

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON WITH JOHN KASICH

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THOMAS BURR: (Sounds gavel) Good afternoon and welcome to the National Press Club. My name is Thomas Burr. I'm the Washington correspondent for the *Salt Lake Tribune* and Vice-President of the club. Our guest today is Ohio Governor, John Kasich, who is seeking the Republican nomination and he hopes eventually the White House. I would like to welcome our head table guests today, Jerry Zremski with the *Buffalo News*, our Chair of our Speakers Committee, and Mark Schoeff with *Investment News* who organized today's event. Thank you, gentlemen. [Applause]

I would also like to welcome our CSPAN and Public Radio audiences, and I would like to remind you that you can follow the action on Twitter using the hashtag NPCLIVE, that's NPCLIVE.

Last weekend when the world learned of the terrorist attacks on Paris Governor Kasich was the first Republican candidate contender to call for NATO to invoke the Article Five Clause that declares that an attack on one NATO country is an attack on all of them. "We as Americans must assert leadership and we need to stand shoulder to shoulder with France and the French people. This is a moment to bring us together," Kasich said at a Republican event in Florida on Saturday.

Today Kasich comes to the National Press Club to outline his national security strategy, which includes rebuilding the U.S. military, revitalizing diplomatic alliances, and in his campaign's words, "recommitting to fundamental Western values." The Paris attacks have quickly turned the focus of the Presidential campaign that had largely been concentrated on domestic affairs to questions surrounding U.S. foreign and security

policy, especially the approach being taken towards the Middle East. A week ago in the Republican debate Governor Kasich forcefully inserted himself into the dialogue on a few occasions, drawing both attention and criticism. Today at the Press Club the second-term Ohio Governor has the stage to himself. [Laughter]

Reelected in 2014-- You can still interrupt if you would like to. Reelected in 2014, Kasich last month achieved an all-time high approval rating of 62% among Ohioans, an unusual feat for someone who is running for President. During his time in office the state of Ohio has turned an eight billion dollar budget deficit into a two billion dollar surplus. His budget cutting enthusiasm was demonstrated during his 18 years in Congress where he served as Chairman of the House Budget Committee. He was also a member of the House Armed Services Committee. Prior to coming to Washington he was an Ohio State Senator. A native of Pennsylvania, Governor Kasich moved to Ohio to attend Ohio State University where he graduated in 1974. At a time when polls showed that Americans have a disdain for public office holders Kasich has tried to turn the long experience in government into a positive for his campaign by asserting that he can fix Washington.

We will see whether the next few weeks whether the Paris attacks will put a higher premium on government experience or will increase voters' frustrations with public officials. Please welcome to the National Press Club podium Governor John Kasich.

[Applause]

JOHN KASICH: Thomas, you did such a good job that maybe you can stand in for me at the next debate. What do you think? Okay, last Friday in Paris it was made obvious to the world yet again that there is an enormous chasm between the worldview of civilized people and the worldview of those who committed these acts of horror. We believe that life has value and meaning. They see no value even in their own lives, let alone others. We believe that different views and ideas should be respected and these make us stronger. They believe the answer to disagreement is death. We believe men and women are equal. They believe women are property. We live in the light of God's love for all creation. They pervert and hijack one of the world's principle religions. We live in the modern world, a world of free expression, a world of science, of respect for individual rights and liberties. They live in a darkness, devoid of even the basic understanding of humanity. We forget these differences, it's at our peril. Unless we want to see the bloodshed of Paris visited here in America and in the streets of our allies' capitols we need to get serious immediately about dealing with this threat.

There can be no negotiating and no delay with this darkness. We must simply defeat it. We cannot wait on a resolution to the Syrian crisis to begin dealing with ISIS. I'm not convinced that the agreement achieved in Vienna several days ago on the future of Syria will be implemented on the announced schedule or, frankly, any schedule. And I doubt it will lead to any certainty over serious future leadership. A ceasefire is supposed to occur within six months and elections within 18, paving the way for a potential

political transition in Syria. I believe these are empty promises. What is more, with ISIS having directly threatened the U.S. homeland we can't afford to wait, we must act now. We must invoke Article Five, the Mutual Defense Clause of the North American Treaty and bring NATO together to assist our ally France in its defense.

I agree with President Hollande that Friday's attacks were an act of war by ISIS on France and therefore they were an attack on America and every other NATO member state. NATO came to our aid after 9/11. NATO must now do so again for France. We must be swift. We must be decisive. And we must be absolute. [Applause]

We must intensify international intelligence cooperation by identifying, exchanging information on tracking, and if necessary arresting the thousands of foreign volunteers currently fighting with ISIS who then later return to their home countries. End to end communications encryption technology is increasingly leaving our intelligence agencies in the dark. We must develop new signals intelligence methods to illuminate these targets technologically, and of course we must also invest more in human intelligence assets with which to penetrate and neutralize these terrorist groups. Our signals intelligence and human intelligence, they do not exist separate from one another. They accent and complement one another and every effort should be made to leverage each for the other's benefit.

We also need to reassess our domestic counterterrorism resources to ensure that our joint FBI/CIA counterterrorism taskforces have the personnel they need to track potential domestic terrorists. We must provide far more support to the Kurds both in Syria and Iraq. The Kurds who are fighting to defend their homeland fight like tigers and they are one of the few groups friendly to the United States who really have shown that they know how to take the fight to ISIS. We must arm them much more, much more generously than we have done so far. Turkey has legitimate concerns about arming the Kurdish YPK in Syria. We must work to address their concerns as we assist on addressing a threat to the vital national interests of America and the rest of the world.

We must create safe havens protected by No Fly Zones. I first called for No Fly Zones early last month in order to relieve the suffering of Syrian refugees and reduce their need to travel to Europe. These sanctuaries should be located on the Turkish and on the Jordanian borders. Our Jordanian and Kurdish allies should provide protection for them on the ground while the United States provides protection from the air. We must arrest human traffickers, prosecute them, put them in jail, and confiscate their ill-gotten gains. We must create an international coalition to defeat ISIS in Syria and Iraq. We must join with our NATO allies and importantly with allies in the region as well. That would be the Turks, the Jordanians, the Egyptians, the Gulf states, the Saudis to organize an international coalition to defeat ISIS on the ground in its heartland. Experience of course has shown that an air campaign on its own is not enough.

We must be more forceful in the battle of ideas. U.S. public diplomacy and international broadcasting have lost their focus on the case for Western values and ideals and effectively countering our opponents' propaganda and disinformation. I will

consolidate them into a new agency that has a clear mandate, to promote the core Judeo-Christian Western values that we and our friends and allies share, the values of human rights, the values of Democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of association. And it should focus on four critical targets, the Middle East, China, Iran, and Russia. Sophisticated strategies will be developed to communicate with each of these hard target countries.

The challenge posed by ISIS in Syria and Iraq is a symptom of a broader weakness in America's national security policy. Failing to advance our values in the battle of ideas, not doing so against a threat such as ISIS or in places such as Syria and Iraq is interpreted by other opponents around the world as weakness. The administration's desire for an Iran nuclear deal at any cost is another example, and weakness invites challenges and attacks of the kind that we have seen from nations that do not share our values such as China and Russia.

By invading Georgia, annexing Crimea, fomenting a murderous proxy war in Eastern Ukraine, mounting provocative patrols, and building out its base structure in both Kaliningrad and Belarus, Russia has once again become a threat to European security. Russia's leadership today does not respect the basic tenets of international order, namely territorial integrity and the rule of law. Those are basic values of international relations and Russia's failure to respect them is simply not compatible with constructive relations with the West. We must work together with our European allies to defend a free Ukraine. That includes training and arming Ukrainian forces with the weapons that they have asked for and which Congress has already approved. It also means focusing on the defense of new NATO member states on the front lines with Russia, such as Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia.

NATO must be vigilant and protective of its easternmost member states who live every day in Russia's shadow. We must focus on supplying and equipping them in achieving interoperability, jointly committing to higher defense spending targets, repositioning existing U.S. forces in Europe onto their eastern borders, increasing cooperation with Finland and Sweden and building a new strong integrated air defense system on NATO's eastern border.

We must also learn the lessons of Crimea and develop and exercise contingency plans for dealing with future Russian provocations. You know, there are no such things as little green men or volunteers. Any such combatants will be treated as what they are, an attacking Russian army. If they reappear I will take U.S. forces in Europe and around the world to heighten combat readiness in order to be able to intervene in support of our friends and our allies.

While Russia's actions are forcing us to take tough measures to achieve peace through strength and safeguard our friends and our allies, I will make it clear that the door to negotiations remains open. I am confident that by sitting and talking together with our allies, Russia and America, that we can forge a new European security architecture that accommodates their interests without damaging those of NATO member states. The

same is true for our relationship with China. The weakness we have shown toward Russia is really no different than that we have shown towards China. Its efforts to control the South China Sea and seabed resources to which it is not entitled are blatant violations of international rules and norms. These are boldfaced efforts to do nothing more than bully its neighbors. Because of those efforts, we must now stand by our Western Pacific allies who rightfully feel threatened by China's belligerence.

That means working with our regional allies to significantly increase our military presence in the region, to ensure freedom of navigation for the 5.3 trillion in annual trade that passes through the Western Pacific. We must forward deploy our Pacific Combat Commander to Guam in stationing additional Air Force and Marine Corps units in the Western Pacific. We should increase joint Western Pacific freedom of navigation and submarine patrols. We should conduct regular regional amphibious landing exercises. We should help our Japanese allies defend their territorial waters by installing seabed acoustic sensor systems, anti-ship missiles, rocket launch torpedoes, and mine laying equipment through their southern island chain.

To deal with the nuclear threat posed by North Korea I will work with South Korea and our other regional allies to revitalize allies' counter proliferation activities and to build ballistic missile defenses. The U.S. does not seek confrontation with China. We should remain open to working responsibly with our allies and with China as an equal stakeholder. Together we should be able to forge innovative solutions and institutions that respect and accommodate the national security interests of all Pacific powers.

The same mistakes in judgement and strategy that have let terrorism flourish in recent years and wrongly signal weakness to Russia and China are found throughout American national security policy right now, and it all comes down to this: We have not led, because leadership has not been a priority we have been content to let the tools of leadership are military and our alliance relations grow weak and frayed. We have even hesitated to express and live by the values at the core of who we are. It's time for change before it's too late. We must rebuild our nation's sorely neglected military from the bottom up. This doesn't mean that like some we rush to fund every General's wish list. Instead we must assess our combined allied capabilities and identify the needs and gaps in dealing with threats that we face in each region of the world. This means being strategic about rebuilding our military, matching it to the threats that we face and complementing the capabilities of our allies.

We must also be more careful in how we spend our military dollars, especially on weapons systems. We can make our dollars go further and get our troops the equipment they need faster by rewarding on target cost estimates, insisting on extensive prototyping, incentivizing contractors and program managers to be ahead of schedule and under budget, using off the shelf technology as much as we can, and putting in place high threshold criteria for design changes. Likewise, we must ensure that scarce resources reach those who need them most, and those would be our fighting men and women. By streamlining the Pentagon bureaucracy, defining performance standards, and holding our

defense civilian workforce to them, providing greater flexibility both to hire the talent we need and part company with consistent underperformers.

And we must recognize that cyberspace is a battlefield as well that demands our attention and resources. This has not been the federal government's strength and we must not shy away from turning to the private sector for much needed help to protect ourselves and to take the battle to the enemy. We can and we must take out of the resources that our enemies use to wage war online. Not only do we need strong, decisive, multilateral agreements to respond to anyone that attacks our governments and our private sector and our allies but we need an aggressive strategy to go after the cyber resources of our enemies. Not only does this eliminate threats, but of course it also deters future attacks.

We have let ourselves fall too far behind in this arena. Rebuilding our military is no easy task. We know it will be expensive, and it cannot be done without first making sure that we have a strong economy. No one understood this as well as President Ronald Reagan. I have proposed an economic revival plan that will provide the growth we need to be strong, strong economically but also strong militarily. Importantly, we need to balance our budget and we need to stop adding to our national debt. What leverage do we have in dealing with other nations if they are the ones loaning us money for our out of control spending?

Relationships with our allies are critical to all we must do going forward. Friends like those in Europe have been ignored. Friends like Israel have been abused. We need to repair the damage. There is strength in numbers, strength in consensus, and by acting in concert with our allies by sharing intelligence, by working together in international bodies we can more effectively advance our interests and we can keep Americans safe. As we rebuild our military we should consult with our allies to assess their military needs and their strengths, and of course we also should expect them to pull their weight.

And nothing about being an ally means you will not advance your own interests. An exclusive diet of going it alone, that's unsustainable, but America must always reserve the right to take its own actions and lead. Our allied relationships are rooted in shared values such as respect for human life, freedom of thought, expression, and religion, equality and the right of every person, every person to have the chance to learn, grow, and achieve. These are handed down to us by our Judeo-Christian tradition which has guided our civilization for centuries, yet it is fair to say that at times we seem to have forgotten them or have become afraid to stand up and proclaim them.

If we don't know what we believe how do we know what we want from life? How do we set goals for our families, our communities, or our nations? If we let ourselves begin to drift, so afraid to offend anyone that we're afraid even to say what we think is right, we put our futures in peril. In this vacuum of values is it any wonder that we see bright, educated young people abandoning the West for the meaning they think they see in the extremist cause? Values are a compass that can help us individually and as a society navigate personal challenges in an increasingly complex and dangerous world.

We need to rediscover them. We need to recommit ourselves to them with passion and without apology.

This is not our battle alone. We should join with those moderate Muslims who have condemned the attack on Paris and who see through the lie of extremism. We must encourage them and join with them to speak with one voice so that the world's young people understand what is a lie, what is true, what is darkness, and what is light and life.

Finally, a word about how I see America's role in the world. There seems to be a fear today to call America exceptional. I believe America is exceptional. [Applause] It is simply a statement of the obvious. We are exceptional because of our uniqueness. America is not a language or ethnic group or religion. We are the melting pot of every people in the world, so when Paris hurts we hurt, when Ukraine hurts we hurt, and conversely when those places hurt and we don't act the world is weaker and so are we.

Throughout all of our history America has never been afraid to fight for our values and ideas. Oh yeah, it's okay that sometimes we argue. That's just part of it. The fact that we have disagreements is part of how we live, but at each moment of crisis we have united as a nation, at each moment we came together in common cause, at each moment we united the civilized world, and of course we came out stronger because of it. This is that moment. It's not someone else's job, nor is it our job alone. It is in the hands of each of us and our allies to realize that we can change the world, we can fix this, we can make America and the world a safer place to ensure that our children and grandchildren can live to fulfill their dreams and ours. Thank you. [Applause]

THOMAS BURR: Thank you, Governor. We have a lot of questions today, so you are the only one on the stage, you don't have to ask for equal time. I think we'll be okay. The first question is will the focus on terrorism give more credence to a candidate with government experience?

JOHN KASICH: You know, I was down in Florida speaking to the Florida Republican Party, and I spoke for a short period of time, much less than the time allotted to me, to talk about the war against Western civilization. I was asked the night before by a reporter from the *New York Times* about experience and I said I didn't think it was appropriate to be injecting a political campaign in the middle of what the world is experiencing. Actually in my speech there was a recommendation that I talk about my many years on the Armed Services Committee. I yanked it out of the speech.

These are very serious times. We have to be careful that we don't use this as an opportunity by anybody, and I'm not saying that they are at this point, to advance a candidacy. We have to be united as Americans. This is serious, serious business. Our very lives are under attack. Let's get through this period of time. Let's hear the different suggestions and ideas that people have. And then over time I think it will be appropriate to talk about what experience means when we're talking about the Commander in Chief of the United States of America.

THOMAS BURR: I'm going to press a little harder on that question. Will the Paris attacks take the air out of the Trump and Carson campaigns as foreign and security policy gain prominence?

JOHN KASICH: Well look, I think the talk that I delivered today, which was not written by anybody else, I mean other people put words to paper, but these things are not something that I'm not directing, I think you've got to analyze whether a talk like this that in many respects covers the globe, but there is a heck of a lot more to say about so many more issues, you're going to have to figure out what we need. We have had a President that for whatever reason, maybe it is on his part the lack of experience, certainly an inability to keep very knowledgeable foreign policy advisors around him, puts him in a position of where we created a great void.

And I'll tell you what I'm worried about. President said yesterday that well, he'll look at the idea of a No Fly Zone, but who would defend the people inside the sanctuary and it's something they ought to consider. I think they should have been considered a lot longer ago. I mean we have just been doing nothing. We did not arm the rebels. We did a poor deal with Iran. We're not creating a No Fly Zone. Our allies have drifted away from us. We have made no decision involved in Ukraine. There has just been so much inaction. Now does that come about because the President didn't have the experience or couldn't maintain the loyalty or commitment of people who are deeply experienced?

One thing I'll tell you is when you put together a national security team you have to have the traditional members of the military, but you also need to have as part of your team those nontraditional members of the military, and I can remember years ago when the military wasn't too keen on the idea of Special Forces. We put it through anyway. Or Joint Task Force or Joint Cooperation. You've got to have both and you have to have civilian leaders who are deeply knowledgeable and you have to invite debate, you have to invite discussion. And at the end of the day the President makes the decision do we go, do we not go, how do we proceed, what is the troop level, do we engage. Those are decisions by an executive and you have to understand how it all works and how you put your team together to get the best possible advice to make sure that America is successful in its foreign ventures.

THOMAS BURR: Thank you, Governor. Given the news out of yesterday, what constitutional grounds do you have to block refugees from settling in Ohio?

JOHN KASICH: Look, in the state we don't have the authority, we can only express our concerns. One of my daughters last night said, "Daddy, why are you not going to let these people come in? What is that? What's that about, Daddy?" Because I know, as some of my friends who are here today would agree, sometimes I'm criticized for having a big heart. I do have a big heart, but I also have a pretty good brain. And I said to my daughter, I said, "Reesie, you know, we understand these people are in trouble, but think about, Reesie, us putting somebody on our street, in our town, or in our country who mean us harm. We can't do that, can we, Reese?" "I understand now, Daddy, why you said what you said."

So, all we can do, as I've urged, written to the President, I've written to the Congress, we just have to have a system that can determine who these people are. And what really got my attention was James Clapper who said, "We are not confident that we can determine who they are." Now, maybe we can develop a system to do that, but at the current time we can't and we've just got to be very careful for our friends, our neighbors, our families, and our country.

THOMAS BURR: Governor, following on that point, nearly 243,000 Muslim refugees, including 23,000 Syrians have been admitted to the United States since 9/11. Not one of them has committed a terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Doesn't that prove that the process is good at screening out security threats? And if so why do we need to bar Syrian refugees?

JOHN KASICH: Well look, I mean I'm just talking about the intelligence officials, whether it's Clapper, I think the head of the FBI, when they assert, "We don't know who they are." And there has been a lot of changes since 9/11 and when we look at ISIS and we begin to read the stories about perhaps somebody using, being able to come from Syria into Paris it gets all of our attention. It is not reasonable for the United States to say that we have to have a system that determines who they're coming in and the fact is that they're safe. I don't by any stretch of the imagination condemn Muslims. I condemn the radicals and I am pleased to see that there were a number of moderate Muslims who stood up and condemned the Paris attacks, but at this point in time it is reasonable for us to be in a position to properly screen.

But in addition to that, if in fact we can create the No Fly Zone that it becomes a sanctuary, that if forces would invade that No Fly Zone on the ground the Jordanian and Kurdish and perhaps other forces can protect those sanctuaries we ought to be in a position of being able to provide the humanitarian relief to countries like Jordan to be able to house these folks until we got a good, the world gets a good determination of where we are.

I think what we have to understand and sometimes maybe in a world where, Tom, news moves so fast, it is so hard for us as Westerners who have tolerance to understand that there are people in this world now that despise the way we live and not only do they despise it but they believe they are rewarded if they can destroy us. And just the women that sit in this room are an abomination to them. Think about who these folks are. That's why it's so important we get together with the world. And sometimes, my sense is that the West would like to look the other way, the West would like to believe that this somehow will go away. It will not. And I have been saying for a very long period of time you either pay me now or you're going to pay me a heck of a lot later if we sit back and don't do what we need to do to destroy ISIS.

Let me also say one other thing. People say, "Well, if ISIS is gone another group will jump up, will stand up." You see, you win the battle with bullets, but the war of ideas has to be engaged. The Jewish and Christian traditions of Western civilization need to be

expressed in ways that give people hope and understanding and passion and understand that their lives make a difference. And when we let that erode then we're not as strong, and that's who we are and we shouldn't apologize for it.

THOMAS BURR: We have learned in the recent days the mastermind of the Paris attacks was a Belgian citizen. Should we bar Belgians from entering the United States?

JOHN KASICH: I think I've said all I've got to say about how I feel about the refugees and we'll go from there.

THOMAS BURR: We have a lot of questions about refugees, so let me look through a few. Let me ask you to talk about another candidate in the field right now. Governor Chris Christie said that we shouldn't be letting three year old orphan refugees in the United States. I know you're done talking about refugees, but we're not done asking. Would a three year old be allowed in?

JOHN KASICH: Look, the only thing that I'm saying is for right now until we get a handle on where we are we need to stop, and once we have a rational program and we can determine who it is that's coming and then it's another story, but for at this point in time, in light of what we're seeing in the world, it's reasonable to stop. Now, let me just say one other thing. I mentioned early on about heart and head. I have done many, many things to make sure that people who find themselves in the shadows are taken care of and I'll continue to do it, but you also have to be in a position of where you're not going to jeopardize other people, and that's the problem here. So, everybody slow down, you can have 50 different questions, but my sense is stop now, get your act together, and then we can proceed once we know where we are.

THOMAS BURR: Governor, some of your fellow Republicans on the hill have talked about using the omnibus bill to deal with the Syrian situation. Would you support a government shutdown over the Syrian immigration policy or would you have any advice to your fellow Republicans on the hill?

JOHN KASICH: Well, we have a new Speaker of the House and he should express our concern to the President. And look, as an executive I kind of like executive orders, but there is a point at which executive orders do nothing more than put your finger in the eye of the legislative branch. Most of the time, almost all the time when I do executive orders I consult with legislative leaders. I don't always reveal that to people, because sometimes these discussions have to stay private, but I think that Paul Ryan and the Congress should express itself in very clear terms, we need to take a pause and we need to get this right, and when James Clapper, the head of the NSA, and all these other intelligence officials say that we can be safe, we have a protocol and a plan to deal with this situation, we can revisit it, but at this point in time this is not what people want.

And one thing you learn when you're an executive, you need to lead, but you also have to be sensitive to what people think. You're an executive. You're not somebody that

is immune from listening to the public. It has to shape part of who you are and what you do. It doesn't mean you don't lead at the end of the day and be willing to take the heat, but public opinion which oftentimes is pretty darn good, most times is pretty darn good is something that we have to pay attention to.

THOMAS BURR: Even before the Paris attacks you called for boots on the ground to deal with ISIS. How many boots on the ground under a Kasich Presidency? Or if Obama were to take your advice today would we be looking at another multiyear engagement?

JOHN KASICH: Well, look, in terms of boots on the ground what I've said a long time ago is what I said just a few minutes ago. Pay me now or pay me a lot more later. I don't think that you can deal with ISIS by just looking the other way. And when people say, "Well how many boots on the ground?" or "What should the force look like?" That's a case where the military and the civilian experts will make recommendations, exactly where do we go, what do we do, and you sit as an executive, on so many things that I do all the time as the Governor of the State, you sit and you listen to what the experts say. But it is important they don't have group think. It's one of the things that almost did us in in the Cuban Missile Crisis, group think, everybody thinking the same way, people not being willing to tell the executive exactly what they think. That's why you get a, you've got to get a few troublemakers in the room, people that don't think like everybody else. I mean you just don't make decisions in a vacuum and you just don't make decisions with people who all think the same way.

What I do know is that we will not stop this with air power. You can bomb them until doomsday. It's just simply not going to work. You don't take back territory from the air. The air can be useful in supporting people on the ground, but this coalition needs to include many different countries, not just NATO, Turks are part of NATO but the Turks are critical. I've always been disappointed that they have not been brought into the economic side of Europe. I think they're critical to bring them towards the West. They have a history towards the West. But we absolutely need the Saudis and the Egyptians and the Jordanians and the Gulf states. I mean everybody has got to be part of this, because everybody's future is at risk.

And so I've never shied away from expressing this. Now when we say, "Are the people tired of war?" Well, we all get tired of war, but at the end of the day leaders have to rally the public to a cause that is great. As it related to Afghanistan I would not have used troop levels. I would have used Special Forces and drones to be able to deal with radicals as they popped up. In Iraq, let me say it one more time, if Saddam did not have weapons of mass destruction there is no way in the world that I would have ever thought that the U.S. should be involved, and my record will reflect it. I remember when the U.S. was engaging in a civil war in Lebanon, there were just a handful of us who voted not to be there. Civil wars do not work out well for the United States of America and we need to go where there is a significant national interest with the probability of success, the ability to do our job, and come home. Nation building, count me out. I don't believe in putting

men and women into countries to try to get people to behave the way we do in America. Just go do your job and come home.

THOMAS BURR: I want to follow up on that in a minute, sir, but I would also like to ask, you just talked about group think, so my question to you would be President Obama when he came to office talked about appointing a cabinet like Lincoln, in your cabinet would you appoint Democrats, perhaps a Socialist?

JOHN KASICH: Well, I don't know. I mean I'm not going to appoint Bernie. I mean that's not going to happen. Well sure I would appoint a Democrat. I mean why wouldn't I? I just created a task force, by the way, on community and police. I created it a long time ago to try to deal with the urban unrest that we have in our country. The Chairperson of that task force is not only a Democrat but she is a liberal Democrat who ran in the last election against a friend of mine who is a Republican. We always believe in working together. Back in the old days with Tim Penney, Tim Penney and I when he was a Democrat worked together on Penney/Kasich, take a penny out of every dollar. We had Republicans and Democrats, and then we were fought by Republicans, Democrats, and appropriators and Hillary and Bill Clinton, but we almost won, and it set the stage for where we were going. And I think many of you know about my long association and effort with Ron Dellums to limit the production of the B2. There would be Democrats who would share my ultimate goal. They don't have to think the way I think, but that they would share--

Come on. We're Americans before we're Republicans and Democrats. It's all about philosophy. And I do think in a cabinet it's always good within certain bounds to have some disruptors. It's always good because you want people to speak truth to power. That's the way you make good decisions. It makes you think deep. And I think that's what leaders do. [Applause]

THOMAS BURR: Thank you, Governor. I would like to remind our public television or radio audiences that we do invite members of the public to our events, so if you hear applause it's not a lack of journalistic objectivity. [Laughter] Back to your point a minute ago, sir, if the U.S. gets more involved in the Middle East once again how would you secure gains in the war against radical terrorism rather than give them up as the U.S. has done with ISIS's capture of parts of Iraq?

JOHN KASICH: Was that media objectivity you referred to? Yeah, I-- Look, I believe that we should systematically in the immediacy create the No Fly Zone, have the Jordanians and have the Kurds who have been great allies of ours, and why, because we have defended them for so many decades and they trust us, have them defend those sanctuaries from incursions on the ground. Article Five is something we should be embracing. An attack on France is an attack on all of us. In addition, shared intelligence is absolutely critical. And immediately we should be planning a coalition of the willing to go and destroy ISIS. At the end of it all the Kurds, I would like to see the Kurds in some sort of a commonwealth where they can be together. A state probably does not work because of the fear that Turkey has about the Kurds, but we've got to deal with Turkey,

got to deal with Uragon (?) [00:44:27], you have to do it, you have to talk about the bigger picture. Iraq, I have felt all along that Iraq would ultimately be divided into three. I always felt that Iraq would be Sunni, Shia, and Kurds. And in addition I would like to believe that if we can leave basically the composition of Syria in place it will prevent a Shia crescent from coming across the Middle East, including Syria.

So, at the end is to make sure we stabilize and we kill ISIS. That will begin to stabilize things. I am not, by the way, in favor of putting 50 advisors into Syria and potentially getting us in the middle of a civil war, but I am for destroying ISIS in Syria. These are complicated issues. But at the end also do you understand what I mean when I talk about ideas? Think about what radio for Europe meant when we bombarded the Soviet Union. Just recently we saw South Korea bombarding North Korea with messages and finally the North Koreans said, "Okay, we'll call it off." We need as the West, including some of our friends in the moderate Muslim community, to make it clear to people that you're not going to paradise by walking into a concert hall and killing innocent people. We have to win the war of ideas.

The lack of winning the war of ideas allows radical groups to sort of justify themselves. We have to engage in this aggressively with all of our allies and with the United States of America leading the way. When we and Europe, when we and Europe, they're all part of who we are, are not certain of what they believe it becomes difficult for them to be strong. We're all united by these values that have lasted for centuries. Let's talk about them. Let's tell the world about them. So it's not just winning the battle of bullets, but it's also winning the war of ideas.

THOMAS BURR: Governor, last month you presented a plan to cut taxes significantly and balance the budget within eight years. How do you propose to pay for strengthening the military and getting U.S. troops more involved in the Middle East?

JOHN KASICH: Well, the fact is that we do have a very good economic plan where the numbers actually all add up. And just to outline the plan quickly, our personal tax rates would come down to 20%, there would be some tax relief at the bottom. You will be able to go to our website soon to see where all the brackets settle down. Capital gains goes to 15%. We lowered the capital gains tax back when I was Chairman of the Budget Committee and unleashed a great amount of prosperity. It will unleash it greatly in the beginning. It will even out over time. But economic growth is important on the individual side. On the corporate side the rates go to 25%. We have a very low tax of the money that would be repatriated and then going forward no double taxation.

Now some people would like me to propose 10% tax or corporations pay nothing and all that, but I have to be realistic because what I'm proposing is not a plan to get elected but a plan to govern. It's a plan to govern, not to get elected. Now, on the spending side we believe that we can lower the growth of Medicare from seven percent to five percent, taking many of the ideas that we've had as we have slowed the growth of Medicaid. We believe we can take Medicaid from five percent to three percent. We also believe it's possible for us to repeal Obamacare and still have a program to offer health

insurance to people who need it. And we freeze non-defense discretionary for eight years. We shift a lot of programs out of the town, including the regulations on welfare, bundling up the educational programs, sending them home, job training, transportation programs, so it begins to in some respects kind of hollow out some of the purposes of big bureaucracy, and hire no new people, and military spending would go up, would go up above the House Republican level.

So you can accommodate greater defense spending. You shift power, money, and influence out of the town, you reduce the growth of Medicare and Medicaid, you have a reasonable tax plan that will grow the economy. And we think all this together, including a program to freeze regulations, will provide us about 3.9% growth.

Now, we don't make numbers up. We believe there is an element here of dynamic scoring on our tax bill, but I have been involved for a very long time in making sure that the numbers we put together adds up and at the end we get economic growth. And the formula I'm speaking about, lower taxes, restraint on spending has yielded significant job growth and significant prosperity both when I was in Washington and since I've been Governor, and the plan that I'm proposing will provide the economic growth we need to accommodate what we need to be doing in America to get to a balanced budget, to get to a point where we can begin to pay down debt, making the tax code simpler, providing the economic growth, managing government, and making America strong again for our families, our children, and our grandchildren.

THOMAS BURR: Thank you, Governor. A minute ago you talked about trying to put out a plan to govern, not to get elected. Are you at a disadvantage in this Republican field where some of your opponents' plans have been challenged for their mathematics in some form? Do you feel like it's difficult to actually put a plan in that works when you're trying to appeal to a base of voters?

JOHN KASICH: Why don't you just put the best plan you can together and let the voters make a choice? And I believe the voters at the end of the day make good choices. And I'm not about to start putting in wild ideas or just to get attention. I just don't want to do that. And the reason I don't want to do it is because I'm a dad and I want my daughters to be proud of their effort. I want my wife who has to support me through all this political stuff I do, I want her to be proud of her husband. I want to raise the bar in politics. And I think leveling with people is not inconsistent with winning. And I would invite all of you to come to New Hampshire and see how it works in the town halls where we do extremely well and where our numbers have been in the top tier all along.

You know, I don't want to look back and think that I did something that I didn't feel good about. I haven't done it throughout my entire political career. One final thing. When I was running for reelection as Governor a lot of my staff said, "You need to get out there and start attacking Barack Obama, because that will get everybody revved up." And I said, "Alright, well Obama, the President is fair game, but frankly I would rather spend my time talking about where we were, where we are, and what we're going to do." And I won the second largest electoral victory in modern Ohio history. That's where I

live. And I'm pretty happy living there and I'm pretty happy with who I am, and I think that matters. [Applause]

THOMAS BURR: Governor, President Obama is not in this race, but Hillary Clinton is. She has been criticized for her Wall Street ties. How do you respond to questions about your employment with Lehman Brothers when anti-Wall Street populism is prevalent among voters?

JOHN KASICH: Well, you know, at Lehman Brothers I ran a two man office in Columbus, Ohio, and if I was involved in bankrupting Lehman or changing the culture I should be named Pope instead of running for President of the United States. Look, I said in the last debate I believe in free enterprise, but I think there needs to be a values system that underlays it. I think there are times when the pendulum swings towards greed in a place like Wall Street, but Wall Street has its place. And I'm really happy I was there. I not only learned about how it works, but more important I learned how business leaders make decisions about jobs. And we're now up 347,000 jobs in Ohio. We have a diversified economy. I deal directly with CEOs. They know who I am. I know who they are. And it works. And I would never look the other way in terms of what the situation is there, and we need to have rules in place that guide them and we need to have regulators that not only bark but bite, and we don't need the federal government encouraging people to buy something that people can't afford.

So, I am always comfortable talking about my time at Lehman Brothers and look forward to a spirited debate about it as we get down the road.

THOMAS BURR: I keep losing count how many candidates there are, but I guess the question would be how long will it take to get down to the final four?

JOHN KASICH: See, that happens in April so they'll start basketball, Midnight Madness starts soon. I just, I think that this process of Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, it will sort itself out. You know, one interesting thing, because we talk about poll numbers, this is the reality of it, and it's why the national polls to me, outside of the fundraising quotient, doesn't mean very much. You see, if you live in Washington in order to cover a politician you take a short cab ride from your office to the capitol. If you are in the New York media market you obviously would get a lot of attention. There are not many reporters who want to consistently fly to Columbus, Ohio or any other Midwestern city to cover somebody who is actually doing a good job. If you were doing a bad job you would get all the press that you could stand.

So, I mean that's the one interesting thing about this. And national poll numbers are a challenge for me, but I think they will be corrected once we get through New Hampshire. And in terms of who is going to be around I expect to be. I don't have any doubt about being around. [Applause]

THOMAS BURR: Governor, we were talking earlier, you said you didn't want to inject politics into a debate over the Paris attacks, but your campaign today released

an ad touting your national security record. Isn't that what your campaign is doing by bringing it up now?

JOHN KASICH: I didn't know they did that and I don't know who did it and I don't know what is behind it, but you heard my speech today and I'm the person that speaks and I have said what I have to say, including in Florida, including on television on Sunday, and including the question that we have here today.

THOMAS BURR: Thank you, Governor, for being here. Before I ask the final question I have a few announcements. The National Press Club is the world's leading professional organization for journalists and we fight for a free press worldwide. For more information about the club visit our website at Press.Org and to donate to our nonprofit journalism institute visit Press.Org/Institute. I would also like to remind you about some upcoming programs. Tonight the Press Club hosts its 38th annual book fair. Tomorrow Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren will speak here. Deborah Lee James, the 23rd Secretary of the Air Force will speak at the National Press Club Luncheon on December 2nd. And Senator Trent Lott who was here a few minutes ago and Tom Daschle will be talking about their new book on January 19th.

Now I would like to present our guest with the traditional National Press Club mug.

JOHN KASICH: Beautiful. No it's wonderful.

THOMAS BURR: So, Governor, my last question is thus. At the next debate how will you stand out when there are nine other people on the stage? Do you light your hair on fire? Do you interrupt more? What do you do to stand out with those other nine candidates?

JOHN KASICH: Well, I think it's all going to depend on how the people who moderate the debate operate. I think going to 90 seconds is probably, is an improvement. But this whole business of standing out and breaking out and all that is-- The most important thing for me is let people know about my experience and let them know about what I want to do and about my concern for their families, and then in addition to that I think I'm going back to New Hampshire for two or three days this week, next week, the week after, the week after, the week after, the week after. You got where I'm going? Okay. And I'll be in Iowa next week and I'm going to South Carolina this week, so we're moving all over the place. But the thing is debates are one snippet, they're just one snippet of an overall campaign.

Let me tell you what we invest in, and this is why I'm so optimistic and buoyant about New Hampshire, and more so growing about Iowa and South Carolina, it's organization. Organization is what wins elections. And the beauty of New Hampshire is it's small, 1.3 million, and it's like running for Congress, Tom, it's like running for Congress, and that's what makes it so great. And it's a special process where the folks there can make really good choices without having to learn everything through the prism

of a campaign ad. So, hey, thanks for letting me be here, thanks for letting me speak, and thanks for putting this together in a short period of time. God bless. [Applause]

THOMAS BURR: Thank you, Governor. How about another round of applause? I appreciate you being here. I would also like to thank the National Press Club staff, including our journalism institute staff, Broadcast Center for organizing today's event. If you would like a copy of today's program or to learn more about the National Press Club go to the website Press.Org. Thank you very much. We are adjourned.
(Sounds gavel)

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