ A LITTLE MORE HISTORY.

>> NO, I WAS WONDERING A LITTLE MORE HOW YOU CONTEXTUALIZE THE VIOLENCE THAT IS GOING ON NOW IN TERMS OF -- SO YOU TAKE AN INCIDENT LIKE VIRGINIA TECH, YOU HAVE THE SCHOOL SHOOTINGS, COLUMBINE --

TED KOPPEL: LOOK. FORGIVE ME IF I AM NOT GOING TO FOCUS ON COLUMBINE, AND I AM NOT GOING FOCUS ON VIRGINIA TECH. AS TERRIBLE AS THOSE EVENTS WERE, THERE ARE GREATER TRAGEDIES THAT ARE GOING ON IN THE WORLD TODAY.

LOOK AT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN IRAQ TODAY. WHAT ABSOLUTELY INFURIATES ME ABOUT THE WAR IN IRAQ IS NOT THAT I THINK WE OUGHT TO BE PULLING ALL OF THE TROOPS OUT RIGHT AWAY, THAT WOULD BE A DISASTER. WE CLEARLY DID NOT GO IN THERE FOR THE RIGHT REASONS IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE REASONS THAT WERE CITED TO BEGIN WITH TURNED OUT NOT TO BE TRUE. BUT THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, IF THERE IS ONE THING ABOUT AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY, THAT DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS HAVE ADHERED TO OVER THE 55 YEARS IS THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSIAN GULF TO AMERICA'S INTEREST. OIL AND NATURAL GAS.

IF WE WERE TO PULL PRECIPITOUSLY OUT OF IRAQ, AND IF THE FIGHTING IN IRAQ WERE TO SPREAD AS IT VERY WELL MIGHT, INTO EGYPT, JORDAN, SAUDI ARABIA -- IF THAT WERE TO REDUCE THE FLOW OF THE OIL OUT OF THE PERSIAN GULF BY 10 TO 20 PERCENT, THOSE 4 DOLLAR A GALLON PRICE TAGS YOU ARE SEEING NOW FOR GASOLINE, TRY 8 DOLLARS A GALLON, TRY 10 OR 12 DOLLARS A GALLON.

WE HAVE LOST 3 THOUSAND SOME HUNDRED TROOPS IN IRAQ OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS. AND IT IS 3,400 INDIVIDUAL TRAGEDIES FOR THOSE FAMILIES.

WHEN WE BELIEVE THAT OUR NATIONAL INTEREST IS TRULY AT STAKE. AND IT MAY BE IN THIS CASE, WE ARE PREPARED TO LOSE 10'S OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ANNUALLY. GOT THAT? WE LOSE 50 THOUSAND PEOPLE A YEAR ON OUR HIGHWAYS. JUST TRY TELLING THE AMERICAN PUBLIC THAT YOU ARE GOING TO CUT OUT CARS, TRUCKS, MOTORCYCLES, BUSSES, COULDN'T BE DONE.

WE WILLINGLY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT 50 THOUSAND PEOPLE A YEAR ARE GOING TO DIE IN THIS COUNTRY ON OUR HIGHWAYS. BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT IF WE STOP DRIVING, IF WE STOP MOVING OUR GOODS WITH TRUCKS IN THIS COUNTRY, EVERYTHING THAT WE KNOW AND APPRECIATE ABOUT AMERICA WOULD COLLAPSE.

SO THE QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER 3000 DEATHS IN IRAQ ARE TOO MANY. THE QUESTION IS WHY DID WE GET IN THERE IN THE FIRST PLACE? DID WE GET IN THERE BECAUSE OF AMERICAN INTERESTS? ARE THOSE INTERESTS STILL A THREAT? AND IF THE ANSWER TO THOSE QUESTIONS ARE YES, YES, AND YES, THEN WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO LOSE EVEN MORE MEN AND WOMEN.

IF THE ANSWER IS NO, THEN WE DO HAVE TO PULL EVERYBODY OUT. (APPLAUSE).

>> IF I MAY HAVE ABOUT 40 SECONDS, WOULD YOU HEAR ME? YOU LOOK MUCH BETTER, SOUND BETTER IN PERSON. (LAUGHTER).

TED KOPPEL: SO DO YOU FRANKLY. (LAUGHTER).

>> I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD SING, AND SUCH GREAT HUMOR, THANK YOU.

I REGARD YOU AS THE MOST HONORABLE JOURNALIST WITH UTMOST INTEGRITY AND HONESTY. AND YOU TOLD US THE TRUTH, WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH EVER SINCE YOU BECAME A JOURNALIST. AND I WATCH NIGHTLINE SINCE 1979, MY WIFE AND I ALWAYS WATCH IT. ONE OF MY FIRST (INAUDIBLE) THE FORMER PRESIDENT MARCUS (INAUDIBLE) AND YOU ASKED HIM WOULD HUMAN (INAUDIBLE) PHILIPPINES IN MANILA, AND WANTED TO MEET YOU, AND IT WAS NEVER GRANTED. WHY DIDN'T THEY CONTACT ME DIRECTLY ON MY PRIVATE LINE? AND YOU COULDN'T BELIEVE IT? WHAT? PRIVATE LINE?

TED KOPPEL: LISTEN, I HATE TO CUT ANYONE SHORT WHO HAS SO MANY NICE THINGS TO SAY ABOUT ME,

BUT WHAT WE REALLY HAVE TO DO IS GET TO THE QUESTIONS.

>> WHAT I AM ASKING IS WORLD LEADERS, EITHER POLITICAL OR BUSINESS LEADERS SHOULD HAVE INTEGRITY, HONESTY AND HONOR LIKE YOU, SIR, HAVE. AND THEY DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO MEET WITH THE COMMON PEOPLE TO HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY. LIKE LEADERS AND COMMON PEOPLE ARE TOTALLY ISOLATED. THAT IS MY QUESTION TO YOU.

TED KOPPEL: THANK YOU VERY MUCH. THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS I THINK OUR LEADERS SPEND ACTUALLY TOO MUCH TIME NOT MEETING WITH COMMON PEOPLE, BUT AS I SAID BEFORE THROUGH THE FOCUS GROUPS, THROUGH THE POLLS THEY TAKE. OUR LEADERS TODAY ACTUALLY HAVE A MUCH BETTER SENSE OF WHAT PEOPLE AS A WHOLE WANT THAN THEY HAVE EVER HAD.

THE BRILLIANCE OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM. AND THIS IS SO FREQUENTLY OVERLOOKED, IS NOT THAT IT IS A TRUE DEMOCRACY, IT ISN'T. ALTHOUGH WE ARE IN DANGER OF BECOMING A TRUE DEMOCRACY. (LAUGHTER).

LET ME EXPLAIN WHAT I MEAN BY THAT. THE WHOLE NOTION OF THE BREAKDOWN OF HAVING A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WHERE THE MEMBERS ARE ELECTED FOR 2 YEARS, AND A SENATE WHERE THEY ARE ELECTED FOR 6 YEARS, AND A PRESIDENCY AND EXECUTIVE WHO IS ELECTED FOR 4, AND CAN BE FOR 8 YEARS. AND OF COURSE THE OTHER BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT IS PRECISELY TO PROTECT US AGAINST THE WILL OF THE MASSES.

AND WHAT I FEAR MOST IS THAT IF WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGICAL CAPACITY ALREADY. AND BEFORE LONG, WE WILL BE ABLE TO SIT IN OUR LIVING ROOMS OR BEDROOMS WITH SOME REMOTE CONTROL WHERE ON A TELEVISION SCREEN, WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS OUR OPINION ON DO YOU WANT THE SOCIAL

SECURITY BILL TO PASS OR NOT? HIT A BUTTON, AND WITHIN SECONDS, THE PEOPLE ON CAPITAL HILL WILL KNOW 42 MILLION PEOPLE WANT IT TO PASS. AND 43 MILLION PEOPLE DON'T, AND THEY VOTE.

THAT WAS NOT THE WAY THIS GOVERNMENT WAS EVER INTENDED TO RUN, AND IT SHOULDN'T.

SO MY CONCERN IS NOT THAT THE POLITICIANS, PARTICULARLY OUR LEADERS DON'T KNOW WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS, MY CONCERN IS THEY PAY FAR TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO WHAT THE PUBLIC WANTS WITHOUT ANY REGARD TO EXERCISING THE LEADERSHIP THAT THEY WERE ELECTED TO EMPLOY IN THE FIRST PLACE.
(APPLAUSE).

>> AT WHAT POINT DO YOU DRAW -- DOES THE MEDIA DRAW THE LINE ON GETTING A PLATFORM TO LEADERS -- PEOPLE THAT ARE NOT LEADERS OF COUNTRIES, LIKE OSAMA BIN LADEN, ARE WE DOING MORE DAMAGE BY GIVING THEM A PLATFORM TO INCITE VIOLENCE? AND I CAN'T ASK THIS QUESTION WITHOUT BRINGING HITLER INTO THE EQUATION. SHOULD HITLER, IF HE HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN A PLATFORM AS HE WAS, WOULD HE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO AS MUCH DAMAGE?

TED KOPPEL: I AM AFRAID THAT YOU ARE ASKING THAT QUESTION OF A JOURNALIST WHO IS COMMITTED TO A FREE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS. THE PROBLEM I HAVE WITH THE TEMPTING NOTION THAT I SHOULD AGREE WITH THE NOTION OF YOUR IMPLICATION, THE PROBLEM I HAVE WITH THE NOTION THAT NO, WE SHOULD NOT GIVE -- LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY. IF TOMORROW I GET A CALL THAT SAYS IF YOU TED WILL GO SUCH AND SUCH A PLACE IN PAKISTAN, OSAMA WOULD GRANT YOU AN INTERVIEW. WOULD I DO IT? YOU BET YOU, IN A HEART BEAT. MY WIFE WOULD BE THROWING HERSELF IN FRONT OF ME (LAUGHTER). BUT I WOULD GO IN A SECOND.

PATT MORRISON: I GET THE SENSE THAT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE.

TED KOPPEL: HAS HAPPENED MANY TIMES WHERE SHE HAS BEEN MORE LOVING AND GRACIOUS IN THAT REGARD THAN I HAD ANY RIGHT TO EXPECT.

BUT LET ME GIVE YOU MY REASON, THE MINUTE I AGREE WITH THE IMPLICATION OF YOUR QUESTION, THE MINUTE I SAY NO, THAT'S A PERSON WHOSE OPINION WE SHOULD NOT GIVE ANY DISTRIBUTION, THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN YOU AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE TO DECIDE WHO IS GOING TO MAKE THOSE JUDGMENTS.

I MEAN, FORGET ABOUT OSAMA BIN LADEN, LET'S GO DOWN THE NASTINESS SCALE. LET'S SAY IT IS SOME POLITICIAN YOU DON'T LIKE. DON'T GIVE HIM OR HER A PLATFORM POSITION WHICH YOU VEHEMENTLY DISAGREE. SOMEONE IS PROLIFE, AND YOU ARE PROCHOICE. AND YOU ARE THE PRESIDENT OF MY NETWORK. AND YOU SAY I'M SORRY, WE ARE NOT PUTTING ANY PROCHOICE PEOPLE ON THE NETWORK TODAY. I DISAGREE WITH THAT.

I AM AFRAID THAT I -- WELL, I AM NOT AFRAID, I AM VERY PROUD OF THE FACT. AND I THINK YOU SHOULD BE TOO, THAT THE PREMISE OF THIS SYSTEM IS THAT COLLECTIVELY, WE ARE SENSIBLE ENOUGH AND INTELLIGENT ENOUGH THAT WE CAN LISTEN TO ANY KIND OF OUTRAGE BEING EXPRESSED. AND NOT BE HARMED BY IT AS MUCH AS WE WOULD BE HARMED BY LIVING UNDER A SYSTEM WHERE ONE PERSON OR ONE BODY OF PEOPLE DECIDE FOR THE REST OF US WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE AND WHAT IS UNACCEPTABLE. (APPLAUSE).

>> THANK YOU FOR COMING TONIGHT, I REALLY APPRECIATE IT. I WANTED TO -- YOU HAVE SPOKEN A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE DUMBING DOWN OF THE NEWS. I AM A FORMER JOURNALIST, SECOND GENERATION JOURNALIST. (INAUDIBLE) WALTER CRONKITE. I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOUR FEELING IS, IS THE PENDULUM GOING TO SWING BACK? AND ARE WE GOING TO START DOING

NEWS PEOPLE CAN USE IN THEIR DAILY LIFE RATHER THAN ANNA NICHOLE SMITH AND HER BABY? WE DON'T NEED TO KNOW THESE THINGS.

TED KOPPEL: THE PENDULUM IS SWINGING BACK. MISTER AND MRS. (INAUDIBLE) ARE HERE. THEIR SON WORKS AT NPR. I USED TO JOKE AT NIGHTLINE THAT I STOLE SOME OF MY STORIES FROM NPR, I LISTENED FAITHFULLY TO THE MORNING EDITION. AND THESE ARE BRILLIANT PROGRAMS.

THE GREAT NEWS IS. NPR'S LISTENERSHIP HAS BEEN GOING UP AND UP AND UP. AND THERE ARE NOW MORE AND MORE PEOPLE LISTENING TO ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, THE MORNING EDITION, THAN WATCH EITHER THE CBS EVENING NEWS, OR NBC'S NIGHTLY NEWS, OR ABC'S WORLD NEWS (APPLAUSE).

I THINK NOW WE HAVE ROUGHLY 12 OR 13 MILLION PEOPLE FOR EACH OF THOSE PROGRAMS LISTENING EVERY DAY. THAT IS PHENOMENAL. AND THE REASON THEY HAVE BECOME SO SUCCESSFUL IS NOT BECAUSE THEY DO A GREAT JOB AT ADVERTISING, THEY DO A TERRIBLE JOB OF ADVERTISING. BUT WORD OF MOUTH. I CAN BE IN MY CAR AND LISTENING TO THE RADIO, AND THERE IS REALLY INTELLIGENT CONVERSATION GOING ON. AND PEOPLE ARE DOING 4 AND 5 MINUTE LONG PIECES ON IMPORTANT ISSUES.

AND YOU KNOW AT NPR, THEY EVEN HAVE A -- THEY HAVE CD'S THAT THEY PUT OUT, WHICH THEY CALL, I THINK THEY CALL THEM DRIVEWAY MOMENTS. THE DRIVEWAY MOMENTS -- AND IT HAS PROBABLY HAPPENED TO A LOT OF YOU HERE. I AM PULLING INTO MY DRIVEWAY AT HOME, I AM IN THE MIDDLE OF LISTENING TO SOME REPORT THAT I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE EVEN READ THE STORY IF I HAD SEEN IT IN THE NEWSPAPER. BUT I AM SO FASCINATED THAT I SIT THERE AND WAIT IN THE CAR FOR IT TO BE OVER. (APPLAUSE) SAME THING WITH THE (INAUDIBLE) ROBIN

MCNEAL, WHO FOUNDED THAT PROGRAM WITH JIM LAUER, THEY SAY WE ARE THE PROGRAM THAT DARES TO BE DULL.

AND I MUST CONFESS THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I THINK THEY ARE A LITTLE TOO DARING. (LAUGHTER) BUT THEY GIVE YOU SUBSTANCE. AND LOOK, WE STILL HAVE THE CAPACITY TO READ THE L.A. TIMES, THE NEW YORK TIMES, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, THERE IS A LOT OF GOOD STUFF OUT THERE, YOU HAVE TO PICK IT. THE CONSUMER HAS SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECIDING WHAT TO WATCH AND WHAT NOT TO WATCH. AND IF YOU STOPPED WATCHING, I SAY YOU COLLECTIVELY, THE AMERICAN AUDIENCE -- IF THE AMERICAN AUDIENCE DIDN'T WATCH ALL OF THAT TRASH ON ANNA NICHOLE SMITH -- THEY ARE NOT DOING IT BECAUSE THEY THINK IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. THEY ARE DOING IT BECAUSE YOU IDIOTS WATCH IT. NOT YOU IDIOTS, THOSE IDIOTS OUT THERE (LAUGHTER).

>> YOU AND I HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON, THAT NEITHER OF US WATCHES NIGHTLINE VERY MUCH. BUT I WANT TO ASK YOU TO HAVE A FANTASY.

TED KOPPEL: WITH YOU? (LAUGHTER). (APPLAUSE).

>> THE FANTASY -- HERE IS THE FANTASY, YOU BECOME TRANSFORMED AND INSTEAD OF REPORTING, ANALYZING EVENTS, YOU MAKE POLICY. WHAT WOULD YOU DO ABOUT THE HIDEOUS MESS IN IRAQ? YOU HAVE ELUDED TO IT, BUT SUDDENLY, YOU ARE MAKING POLICY, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

TED KOPPEL: THAT'S A FAIR QUESTION.

THE FIRST THING I WOULD DO IS EXPLAIN WHY I THINK WE ARE REALLY THERE. WHICH IS IN 1953, THE PRIME MINISTER OF IRAN WAS A MAN BY THE NAME OF MUHAMMAD MOSEVIC INCURRED THE WRATH OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT -- IRAN -- SORRY, YOU ARE HERE FOR A HISTORIC MOMENT. (LAUGHTER). THIS IS THE FIRST TIME MY WIFE HAS EVER BEEN WRONG. (LAUGHTER). IN 1953, THE BRITISH SECRET AGENCY, THE MI6 CONSPIRED WITH THE

CIA TO OVERTHROW MUHAMMAD MOSEVIC, REPLACING HIM WITH THE YOUNG SHAH, HE BECAME THE MIDDLE AGED SHAH. AND HE WAS USED BY RICHARD NIXON AS WHAT HE CALLED AMERICA'S SURROGATE IN THE PERSIAN GULF.

MANY OF YOU WILL REMEMBER IN THE EARLY 1970S, FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN THE PRICE OF OIL STARTED GOING SKY HIGH WHEN WE HAD THE OIL BOYCOTT BY OPEC, WE RELIED HEAVILY ON THE IRANIANS CONTINUING TO SUPPLY OIL. WE PURCHASED BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF OIL, AND TRIED TO SOP UP THOSE DOLLARS BY SELLING IRAN BILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF HIGH TECH WEAPONRY.

WHEN THE SHAH WAS OVERTHROWN IN 1979 WITH THE RETURN OF THE IOTOLA, WE COULD NO LONGER USE IRAN. WE BUILT MILITARY BASES IN SAUDI ARABIA. NOT BECAUSE WE PARTICULARLY CARED ABOUT THE SAUDI'S, WE CARED ABOUT SAUDI OIL, ABOUT KUWAITI OIL, AND IRANI OIL. AND (INAUDIBLE).

AND THEN WITH THE ARRIVAL OF OSAMA BIN LADEN, THE SAUDI'S BECAME TERRIBLY NERVOUS. AL QAEDA PUT THEM ON NOTICE IN EFFECT THAT THEY MIGHT BE NEXT. THEY PUSHED THE UNITED STATES OUT OF SAUDI ARABIA.

WE BEGAN LOOKING FOR ANOTHER SURROGATE, ANOTHER BASE. THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, AS MANY OF YOU WILL REMEMBER, WE HAD NOTHING IN PRINCIPAL AGAINST SADAM HUSSAIN. SADAM HUSSAIN CARRIED OUT SOME OF HIS WORST KILLINGS IN 1988 IN A PLACE CALLED (INAUDIBLE) THAT'S WHERE HE USED POISONOUS GAS AGAINST IRAQI KURDS. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT COULDN'T HAVE CARED LESS.

THE JOKE IN 2003 WAS THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WAS SAYING WE KNOW THAT SADAM HUSSAIN HAS CHEMICAL WEAPONS, WE STILL HAVE THE RECEIPTS. (LAUGHTER).

A VERY LONG WINDED ALL BE IT BRIEF HISTORY LESSON TO MAKE THE POINT THAT THE IDEA WAS THAT SADAM WOULD BE THE EASIEST GUY TO KNOCK OVER,

BECAUSE HIS MILITARY HAD REALLY BEEN DEPLETED OVER THE YEARS. IRAQ WOULD BE AN EASY PLACE. AND YES, I BELIEVE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WANTED TO BRING DEMOCRACY TO IRAQ. BUT WE DON'T KILL OURSELVES BRINGING DEMOCRACY TO EVERY NASTY COUNTRY AROUND THE WORLD. WE PARTICULARLY CARED ABOUT HAVING A BASE IN THE PERSIAN GULF, AND WE THOUGHT IRAQ WOULD BE THE RIGHT PLACE TO DO IT.

NOW, IF THAT PREMISE IS CORRECT, AND IT VERY WELL MAY BE, THE FIRST THING I WOULD DO IS SHARE THAT WITH THE AMERICAN PUBLIC. WHY DON'T OUR LEADERS SHARE IT WITH US? I SUSPECT BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT DEMONSTRATIONS IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE WITH PEOPLE CARRYING PLACARDS THAT SAY "NO MORE BLOOD FOR OIL." THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS WE NEED THAT OIL.

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS WE WOULD GO NUTS IF WE DIDN'T HAVE ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF OIL IN THIS COUNTRY. WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO LIVE IN THE KIND OF ECONOMIC SYSTEM THAT WOULD BE NECESSARY IF WE DIDN'T IMPORT OIL FROM THE PERSIAN GULF, FROM NIGERIA, FROM VENEZUELA.

SO THE FIRST THING I WOULD DO IS LEVEL WITH THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AND SAY YOU TELL ME, YOU WILLING TO DO WITHOUT YOUR CAR? YOU WILLING TO CUT BACK TO A BICYCLE? YOU WILLING TO HAVE FOOD COST 2 OR 3 TIMES AS MUCH, BECAUSE WE ARE ONLY GOING TO SHIP IT BY TRAIN, NOT USE TRUCKS ANYMORE? YOU TELL ME, IF THE ANSWER TO ALL OF THOSE QUESTIONS IS YES, WE WILL PULL RIGHT OUT OF IRAQ IMMEDIATELY. IF THE ANSWER TO THOSE QUESTIONS IS NO, WE MAY HAVE TO STAY OVER THERE UNTIL WE BRING SOME FASHION OF STABILITY.

AND THE WAY TO DO THAT I AM AFRAID IS NOT BY SAYING, WELL, LET'S SEE, CAN WE PULL OUT BY AUGUST? CAN WE START WITHDRAWING TROOPS BY SEPTEMBER? WHAT ABOUT THE BEGINNING OF NEXT YEAR? CAN THEY

ALL BE OUT BY MARCH OF 2008? THE ANSWER IS NO, THEY CAN'T BE, THEY WON'T BE. I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU ARE HEARING IN ALL OF THESE DEBATES, THERE WILL STILL BE 10'S OF THOUSANDS OF U.S. TROOPS IN IRAQ BY THE TIME THAT GEORGE BUSH LEAVES OFFICE. TAKE IT TO THE BANK.

IS THAT A SUFFICIENT ANSWER FOR YOU?

(APPLAUSE).

PATT MORRISON: WE HAVE MORE QUESTIONERS THAN TIME.

>> IN VIEW OF WHAT YOU JUST SAID, WHY DO YOU THINK THE POLITICAL AND BUSINESS LEADERSHIP OF THIS COUNTRY WON'T SET US ON A LONG-TERM STRATEGY OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE?

TED KOPPEL: WELL, I TRIED TO ADDRESS THAT, THE PREMISE OF THAT QUESTION IN WHAT I SAID IN MY REMARKS. BECAUSE THE REWARD FOR A LONG-TERM STRATEGY IS NOT IMMEDIATE. THE REWARD FOR TELLING THE AMERICAN PUBLIC 10 YEARS AGO OR 20 SOMETHING YEARS AGO, AFTER THE 3 MILE ISLAND FIASCO, FOLKS, THAT WAS TERRIBLE, BUT YOU KNOW SOMETHING, WE STILL HAVE TO BUILD MORE NUCLEAR FACILITIES.

THE PRICE OF DOING THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN NOT BEING REELECTED, WHETHER YOU ARE A CONGRESSMAN, SENATOR OR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. UNFORTUNATELY WE RESPOND TO CRISIS IN THIS COUNTRY. WE ARE NOT VERY GOOD, FOR MANY OF THE REASONS I HAVE CITED HERE THIS EVENING, AT DOING THINGS FOR WHICH THERE IS NO IMMEDIATE PAY OFF.

WE DON'T GET ELECTED TO CONGRESS BY SAYING WE NEED TO HAVE MORE NUCLEAR PLANTS IN THIS COUNTRY. AND YOU KNOW SOMETHING, I AM GOING TO PROPOSE THAT THE NEXT ONE BE BUILT IN OUR DISTRICT. (LAUGHTER). DON'T GET ELECTED DOING THAT.

AND WHAT IS BEGINNING TO HAPPEN NOW IS SKY IS FALLING. PRICE OF OIL AND GASOLINE IS GOING UP. PRICE

OF LIVING IS GOING UP IN THE UNITED STATES. AND WE ARE SAYING WHY IS THAT?

AND YOU KNOW SOMETHING? SOME OF THE FACILE ANSWERS, LET'S USE CORN, LET'S USE SUGAR BEETS, RIGHT? YEAH. BUT YOU KNOW SOMETHING, THAT CORN, THOSE SUGAR BEETS ARE CURRENTLY BEING USED TO FEED STARVING PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE IMPACT IS GOING TO BE IF WE START USING THAT TO CREATE MORE GASOLINE IN THIS COUNTRY? RIOTS, UPRISING, REVOLUTION, (CELL PHONE RINGING).

ALL I AM SAYING IS -- AND THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION IS YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN DOING THINGS FOR YEARS. WE OUGHT TO BE DOING THINGS NOW. BUT IF INDEED WE ARE IN A TIME OF CRISIS, IF WE ARE AT WAR RIGHT NOW, AS THE PRESIDENT KEEPS TELLING YOU, YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE TO PAY SOME OF THAT PRICE, I AM GOING TO HAVE TO PAY SOME OF THAT PRICE. WE CAN'T JUST PRETEND THAT WAR IS SOMETHING OTHER AMERICANS FIGHT. (APPLAUSE).

>> WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT NOW ARE VERY SERIOUS ISSUES. AND WE TALKED EARLIER ABOUT THE FLUFF IN THE NEWS TODAY. THE AIR WAVES ARE PUBLIC AIR WAVES. SO MY QUESTION IS CAN WE EVER GET TO A POINT, OR IS THERE A PATH TO GO BACK TO PUBLIC AIR WAVES THAT ARE NOT RELIANT ON TURNING A PROFIT? WHY ARE WE GIVING OUR PUBLIC AIR WAVES TO COMPANIES THAT THEIR SOLE GOAL IS TO HAVE A POSITIVE BOTTOM LINE? CAN WE CHANGE THAT? BEFORE WE LITERALLY OWN THE AIR?

PATT MORRISON: WE ONLY HAVE TIME FOR THE QUESTIONS OF THE PEOPLE THAT ARE IN LINE, AND I AM HOPING WE CAN GET TO THOSE.

TED KOPPEL: LOOK, AGAIN, THESE ARE ALL SERIOUS, SMART QUESTIONS. AND THE REASON I RAMBLE ON SO LONG IS THAT THEY DEMAND THOUGHTFUL

ANSWERS. I WOULD HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE DEREGULATION OF THE REAGAN ERA IN THE 1980S. THE FCC, FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION HAS BEEN ESSENTIALLY DEFANGED. BECAUSE WHAT HAPPENED WAS CERTAINLY DECISIONS WERE MADE IN THIS COUNTRY TO MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR BUSINESS PEOPLE. AND THE BROADCASTING INDUSTRY HAS A VERY EFFECTIVE LOBBY. AND THEY SUCCEEDED IN A LOT OF THE RESTRICTIONS THAT HAD BEEN PLACED ON THE INDUSTRY PRIOR TO THAT BEING EASED.

THERE IS IN THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS CODE SECTION 315, WHICH DEMANDS THAT BROADCASTERS OPERATE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST, CONVENIENCE, AND NECESSITY. IT IS NOT HAPPENING. AND ONE OF THE REASONS IT IS NOT HAPPENING IS BECAUSE THOSE RULES DO NOT APPLY, SINCE THE PUBLIC AIR WAVES ARE NOT USED, TO CABLE OPERATORS. THEY DO NOT APPLY TO SATELLITE OPERATORS.

SO YOU ARE TALKING TO A BUNCH OF BUSINESS PEOPLE WHO REALLY HAVE INVESTED A TON OF MONEY IN BROADCASTING. AND YOU ARE SAYING TO THEM, YOU CAN'T DO THE THINGS THAT THE FOLKS IN CABLE CAN DO, YOU CAN'T SAY DIRTY WORDS ON THE AIR EVEN THOUGH THEY CAN. YOU CAN'T SHOW NAKED MEN AND WOMEN ON THE AIR EVEN THOUGH THEY CAN. WE WANT YOU TO BE RESPONSIBLE, RIGHT? WE ARE NOT GOING TO GIVE YOU ANY TAX MONEY TO DO IT, IT IS UP TO YOU TO TRY AND MAKE A PROFIT, RIGHT?

TAKE (INAUDIBLE) AND PUT HIM ON ABC. AND THE FACT THAT YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE AS MUCH MONEY AS AMERICAN IDOL, TOO BAD. RIGHT?

CAN'T DO THAT, YOU CAN'T -- BUT YOU KNOW, THAT IS THE QUICK AND DIRTY ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION.

>> SO WE NEED TO COME UP WITH A NEW MODEL?

TED KOPPEL: NO, WE HAVE GOT ENOUGH OUTLETS NOW, BETWEEN THE INTERNET -- OR AMONG THE INTERNET

AND CABLE, AND SATELLITE, YOU KNOW. ONE OF THESE DAYS SOMEONE IS GOING TO -- YOU FOR EXAMPLE, GO OUT AND START AN INTERNET NETWORK. YOU KNOW, START DOING THE KIND OF PROGRAMMING THAT YOU THINK OUGHT TO BE DONE. PUT IT ON THE INTERNET AND SEE HOW MANY PEOPLE WATCH IT.

>> IT IS REALLY A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU IN PERSON AFTER ALL OF THESE YEARS RELIGIOUSLY WATCHING YOUR NIGHTLINE.

TED KOPPEL: YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T WATCH NIGHTLINE ON YOUR KNEES. (LAUGHTER). I AM TEASING YOU. WHEN YOU SAID RELIGIOUSLY WATCHING NIGHTLINE.

>> YOU ARE AN EXCELLENT INTERVIEWER, AND YOU NEVER EVER LET THE VIEWERS KNOW WHAT YOUR POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY IS. I LEARNED MORE TODAY ABOUT WHAT YOU THINK THAN ALL OF THESE YEARS.

MY QUESTION IS WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THESE KINDS OF JOURNALISTS LIKE YOU THAT NEVER BRING UP YOUR OPINIONS VERSUS OTHER JOURNALISTS THAT WE SEE IN THE MEDIA THAT WE KNOW EXACTLY WHERE THEY STAND?

TED KOPPEL: AGAIN, I AM A VERY OLD FASHIONED JOURNALIST. AND THAT WAS THE WAY I WAS TAUGHT, THAT'S THE WAY I WAS RAISED. THE IDEA WAS NOT TO, YOU KNOW, I WAS NOT THERE TO GET MY POINT OF VIEW ACROSS. I WAS THERE TO ELICIT THE POINTS OF VIEW OF OTHER PEOPLE. A LOT HAS CHANGED IN JOURNALISM, THERE ARE STILL MANY JOURNALISTS THAT OPERATE THE SAME WAY.

(INAUDIBLE) I DON'T THINK YOU KNOW IF HE IS PROLIFE, PROCHOICE. LIBERAL OR NOT. HE DOES A GREAT JOB OF KEEPING HIS OPINIONS OUT OF THERE. WE HAVE ENOUGH MEDIA OUT THERE NOW THAT EVERY FORM OF JOURNALISM CAN HAVE SOME VOICE. AND IF YOU FIND THE KIND OF JOURNALISM YOU LIKE ON PBS, THEN WATCH PBS, SUPPORT THEM. SEND MONEY TO THEM. SEND MONEY TO

NPR IF YOU LIKE WHAT THEY ARE DOING. IF YOU DON'T LIKE WHAT YOU ARE SEEING ON FOX TELEVISION OR CNN, DON'T WATCH IT. IT IS AMAZING WHAT AN IMPACT THAT CAN HAVE ON THESE GIANT ORGANIZATIONS.

IF ALL OF A SUDDEN, THEY SEE THEIR RATINGS GOING ON AND START DOING POLLS AND FOCUS GROUPS, THEY REALIZE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IS GETTING ANNOYED AT THE SUBJECTIVITY OF THE NEWS COVERAGE, THEY WILL STOP DOING IT.

>> I LEARNED TODAY THAT YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL SENSE OF HUMOR.

>> I AM A BROADCASTER, AND I AM ABLE TO USE THAT WORD TO DESCRIBE MYSELF. I WANT TO KNOW WHAT ADVICE YOU HAVE FOR THOSE IN THE PROFESSION?

TED KOPPEL: LET ME, AT THE RISK OF REPETITION, LET ME SAY SOMETHING AGAIN. WHEN I JOINED ABC IN 1963, THERE WERE 3 OUTLETS FOR A BROADCAST JOURNALIST TO REACH THE ENTIRE AMERICAN PUBLIC. ABC, NBC, AND CBS. I WENT TO ABC, BECAUSE THEY WERE THE RUNT OF THE LITTER AND WERE THE ONLY ONES THAT WOULD HIRE A KID LIKE ME.

TODAY YOU HAVE HUNDREDS OF OUTLETS, THE DIFFERENCE TODAY IS THAT THE TECHNOLOGY ACTUALLY MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO TAKE A LIGHT WEIGHT CAMERA, GO OUT, SHOOT SOME STORY THAT YOU REALLY BELIEVE NEEDS TO BE TOLD AND ISN'T GETTING PROPER COVERAGE, COME BACK AND TAKE YOUR APPLE LAPTOP AND PUT IN AN EDITING PROGRAM IT HAS.

EDIT THAT PIECE, NARRATE THAT PIECE. AND INSTANTLY HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE CAN SEE IT. CHANCES ARE, YOU WILL BE LUCKY IF YOU CAN GET 20 THOUSAND, BUT IF YOU ARE AS GOOD AS I THINK YOU ARE GOING TO BE, YOU EVENTUALLY, WORD OF MOUTH WILL GET AROUND, AND SAY YOU KNOW SOMETHING -- SOMETHING SOMETHING OUT THERE ON THE INTERNET --

AS YOU TUBE DOES FOR EXAMPLE. WHERE SOME PIECE OF VIDEO GETS OUT THERE, AND THOUSANDS, 10'S OF THOUSANDS, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE START WATCHING IT. YOU HAVE OPPORTUNITIES THAT WERE NEVER AVAILABLE 45 YEARS AGO.

AND IF YOU DON'T USE THEM THAT IS YOUR PROBLEM. BUT YOU DON'T EVEN NEED TO ASK SOMEONE FOR A JOB. YOU CAN -- YOU KNOW, YOU CAN PUT YOUR AUDITION TAPE OUT THERE EVERY DAY. AND THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WILL SEE IT. AND IF YOU ARE GOOD, SOME WILL HIRE YOU. ALL RIGHT?

>> THANK YOU. (APPLAUSE).

>> THE LAST 2 SPEAKERS TOOK MY QUESTION BASICALLY WHERE I WAS GOING TO COMMENT ON BIAS IN THE MEDIA. KATIE COURIC, WHEN SHE INTERVIEWS DEMOCRATS, SHE FROWNS, AND WHEN SHE INTERVIEWS GEORGE BUSH, SHE BEAMS.

TED KOPPEL: HORSE PUPPY. (LAUGHTER). I MEAN GIVE ME A BREAK KATIE COURIC. SHE IS A PRETTY GOOD JOURNALIST. I HAVE KNOWN HER. SHE USED TO WORK FOR ME AT NIGHTLINE. SHE USED TO BRING ME COFFEE IN THE OLD DAYS. (LAUGHTER). I GUARANTEE YOU, YOU DON'T KNOW KATIE'S POLITICS BASED ON WHETHER SHE SMILES OR SMIRKS.

IT IS AMAZING WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHEN THEY ARE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESIDENT, EVEN IF THEY DON'T LIKE THEM.

>> I WILL ASK MY FOLLOW UP QUESTION ANYWAY. (INAUDIBLE) YOU TALKED ABOUT THE NEED TO HAVE STABILITY IN IRAQ, STAYING THE COURSE IS NOT WORKING. THE SURGE, IT IS DOUBTFUL IT WILL WORK. JUST PULLING OUT THE TROOPS IS NOT A GOOD ANSWER. WHAT IS YOUR SUGGESTION FOR BRINGING STABILITY INTO THE REGION?

TED KOPPEL: AGAIN, AT THE RISK OF BORING YOU, LET ME REPEAT WHAT I SAID, IF WE ARE IN AGREEMENT, WE MAY NOT BE, BUT IF WE ARE IN AGREEMENT THAT THE

FUTURE OF THE PERSIAN GULF MAY BE AFFECTED BY WHAT HAPPENS IN IRAQ. AND THE FUTURE OF THE PERSIAN GULF IS OF EXTRAORDINARY IMPORTANCE TO THE ECONOMIC WELFARE OF THE UNITED STATES, THE ANSWER IS IF IT TAKES 300 THOUSAND TROOPS 10 YEARS, THEN THAT'S HOW LONG THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO STAY. BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT NATIONS DO WHEN THEIR NATIONAL INTERESTS ARE THREATENED.

IF ON THE OTHER HAND THAT IS ALL MUCH SMOKE THAT I MADE IT UP, IT IS NOT TRUE, THEN INDEED WE SHOULD GET OUT. ALTHOUGH EVEN FROM AN ETHICAL POINT OF VIEW, WHEN WE START SOMETHING, AND WE CREATE A SITUATION THAT IS AS BAD OR EVEN WORSE THAN THE ONE WE FOUND WHEN WE GOT THERE, WE HAVE A CERTAIN MORAL OBLIGATION TO STAY UNTIL IT HAS BEEN CLEANED UP.

PATT MORRISON: I'M SORRY, WE ARE OUT OF TIME.

>> I APOLOGIZE, BUT I REALLY NEED TO SAY THIS, BECAUSE I FEEL I JUST HAVE TO. SIMPLY KEEPING THE TROOPS THERE, THERE NEEDS TO BE SOME FURTHER STEP FORWARD, THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE THAN SIMPLY KEEPING THE TROOPS THERE. SOMETHING MORE.

TED KOPPEL: I APPRECIATE YOUR POINT. AND LET ME ADDRESS IT. BECAUSE IT IS A FAIR POINT. I AM SAYING TO YOU THAT WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS COUNTRY TODAY IS DAMAGING TO THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES. BECAUSE AS LONG AS PEOPLE HERE AND THERE THINK THAT IT IS JUST A MATTER OF WAITING ANOTHER 3 MONTHS, 6 MONTHS, OR 9 MONTHS, WE CANNOT POSSIBLY CREATE ANY KIND OF STABILITY IN IRAQ. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.

THE MINUTE THAT IT BECAME BELIEVABLE TO OUR ALLIES, AND OUR ENEMIES THAT THE UNITED STATES IS ABSOLUTELY COMMITTED TO MAKING THIS WORK, AND IS PREPARED TO STAY IN IRAQ AS LONG AS IT TAKES, AND IS PREPARED TO LEAVE OR INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TROOPS, THEN I BELIEVE THAT WE COULD BRING STABILITY

TO IRAQ. YOU AND I MAY DISAGREE ON THAT, THERE ARE NO -- I DON'T HAVE PATENTED ANSWERS FOR ANYTHING. ALL I CAN DO IS GIVE YOU MY BEST ANSWER, ALL RIGHT? (APPLAUSE).

>> THANK YOU AGAIN FOR INVITING ME. IF FRIENDS ASKED ME TO TALK TO THEIR SON, BECAUSE HE IS HOOKED TO DRUGS, AND HAS BEEN COMMITTING CRIMES, AND HE TELLS ME I WILL GO NUTS WITHOUT DRUGS, TODAY LISTENING TO (INAUDIBLE) I THINK I UNDERSTAND HIM. BUT THAT IS NOT MY QUESTION. MY QUESTION IS VERY RARE ON THE MEDIA (INAUDIBLE).

DID YOU WATCH BILL MOYER JOURNAL ABOUT THE BUILD UP OF THE IRAQ WAR ON PBS.

TED KOPPEL: YES.

>> DO YOU THINK, MR. KOPPEL, THAT OUR CORPORATE MEDIA, NOT THE PUBLIC (INAUDIBLE) ON KBCC. DO YOU THINK THAT OUR CORPORATE MEDIA, IF IT WERE ENTIRELY OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, WOULD IT BE ANY DIFFERENT?

TED KOPPEL: THAT IS A VERY GOOD QUESTION. AND THE ANSWER IS YES, IT WOULD BE DIFFERENT. BUT THE IMPLICATION OF -- THAT'S BECAUSE AFTER A GIVEN PERIOD OF TIME, EVEN THE COMMERCIAL MEDIA IN THIS COUNTRY CAME TO REALIZE THAT THIS SORT OF UNSWERVING SUPPORT IN IRAQ MAY HAVE BEEN A MISTAKE.

DOESN'T MEAN THAT THINGS BACK IN 2002 AND 2003 WOULD HAVE BEEN ANY DIFFERENT. BUT I MUST TELL YOU -- I MEAN, FOR EXAMPLE, WE DID A PROGRAM ON NIGHTLINE. IT WAS A 90 MINUTE TOWN MEETING IN JANUARY OF 2003. 2 MONTHS BEFORE THE WAR BEGAN. AND THE TITLE OF THE TOWN MEETING WAS QUITE SIMPLY "WHY NOW?" AND WE DEBATED THE ISSUE FOR 90 MINUTES. AND I THINK THE CLEAR IMPLICATION WAS IT DIDN'T NEED TO BE NOW. IT DIDN'T NEED TO BE THEN. IT COULD HAVE BEEN 6 MONTHS SINCE, OR 9 MONTHS SINCE, OR A YEAR.

BILL MOYER'S PROGRAM WAS TERRIFIC. BUT POINT IN FACT THERE WERE CRITICAL STORIES BEING WRITTEN. AND THERE WERE EVEN SOME CRITICAL THINGS BEING DONE ON THE NETWORKS. NOT NEARLY ENOUGH.

BUT THE BIG DIFFERENCE IS A YEAR AGO TODAY, NEXT YEAR, DOES THE GOVERNMENT HAVE ABSOLUTE CONTROL OF THE MEDIA? YOU WOULDN'T HEAR ANY CRITICISM AT ALL. (APPLAUSE).

>> I BELIEVE YOU LEFT GERMANY IN THE 1930S.

TED KOPPEL: NO, I ACTUALLY WASN'T ALIVE IN THE 1930S (LAUGHTER). MY PARENTS LEFT IN THE 1930S, AND I WAS BORN IN ENGLAND IN 1940.

>> THE WORLD HAD FASCISM TO CONFRONT THEN. AND UNITED STATES HAD FASCISM TO CONFRONT. AND WE HAD THE MEANS TO DO IT. AFTER FASCISM, WE HAVE COMMUNISM TO CONFRONT. POLICY CONTAINMENT. AND WE HAD THE MEANS, WILL, AND PERSEVERANCE TO DO IT. WHAT ARE WE CONFRONTING NOW ON -- IS IT RADICAL ISLAM IN IS IT RADICAL ISLAM THAT IS THE GREAT CHALLENGE FOR THE UNITED STATES TODAY? AND IF YOUR OPINION, WITH A DEMAND FOR INSTANT SOLUTIONS, INSTANT PROFITS, INSTANT NEWS, DO WE HAVE THE WILL, THE MEANS, AND THE PERSEVERANCE TO CONFRONT THAT?

TED KOPPEL: GREAT QUESTION. AND YOU HAVE REQUESTED IT ELEGANTLY AND SUCCINCTLY. THE PROBLEM IS WE LIVE IN AN INTERNET KIND OF MENTALITY WHERE EVERYTHING IS FRAGMENTED, EVERYTHING IS INDIVIDUALIZED, EVERYTHING IS SUBJECTIVE. WHERE IT BECOMES MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT THROUGH REASONS I OUTLINED EARLIER ON, TO EVER GET EVERYONE TOGETHER AND SAY LOOK, THE NATION IS AT WAR. EACH OF YOU IS GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE CERTAIN SACRIFICES. THOSE SACRIFICES THOUGH IT MAY NOT ENTAIL FOR MOST OF YOU PUTTING YOUR LIFE AT RISK. YOU HAVE GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO MANY CONVENIENCES.

I THINK THE WAR ON TERRORISM IS A MISSTATEMENT. I THINK BY ELEVATING GROUPS LIKE AL QAEDA TO THE LEVEL OF INTERNATIONAL ENEMY, WE HAVE TURNED IT INTO THE MOST EFFECTIVE -- WHAT'S THE WORD I AM LOOKING FOR? YOU KNOW LIKE MCDONALDS. WHAT FRANCHISE -- WE HAVE TURNED IT INTO AN INTERNATIONAL FRANCHISE. WE HAVE ELEVATED OSAMA BIN LADEN TO THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL SUPER STAR.

WE HAVE BEEN -- MANY OF OUR OWN ACTIONS HELPED NURTURE AN ANTIAMERICAN FEELING OVERSEAS THAT CLEARLY WAS NOT THERE ON 911 OF 2001. QUITE THE CONTRARY WE HAD EVEN COUNTRIES LIKE FRANCE (LAUGHTER) EXPRESSING THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THE UNITED STATES. I THINK WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF REAL LEADERSHIP. BUT JUST AS BRITAIN DISCOVERED IN THE 1930S, WHEN NEVIL CHAMBERLAIN WAS LEADING AND CHURCHILL WAS THE VOICE OF BUSINESS.

>> MY WIFE'S PARENTS LEFT GERMANY IN THE 1930S. MY WIFE AND I A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO WERE AT HYDE PARK, AND WE PICKED UP A COLLECTION OF FDR'S FIRESIDE CHATS. AND I WAS READING ONE ABOUT A YEAR BEFORE THE UNITED STATES FACED PEARL HARBOR, ROOSEVELT HAD TO RALLY A HIGHLY DIVIDED COUNTRY AGAINST NAZI GERMANY WHERE WE WERE SINKING SUBMARINES AND GERMAN SHIPS WERE FIRING AT THE UNITED STATES.

IF YOU READ THOSE FIRESIDE CHATS, THAT IS THE KIND OF LEADERSHIP THIS COUNTRY NEEDS RIGHT NOW.

TED KOPPEL: HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR PEARL HARBOR ON DECEMBER 7, 1941, THE UNITED STATES MAY NOT HAVE GONE TO WAR AGAINST GERMANY. THAT IS THE UNFORTUNATE REALITY HERE. ROOSEVELT HAD TO USE ALL KINDS OF DECEPTIVE METHODS AS A MEANS OF GETTING AMERICAN WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT TO THE BRITISH AT A TIME OF DESPERATE NEED FOR GREAT BRITAIN (INAUDIBLE) AS FOREIGN AID. IT HAD TO BE

PRESENTED AS WE WILL GIVE IT TO THEM NOW. WE WILL PAY THEM BACK LATER.

>> I AM A STUDENT HERE, AND I FIRST WOULD LIKE TO THANK MR. AND MRS. PEARL, AND YOU MR. KOPPEL (APPLAUSE).

ONE OF THE MAJOR THEMES YOU TOUCHED ON TONIGHT HAS BEEN THE DUMBING DOWN OF MAJOR TELEVISION NEWS NETWORKS AND THE NEWS THEY PROVIDE. I WAS WONDERING IF YOU NOTICED DUMB DOWN OCCURRING (INAUDIBLE) COLUMBINE ABOUT A DECADE AGO, TO VIRGINIA TECH THIS YEAR?

TED KOPPEL: I THINK THAT IS MORE OF A FUNCTION OF THE NUMBER OF OUTLETS THAT EXIST TODAY. IF YOU GO BACK TO THE TEXAS SHOOTING, THAT WAS AT A TIME WHEN THE NEWS CAME ON AT 6:30 OR 7:00 O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING. AND IF YOU WEREN'T THERE AT 6:30 OR 7:00 O'CLOCK, YOU DIDN'T SEE THE NEWS. AND SOMEWHERE IN 1980 ALONG CAME TED TURNER AND CNN CREATED A CABLE NEWS NETWORK. AND WHAT INITIALLY MADE CNN A SUCCESS WAS TED TURNER'S GREAT MARKETING NOTION. HE SAID YOU MAY NOT BE FREE AT 6:30 OR 7:00. IT MAY BE MORE CONVENIENT FOR YOU TO WATCH THE NEWS AT 10:00 IN THE MORNING, OR 3:00 IN THE AFTERNOON, OR 10:00 IN THE EVENING. WE WILL BE THERE ALL OF THE TIME FOR YOU. THAT SOUNDED LIKE THE ANSWER TO A JOURNALIST'S DREAM, 24 HOUR NEWS MY GOSH, HOW MUCH SUBSTANCE WE ARE GOING TO HAVE.

IN REALITY, IT TURNED OUT TO BE SOMEWHAT OF A DISASTER. THERE ARE MOMENTS WHEN CNN DOES BRILLIANT, AND FOX DOES BRILLIANTLY. BUT MOST OF THE TIME YOU ARE STUCK WITH 24 HOURS THAT THEY HAVE TO FILL.

AND SO WHEN A DISASTER -- I MEAN IF THE TEXAS SHOOTING HAD HAPPENED AT A TIME WHEN CABLE NEWS EXISTED, I GUARANTEE YOU IT WOULD HAVE BEEN AROUND THE CLOCK. JUST AS THE VIRGINIA TECH SHOOTING WAS

AROUND THE CLOCK. JUST AS ANNA NICHOLE SMITH WAS
AROUND THE CLOCK. SO THE ANSWER IS THAT
TECHNOLOGY HAS CHANGED. NOT THAT OUR VIEW OF
WHAT IS IMPORTANT OR UNIMPORTANT HAS CHANGED.

AND THE TECH KNOWLEDGE IS IMPOSING ON US THINGS
THAT WE NEED TO RESIST. BUT AGAIN, NO ONE IS HOLDING
A GUN TO YOUR HEAD SAYING YOU HAVE TO WATCH THIS
CRAP. (APPLAUSE).

I TOO WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY THANKS AND
DEEP ADMIRATION TO MR. AND MRS. PEARL. (APPLAUSE).