



THE CENTRE
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Public Lecture

Bill Clinton

On Globalisation

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Bill Clinton, 'On Globalisation'

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This is the transcript of *On Globalisation* given by William J Clinton. Bill Clinton is the former President of the United States

Tony Giddens:

Good evening everybody. I'm Tony Giddens, the director of the LSE. It's my great pleasure to welcome you all here this evening and to extend a particular welcome to the LSE to our highly distinguished guest, President Clinton. As I understand it, this is a return to the LSE, since I think you came here in the late 1960s occasionally when you were a student in Oxford. I first met Bill Clinton during the dialogues that were carried on between Tony Blair, Bill Clinton, and a few members of the US and the UK Cabinet starting in 1998. They started as a small event at Chequers, then they went to the White House, then they got bigger and bigger through New York, Florence, Berlin. Many people said they didn't achieve a lot, but I think they did. They established essentially a framework for progressive politics; very influential on the Labour government here, but I think also very influential on a range of social democratic governments across Europe.

During Bill Clinton's presidency the US experienced an unprecedented period of economic growth coupled to low inflation and high employment. The American economy fared far better than the Japanese economy or the core EU economies during this period. What I think is not so recognised is that during the period of the Clinton administration the long time at which economic inequality in the United States expanded was brought to a halt and reversed. Those in the bottom 10 per cent of income groups fared much better than before, and blacks and Hispanics made particular advances, and I believe this was due to the policies of the Clinton administration, especially the tax credit policies which lifted many people out of poverty. Bill Clinton is a voracious reader, and famously a master of many detailed policy areas, and his voice forgiving, because he's suffering from a fairly bad cold, I'm sure these qualities will be amply on display here this evening. To introduce the title of his lecture, I give you LSE's very own Don King, Lord Meghnad Desai.

Lord Desai:

Thank you very much. Mr President, my lords, ladies and gentlemen, it's a great pleasure for me to welcome President Clinton here this evening to LSE. The Centre for Study of Global Governance at LSE is one of the first of its kind, established 10 years ago in 1991, and we do a lot of work trying to mould opinion and influence policy on all issues to do with globalisation. The Global Dimensions programme of the LSE, which has been generously supported by BP, is what makes this occasion possible, and all I can say is that I'm really very pleased to have President Clinton here. His many achievements have been described by Tony Giddens, but for me what is always his greatest achievement is that he is the only Democratic President to be elected twice since the Second World War - and the only left-handed one in the entire 20th century. As far as I can see, in his distinguished career, he's made, I think, only two mistakes: one was that when he first came to these shores he didn't come to LSE and went to Oxford. (laughter, applause) We can forgive that because he had a fellowship to come. But he compounded the mistake by sending his daughter to Oxford. (laughter) Ladies and gentlemen, President Clinton on globalisation.

Bill Clinton:

Thank you very much. You can hear that my voice is terrible. Can you hear up there? So if you can hear me, I'll try to get through this. Lord Desai, thank you very much for inviting me here and for the work you do, and for forgiving me my two mistakes. And Tony, my old friend, it is true that I came to LSE when I was a student, but I have to acknowledge I never came here for anything remotely approaching an academic purpose. (laughter) Perhaps I will remedy that somewhat tonight. I want to thank Tony Giddens for making Tony Blair and me look good (laughter) and for the words and ideas that did so much to give life to the Third Way movement, for the constant encouragement to move beyond the false choices of the past and look at our world and our future possibilities in entirely new ways.

That's what I would like to ask you to do for a moment tonight. LSE has always had sort of a mythic place in the imagination, I think, of certain kinds of people my age. When I was young and enthralled with President Kennedy, I learned he spent the summer of 1935 here, caught in the middle of those great LSE-Cambridge debates between Von Hayek and Keynes that helped change the way people looked at the

world. When I was a student, LSE was the school in which one professor famously discouraged one of his students from his stated intention to form a skiffle group, because there was no money there. Thank God, Mick Jagger disregarded the advice. (laughter) In his own way, Mick Jagger changed the way we look at the world. Or at least, back in the sixties, the condition in which we looked at it. (laughter)

For a long time the world has turned to LSE for some understanding of each new age. A hundred years ago, Beatrice and Sidney Webb and George Bernard Shaw introduced the idea that government had certain obligations to its citizens and could actually do something to improve their lives. After the Versailles Treaty, people like Lord Attlee, Harold Laski and Vera Anstey laid the intellectual groundwork for so many of the social reforms we now take for granted, like old age pensions and national health. After World War Two, economists from these halls helped to rebuild Britain and implement the Marshall Plan. And then when the Berlin Wall fell, LSE helped the world to rebuild Central and Eastern Europe. I respect this tradition very much. It was my great honour to serve as President at the end of the Cold War and the beginning of a global age of interdependence more sweeping and profound than anything the world has ever known before, changing the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to each other in the larger world.

I tried too, to change the way people think about politics and to develop a political philosophy relevant to the new century but rooted in enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of citizens who all accept certain basic rules of the game. Everyone counts; everyone has a role to play. We all do better when we help each other. Because the world has grown increasingly interdependent and isolation is no longer an option, we need a politics of unity, a politics that integrates what we feel, what we believe and what we experience. And those of us like Professor Giddens and me and Prime Minister Blair, believe that requires us to move beyond the old dividing blocs of industrial era politics, that we had to find an economic policy that instead of being pro-Labour or pro-business, actually helped them both; that we had to find social policies that instead of just helping the poor or only helping the middle class, helped both; that instead of making choices that would protect the environment but hurt the economy, we had to find a way to advance both; that in a world in which most men and most women, most parents, are in the workforce, we

had to find a way to help citizens avoid choosing between being effective workers and effective parents, we had to advance simultaneously the cause of work and family. And I could go on and on and on. But this required us to rethink the role of government and to conclude that the primary business of government was to establish the conditions and give people the tools, at home and around the world, to make the most of their own lives.

Some people derided this whole idea as trying to have it both ways, as having no convictions, as having no content and straddling the middle of the road. But it's rather hard to quarrel with the results that the implementation of these ideas achieved, in the United States, in the UK and elsewhere where they have been seriously pursued. Last year, an author named Robert Wright published a book called *Nonzero*, some of you may have read his earlier book *The Moral Animal*, which I also highly recommend. But Wright argues that ever since the dawn of time human societies have become more and more and more complex, their interrelationships more developed and more overlapping, and he argues that the more complex human societies and their relationships get the more it becomes necessary for people to seek non-zero sum solutions. And most of you know it's a term from game theory. A zero sum game is a soccer match, an election. In order for one person to win, somebody else has to lose. A non-zero sum game is a good friendship, a good marriage, a good business partnership, a good peace process; in order for victory to accrue to one side, the other side has to feel that it has won as well. So Wright argues that with increasing sophistication in interrelationships it will become more and more necessary to find non-zero sum solutions.

That is not a prescription for a static moderation, but for dynamic progress. That is, in essence, what those of us associated with the Third Way movement tried to do. We tried to bring to politics what many of us believed, without regard to our politics, in our private lives as a religious conviction, which is that, for all of our differences that make life more interesting, our common humanity is more important and we ought to organise our lives around it. For everyone who fundamentally agrees with that, it is possible to work together and to make progress and to bridge even quite large differences. But non-zero sum solutions are not possible when we deal with people who believe our differences are more important than our common humanity. That is

the simple explanation of September 11th, where people claim the benefits of technology, open borders, easy access, widespread information and use them to hideous effect because they believed our differences were more important than our common humanity. They believed that the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon were symbols of American corruption and materialism and abuse of power.

Well, you know, I live and work in New York, my wife represents New York in the United States Senate, our daughter Chelsea, who's here with me tonight, was in lower Manhattan on September 11th. That's not what we see. There were people from over 80 nations killed, September 11th, including about 250-plus from Great Britain, and over 500 Muslims. To me, those people represent the world that I worked hard for eight years to build, a world of greater freedom and opportunity, a world of greater citizen responsibility, of both growing diversity and deeper bonds of community. Those who killed them, just saw them as legitimate targets, because they thought their differences were more important than our common humanity. I believe the clash between these views will essentially shape the soul of this new century. Obviously I believe that the vision I share will prevail, but for it to do so, four things must happen. First we have to win the fight we're in against terrorism. Second, we have to build a world with more partners and fewer terrorists. That requires us to spread the benefits and shrink the burdens of the 21st century world, something the wealthy countries have to do. Third, the poor countries have to make some changes, perhaps especially in the Muslim world, to make progress more possible. And finally, we will all have to develop a far higher level of consciousness about the correct nature of our responsibilities to each other and our relationships than anything we saw in the century from which we've just departed.

Let me take each of these briefly in turn. First, we will win the fight we're in. It won't be easy and I can't say there won't be any attacks within Great Britain or again in the United States, but we will win it. Why do I think that? Well, terror has a long history. No region of the world has been spared it, few people have entirely clean hands. In 1095, Pope Urban II urged the Christian soldiers to go on the First Crusade to capture Jerusalem. They did so. When they seized the Temple Mount, their first act was to burn a synagogue with 300 Jews. They then proceeded to kill every Muslim woman and child on the Temple Mount and to leave bitter memories that are still recounted

today in the Middle East. Throughout the 20th century people continued to be killed in staggering numbers because of their race, their ethnic origin, their tribe or their religion, even in the West. And though we Americans have come such a very long way since the dark days when African American slaves or Native Americans could be terrorised or killed with impunity, still to this day we occasionally have someone killed or terrorised because of his or her race or religion or sexual orientation. Yet in spite of this long history, no terrorist campaign has ever succeeded. In fact, they usually backfire. Indeed, the purpose of terrorism is not military victory, it is to terrorise, to affect a change in people's behaviour by making the targets afraid of today, afraid of tomorrow, afraid of each other. So they can't win unless the targets give them permission. So far, thank God, in all history nobody has given their permission. I do not believe we are about to be the first to do so. However, there is something that makes this particular terrorism more frightening: it is the combination of the perceived vulnerability of powerful and wealthy places with the extraordinary potential of the weapons at hand. So I want to talk about that a minute.

First of all, it's important to understand that from the dawn of time, since the first person walked out of a cave with a club in his hand and began to beat people over the head, there was a gap in time till somebody figured out, hey, I could put two sticks together, stretch an animal skin over it, I would have a shield and the club wouldn't work against me any more. That is always the history of combat. First the club, then the shield. The more lethal the weapons, the more important it is to close the gap in time quickly between the introduction of a new form of offence and an effective defence. Civilisation is still here, because so far, even in the nuclear age, with mutually assured destruction, we have been able to find the defence in time. There is no reason to believe it will not happen here. But there is a lot to do.

The modern world is awash in terror. Just since 1995 there have been more than 2100 attacks, no fewer than 20 in the United States, and none, save Oklahoma City, claiming a large number of lives before September 11th. The Europeans, including all of you, have been exposed to terrorist attacks on your own soil for considerably longer. And we Americans have been involved in it at least since 1983, when 240 of our marines and sailors were killed in a suicide attack in Beirut. In the years that I served as President, we worked very hard to improve our defences and to bring

terrorists to justice in the hope a day like September 11th would never come. Law enforcement officials thwarted attempts to blow up the Harlem and Lincoln tunnels in New York, the Los Angeles airport and planes flying out for the Philippines. They thwarted an attempt on the Pope's life, and just over the millennium weekend alone, attempts on the largest hotel on Mount Jordan, a Christian site in the Holy Land, two large cities in the American north-east and north-west. They brought a lot of terrorists to justice. Good people have been working on this and our defences have been getting better, but clearly we need to do more; to defend all transportation, critical infrastructure and computer networks, to break into the money networks of terrorists - something we tried to do that the Congress stopped last year but just yesterday, thank goodness, has finally decided to give the government the power to do - to track potential terrorists with legal information when they are within our borders and to secure - this is very important - to secure the world's rather vast stores of chemical, biological and nuclear materials that could be used to make weapons. There is a lot to do. But the larger point holds: terror has never worked, we have always managed to close the gap between offensive action and effective defence. We are working hard at it now. We are clearly winning in Afghanistan; our defences at home will get better, and terror will not prevail.

That brings me to the second point. As grateful as I am to Prime Minister Blair and all of our allies for supporting President Bush in this common effort against terror, as sure as I am that they're going to prevail, winning the war in Afghanistan and strengthening our defences at home will not be enough to build the world we want for our children and grandchildren. We have built a world without walls, we can't put them up again. But we'll force them, all of our children, to live in a world of barbed wire unless we reduce the number of potential terrorists and increase the number of potential partners. We have to begin with the wealthy countries' obligations to do more to spread the benefits and reduce the burdens of this modern world.

Think for a moment how you felt on September 10th. If I had asked you then what is the single driving force of the 21st century world, what would you have answered? Well, if you're British or American, you come from some other rich country or you're upbeat, it seems to me you could have given one of four positive answers. You could have said, 'the global economy has made us rich and lifted more people out of poverty

than ever before in history.' You could have said, 'no, the information technology revolution. It's driving productivity which lifts growth and there's never been anything like it.' Believe it or not, when I became President in 1993, there were only 50 sites on the worldwide web. Five-oh. When I left office eight years later, the number was 350 million and rising.

Or you might say, 'that's very impressive, but the advances in the biological sciences will affect more people more positively.' One of the happiest days of my presidency was to announce, along with Prime Minister Blair and others, the completion of the sequencing of the human genome. We have already identified the genetic variances that are high predictors of breast cancer, getting close on Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. Quite soon, young mothers will bring babies home from the hospital with little gene cards profiling their kids' future and say okay, here are the strengths, here are the problems, here's what you do. And I believe, before long babies will come home with life expectancies in excess of 90 years. Significant investments in nanotechnology, super microtechnology, will give us the diagnostic capacity to see tumours when they're only a few cells in size, raising the prospect that all cancers will be curable. Research is now under way on digital chips to replicate the highly complex nerve movements of damaged spines, raising the prospect that people long paralysed might get up and walk. This is pretty heady stuff. And to boot, we'll find out what's in the black holes in outer space. And we're still finding new forms of life in the deepest levels of the oceans and the rivers. So you could say that.

Or, if like me, you're into politics, you could say, 'well, that's all very well, but the most important thing is the explosion of democracy and diversity within democracies, because that creates the conditions which make all this other progress possible.' For the first time in history, now more than half the people of the world live under governments of their own choosing. And people are going everywhere in search of opportunity and freedom. Look around this crowd today, if I had given this speech 30 years ago this crowd wouldn't look like it does. All the young people I shook hands with outside on the way in, they wouldn't look like they did either. Democracy and diversity has made a world where a lot of good things have happened. Now, you could have said that.

On the other hand, suppose you come from a developing country, or you're more pessimistic, or you're what my wife Hillary calls your family's designated worrier. Most families have one. You could have given one of four negative answers.

You could have said, 'no, no, no, no. The biggest problem in the world is the global economy because of global poverty. Half the people live on less than on two dollars a day. A billion people go to bed hungry every night. A billion and a half people never get a clean glass of water. One woman dies every minute in childbirth. What, are you kidding me, the global economy's an asset? It's a nightmare. Half the people aren't in it.'

Or you could say, 'yeah, that may be true, but before we're consumed by that, environmental crises will tear the world apart in the 21st century. The oceans are deteriorating, and we get most of our oxygen from there. One in four people don't have water today; it's going to get worse. And most profoundly, global warming. If the climate warms for 50 years at the rate of the last 10, whole island nations in the Pacific will be flooded, we will lose in America the Florida Everglades and 50 feet of Manhattan Island. Millions of food refugees will be created as agricultural production is disrupted, a recipe for more violence, more terror, more trouble.

Or you could say, 'that may be true, but long before that happens we'll be consumed by health crises.' One in four people this year who die will perish from Aids, TB, Malaria and infections related to diarrhoea. Most of them little kids that never got a clean glass of water. If you just take Aids alone, there are now 40 million cases. 70 per cent of them are in Africa. But it's not an African problem. It is projected that in four years there will be 100 million cases. The fastest growing rates are in the former Soviet Union, on Europe's back door. The second fastest growing rate, in the Caribbean, on America's front door. My wife represents a million people who come from the Dominican Republic alone. There may be more cases in India now than in any country in the world, with the possible exception of South Africa. And China just admitted to have twice as many cases as they thought, a 67 per cent increase in reported cases in one year, and only four per cent of the adults in China have any idea how Aids is contracted and spread. So if we don't turn this around, you're looking at the most profound epidemic since the plague killed one quarter of Europe in the 14th century. Democracies will fall and you'll have millions of young people who are HIV

positive who think they only have a year or two to live and will be more than happy to join renegade armies and kill and plunder and make a very bleak mess of a lot of places in the modern world.

If I'd asked you this question on September 10th, even then, if you'd been keeping up, you might have said, 'even before Aids gets us, the world will be consumed by high tech terrorism. The marriage of modern weapons to ancient hatreds.' Isn't it ironic that we talk about sequencing the human genome in a world where the biggest problem is the oldest element of human society? We still are afraid of people who are different from us. And it's a short step from fear to dislike, to hatred, to dehumanisation, to death. And all you have to do is just look around the world, from Rwanda to Sierra Leone, to East Timor, to the Balkans, to the Middle East, and before, God bless them, my mother's people finally did the right thing, even Northern Ireland, which caused you so much heartache for so long.

So I mentioned these four positive things: the economy, information technology, scientific advance, democracy and diversity, and the four negative things: poverty, global warming, Aids and terrorism. And I would imagine that everything had some resonance with you. Why? Because we live in a world where we've taken down the barriers, collapsed the distances and spread information and technology. So all of this is real to us. Borders don't stop much, good or bad, any more. If we live in a world without walls, we have no choice but to try and make it a world where people want to be our neighbours and not our friendly terrorist. It's not rocket science, it's inevitable.

So what do we do? Well, those of us from wealthy countries first have to promote more economic opportunity and less poverty. There should be another round of global debt relief, with the debt relief tied to health care, education and development, just as it was last year. The results have been stunning. Uganda took its savings in one year and doubled primary school enrolment, cut class size. There should be another round. We fund two million micro enterprise loans a year to poor people on all continents. The better off world should fund 50 million. Look at the success of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and you will see what could be done if we got behind it. Last year we opened our markets to Africa, Caribbean, to Jordan, to Vietnam, as well as voting to let China into the WTO. In less than a year, America had increased its purchases from some African countries by one thousand per cent, and it did not hurt the American

economy. America, Europe, other wealthy countries, should do more to open our markets, and you should give special care to the Balkans and to making sure it does not slip back into the nightmare from which we rescued it.

The great Peruvian economist Hernando De Soto is doing some of the most important work in the world today. He points out, correctly, that the poor people in the world today already have five trillion dollars worth of assets in their homes and their businesses, totally useless as a basis for credit because they're not in the legal system, either because it's too costly to legalise their business - in Cairo, for example, it takes an average of 500 days if you run a bakery to go through all the hoops it takes to legalise it - it's cheaper to pay the guy not to pay taxes. In Bombay, if you have a little shack, you don't have an address, you don't have a title that you can take to a court where if you can't afford a lawyer you can at least prove out your title. So there's five trillion dollars worth of assets and nobody can get a loan. De Soto is spending his life trying to organise, first the businesses, then the homes, get them in the legal system, so poor people who work hard and have sense can get credit and advance their family fortune, promote economic growth, be part of the market economy. It's very important. The work they did in Peru before the Fujimori government started to decline led to double digit growth three years in a row. We gave him a little money when I was President, but the rich countries ought to just pay for this to be done and done as quickly as possible. It would create a whole new set of markets for us.

And the same argument applies to health care. We should simply fund Kofi Annan's 10 billion dollar Aids health fund. America's share would be about 2.2 billion, Britain's share a little under half a billion. For us, it's a tenth of a per cent of the budget. I promise you it'll cost us more if we let a lot of those African countries be destroyed, and if we let countries in central and eastern Europe be destabilised, and if we have 10-20-30 million Aids cases in India, we'll pay more.

The same argument applies to education. A year's worth of education is worth 10 to 20 per cent of income in a poor country. There are 100 million kids that never go to school. In Pakistan, the main reason that all those kids were in the madrassas that were indoctrinating them instead of educating them, teaching them that America and Israel brought dinosaurs back to earth to kill the Muslims, but not what two times two is, is that the Pakistanis ran out of money in the 1980s and couldn't support their

schools any more, and we didn't come in and help. Now, we could put 100 million kids in school for not very much money. Brazil has 97 per cent of its children in school, the only developing country with that percentage. Why? They pay the mothers in the 30 per cent of the poorest families every month for their children if they go to school 85 per cent of the time. Not the fathers, the mothers. It's a simple system and it works great. Last year I got the Congress to give me 300 million dollars to start a programme that offered poor children a nutritious meal, but only if they'd come to school to get it. You know how much 300 million dollars will buy? A meal every day, every school day for a year for over six million children. And in the initial reports, enrolments are exploding, because the mothers want their kids to have a good meal.

We just ought to fund this stuff. It costs money. It's a lot cheaper than going to war. The Afghan war costs America about a billion dollars a month. And it's about as inexpensive as war gets. For 12 billion dollars a year, America could pay more than its fair share of every programme I've mentioned. And when it comes to global warming, I just think the developed world has made a terrible mistake, especially the Americans who've fought it so far. There is a one trillion-dollar untapped market in existing alternative energy resources and energy conservation technologies, a trillion dollars today. The stuff on the horizon will put an end to the internal combustion engine in a way that will generate more jobs and clean up the environment. And I must say we've had some very good leadership coming out of Europe here, and I hope when the dust settles from the current conflict, America, Europe and Japan will get together with a plan that will actually promote energy independence, reverse global warming and generate economic activity. It's there. If we do all that, it still won't work in some places, so I just want to say briefly poor countries have to make some changes, and we have to help. We need to advance democracy, human rights and good governance. You don't find many terrorists coming out of democracy, although you get the odd one from time to time. Not many. You don't find democracies sponsoring terrorism, and they're more likely to honour human rights. But a lot of these democracies are new democracies, so they need help in increasing their capacity to deliver for their people. That also is important. And we need especial care for the debate now going on in the Muslim world. And I just want to say a little about this.

I was the first President ever to observe the feast of Id al-Fitr every year at the end of Ramadan, the first to bring large numbers of Muslims into the White House to consult on domestic and international issues. One of the best things I think President Bush has done is to go to a mosque and meet with Muslim leaders soon after September 11th, to have a breaking of the fast dinner for Muslims in the White House during Ramadan, to make it clear that America and the West are not the enemies of Islam. But we are seeing a terrific debate going on within the Muslim world and many Muslims believe that the West in general, and America in particular, are hostile to their values, to their way of life, to their economic well being. This debate is raging in the Middle East, Central Asia, and also, I would imagine, in Great Britain, and I can tell you, in New York.

Recently a Muslim chaplain was put on probation for allegedly defending Bin Laden in a prison in New York. There's an Afghan mosque in New York City where the Imam, the day after September 11th, made a wonderful, wonderful statement condemning the terror as a violation of Islam, but a minority of his congregation walked out of the mosque and began to worship in the parking lot, because they were pulling for Bin Laden. A conservative activist recently got in trouble in America for bringing people into the White House in the administration's effort to reach out to Muslim Americans; they allegedly brought people into the White House that had supported terrorist networks. This debate's going on everywhere, and we have to get into the middle of it, because we have to strengthen the forces of moderate Muslims. I will guarantee you that most Muslims in the Middle East, even today, don't know that the last time the United States and United Kingdom used military power was to protect the lives of poor Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo. They don't know that 500 Muslims died in the World Trade Centre. They don't know that the FBI recently asked for 200 Arabic speakers to help America fight terrorism, and 15,000 people volunteered. They don't know that when 18 American marines were killed in Somalia in 1993, in that raid - you probably heard Mr Bin Laden bragging about, 'oh, I trained the Somalis who killed the Americans' - they don't know why the Americans died. The United Nations asked the Americans to arrest Mohammed Adid because he had murdered 22 of our fellow peace keepers, all Pakistani Muslims. They don't know how many Muslims were murdered in the African embassy bombings. 200 Africans were killed. And they certainly do not know that the United States proposed, Israel

accepted, but the PLO rejected, in December of last year and January of this year, the most sweeping terms to provide a Palestinian state on the West Bank in Gaza and protect Palestinian and Muslim interests in Jerusalem and on the Temple Mount in all of history. Far more than anybody ever dreamed the Israelis would agree to. And the PLO said no. They don't know that. So we have to get our story out.

And finally, let me say this. You may consider this naïve, I think this is the most important thing I'm going to say. We all have to change. The poor people in the world cannot be led by people like Bin Laden who think they can find their redemption in our destruction. But the wealthy people of the world cannot be led by those who play to our self interest in a short sighted way and tell us that we can forever claim for ourselves what we deny to others. We all have to change. It all comes down to which do you believe is more important, our differences or our common humanity? This crowd in Afghanistan, like fanatics from time immemorial, are absolutely convinced our differences are more important. They think they have the whole truth: if you share it your life has value, if you don't you're a target, even if you're just a six year old girl who went to work with her mother at the World Trade Centre on September 11th. They think a community are people who look alike, think alike and act alike, and if people stray you have somebody there to beat them back into line.

Most of us believe, and indeed you could argue that the whole premise of a university requires a belief that nobody has the truth. And arguably, the more religious you are, the more you should feel this, because if you are a child of God, however you define that and worship it, you must surely feel the finite nature of your life and your mind. So most of us see life as a sort of journey where hopefully we stumble toward the truth, and we learn things from each other. So we think everybody ought to make the journey. Most of us believe you can be in our community, as I said earlier, if you simply accept the rules of the game, that everyone counts, has a role to play, we all do better when we work together. That's what this is all about. This answer is easy to give. You're all sitting there saying, that's right, that's right. But this answer is hard to live. Our boxes are real important to us. Student, professor, Indian, British, Irish. (laughter) Men, women, God forbid. Football, rugby, Tory, Labour. You think about it. Think about how many of your categories you think about between now and the

time you get home tonight. We have to organise reality into these little boxes, otherwise we couldn't navigate the world.

But then some time along life's way it dawns on us that if all we are is the sum of our boxes, we will never really be connected to the rest of humanity. And so the way we understand reality is helpful to us, but it isn't the whole ball of wax. So you come to the conclusion that our common humanity is more important. But it's hard to live. When I was the age of my daughter and the students who are here, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King were murdered because they tried to reconcile the American people to each other and they did not want to be reconciled to their common humanity. Perhaps the greatest spirit to live in my lifetime, Mohandas Gandhi, was killed by a Hindu, not a Muslim, not a Tamil, but a Hindu. Why? Because Gandhi said India should be for the Hindus and the Muslims and the Jains and the Sikhs and the Jews and the Christians and the Buddhists and whoever else wants to show up. And this Hindu guy was really mad, because there was Gandhi, outside the box again. Couldn't be a good Hindu, couldn't be a good Indian, so he murdered him. He gave his whole life, 78 years, to bringing India into being, and getting you off their back. (laughter)

Sadat was murdered, not by an Israeli commando, but by other Egyptians. Why? Oh, he was not a good Muslim or a good Egyptian because he wanted secular government and peace with Israel.

And one of the best people I ever knew in my life, Yitzak Rabin, was murdered after a lifetime defending his country, not by a Palestinian terrorist, but by an Israeli who thought he was not a good Israeli or a good Jew because he wanted to lay down a lifetime of fighting and give the Palestinians their homeland and find security for Israel in a world with more partners and fewer terrorists. The answer is easy to give, but hard to live. But this is what this whole deal is about in the end. Look, we're going to win this fight in Afghanistan, we're going to make our defences better, but if you want this world without walls to be a good home for your children we'll have to make it a home for all the world's children. Thank you very much.

Question and answer session

Giddens: Ladies and gentlemen, President Clinton has very kindly agreed to answer some questions sent in by members of the LSE community. I'll reduce the number of questions to save your voice, but if you'd answer two or three it'd be very good for us. The first one is from -

Clinton: Little late for that, I think.

Giddens: Well, let me know if it fails. From Adam Austerfield, an LSE graduate and actually one of the organisers of this event, who asked the following question. Do you believe that a significant and coordinated increase in intelligence gathering and covert operations by the US and its allies could help prevent such tragic events as September 11th, but will this necessarily be at great cost to civil liberties?

Clinton: Yes and no. Let me explain what I mean. First of all, when something like September 11th happens, millions of people begin to think about this for the first time, and when they do they assume that everybody else started thinking about it for the first time, so nobody did anything on it before, and everyone was asleep at the switch. The truth is, after Bin Laden blew up the two embassies in Africa in '98, because of intelligence coordination, with no abuse of civil liberties, we took down, I can't remember, I think five or six of his cells in Europe. Just convicted four people in New York who were part of it.

Now, if you have increased coordination, how would that lead to a restriction on civil liberties? It can only do so in one of two cases: either you pass laws which permit people to do things to suspects they couldn't otherwise do, or you begin to cooperate with countries that, in effect, torture potential sources of information. There was an interesting story, I'm embarrassed I don't remember the facts, but maybe that's just as well, but in one of the Balkan countries there was a story about a month ago about American and other allied intelligence officers cooperating with people there and they tortured people and gave information to us that apparently was helpful, so did that mean we support torture? And if we didn't, should we, if it saved enough lives? It was really difficult and this story broke right after the horror of September 11th. But let me tell you, I don't think you even have to get there, for the following reasons: there is

nowhere near the level of coordination there should be - there is between the United States and Great Britain, we're great - together I mean. We don't fight with each other, we share most everything we know and when we don't we normally accept there was a good reason for it. You know what I mean, it's a good, high trust, high efficiency, high production relationship. But there is a lot to be done to establish that everywhere else, and to increase the sheer capacity of intelligence services in some other countries. First point.

The second point I want to make is that, without getting into abuses of civil liberties, the first thing we need to do is to bring the computer tracking capacity of the governments of the world where terrorists would like to go and move around, as they did in the United States for quite a long time, just bring the capacity of the intelligence agency up to that of the basic private sector companies that do mass mailing for a living. (laughter) Now, you laugh about this, but there are private - there's some company in Great Britain that mails the *Economist* out every week. Maybe they mail lots of bank statements or whatever. And you're in their computer. In America, our biggest mass mailing company has 95 per cent of us in a computer. They know where we live, they know where our second homes are, they know the utilities to which we pay our utility bills, they often know how many credit cards we have and what our accumulated bill is. They've had that stuff for years. If they've got it, the government should have it on suspected terrorists so at least they could keep up with where they are and what they're doing. Two of these people who did this thing on September 11th came into the United States, were red-flagged, if you will, by the intelligence agencies, had a visa for New York, scooted away to Florida. If we had had the capacity that some of these private sector companies have, we might have been able to find them. So I think our government is now doing the right thing, they're going to use the private resources that they can until they develop the government's capacity. The only thing I'd say is, let's just don't rush headlong into taking everybody's civil liberties away and assume that's the price of better intelligence. It may be that better technology and better cooperation will get more results than taking civil liberties away.

Giddens: This is from Stanley Pignal, a final year undergraduate in international relations, and Stanley asks would Europe be safer with a NATO that includes Russia rather than one without it?

Clinton: Yes. Unless Russia - you see, NATO makes, first of all, I think the answer is yes and I think we're moving there. I talked to Boris Yeltsin about Russia being in NATO. But I explained that, you know, the only problem is NATO is a consensus organisation. So, for example, we had to get everybody to say yes before we went into Bosnia with air power, and we sure had to get everybody to say yes before we fought a protracted conflict in Kosovo. And it could be very tendentious, but we developed, in my time, we expanded NATO, agreed to keep the doors open and bring some more members in this year, next year, and sign special relationships with Russia and Ukraine. I personally think we're moving in that direction, and I think that the more closely NATO is identified with, and Russia identified with NATO, the better. Because the main thing we have to do now, the big problem there with the Balkan wars, the big thing we've got to do now, is to make sure the Balkans don't slide back, they keep going forward. But the Russians do have, you know, they have special problems because of their neighbourhood. If Russia had an even closer relationship with NATO, we might be able to be even more effective in working together. I tried for years to work with the Russians to solve the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which would have, in ways that no one ever thinks about today, made five years from now a lot better and a lot more secure from an energy point of view. It won't solve all the problems. Greece and Turkey are both NATO members. They were great in Kosovo and Bosnia, but I have utterly failed to bring them together over Cyprus. And yet if they did solve the Cyprus problem together, the Greeks and the Turks could shepherd the future of the Balkans in a way that would make all of Europe much more secure and at peace and much more prosperous. So it's not a cure-all, but I think the answer, on balance, is yes.

Giddens: The third and final question is an easy one, and it comes from the leaders of the Student Union, and the honorary secretary is sitting up near the back there, and it goes as follows: Do you think Hillary will be the first female President of the United States (laughter) and if so, will she be any good at it? (laughter)

Clinton: You know, if you think that's an easy question (laughter) I'm gonna have to revise my estimate of your brilliance. (laughter) The truth is, I don't know. She says not. About whether she'll ever run for President. I don't know. She just got to the Senate and she's doing a great job. I'm very proud of her. She's working like crazy and she's had an enormous job to do. They just got another three billion dollars for the state of New York that some people didn't want to give them, right here at the end of the year. But I think, you know, now is not a time that any American is thinking very much about politics, and I think her view is she got this term from the people of New York and she's got to serve it and do the best she can with it, and then see what happens. So I don't know.

The answer to the second question is, if she got it would she be any good at it, she would be unbelievably good. She's the ablest person I have personally ever known. I mean, she has the best combination of mind and heart, of toughness and compassion and administrative capacity - she's better at running things and keeping the trains going than I am - than of anybody I've ever known. So yeah, she'd be great at it. But I have no idea whether anybody could ever persuade her to do it, because I think she's amazed to be a Senator. When I first met her she told me she loved public life and never wanted to be elected to anything. So, I doubt - you know, I have no knowledge of any impending campaign, but if she ever got there, she'd be great, just great. Thank you.

Giddens: Ladies and gentlemen, could I ask everyone to stay very strictly in their seats until President Clinton leaves the auditorium. Bill, you won't remember this, but we were down in Florida at a discussion group with the DLC about three years ago or something, and we were wandering around between these sessions, you'd just been talking about China, as I remember, and we were on the edge of the golf course and you came up and gave us this golf lesson, a long golf lesson. We applied the principles and the ball I hit went right into a tree miles over to the right, I never saw it again. But we did enjoy the lesson and we've got you here an LSE cap you can forever wear on the golf course, should you choose to. (laughter)

Clinton: Thank you very much, thank you.

Giddens: Can I just say before President Clinton leaves, you'd have to go an awful long way to hear a better lecture than that.

Desai: Hear, hear.

Giddens: Please give him a big round of applause.