



University of New Mexico School of Law CLE Programs
“The War on Terror and U.S. Foreign Policy”

William H. Taft IV, Esq.

Monday, April 23, 2007, 5:30-7:00 p.m., Rm. 2402

UNM School of Law, Albuquerque

1.5 General CLE Credits - \$39 (free if not attended for credit)

Free parking in Law School “L” lot.

Funding provided by the Guadalupe Institute.

William H. Taft IV, Esq. is of counsel to the Fried Frank law firm Wash., D.C. From 2001-05, he was legal adviser to the U.S. Department of State. He has also served as U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO, Deputy and Acting Secretary of Defense, and General Counsel for the Department of Defense.

Mr. Taft will explore important domestic and international legal issues raised by the war on terror. How has the law affected the way the U.S. has engaged in the conflict, and how has the conflict affected the law? Mr. Taft will discuss the substance of new practices and the means by which they have been put in place. He also will consider how terrorism has affected other countries’ laws. Please join us!

CLE registration at the door or in advance at:

<http://lawschool.unm.edu/announcements/cle-impact-terrorism/index.php>



Antonio Gandara / Daily Lobo

William Taft, a lawyer and former adviser to the Department of Defense, talks about U.S. foreign policy Monday at the law school.

Lawyer: U.S. can't go it alone in Iraq

by Jeremy Hunt

Daily Lobo

The United States needs to promote and conform to international law if it wants success in the Middle East, said a former legal adviser to the Department of Defense.

William Taft, an adviser during President George W. Bush's first term, said that after the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the United States began to break away from its history of encouraging countries to work together.

"In 2001, people took office who didn't want international law," he said. "When the opportunity came to enact their ideals, they were ready."

Taft spoke to more than 75 people about U.S. foreign policy and the war on terror at the law school Monday.

Taft is a lawyer for Fried Frank law firm's Washington, D.C., office.

Except for a period of isolationism during the Great Depression, the United States has worked to establish global courts, Taft said.

The United States started to show signs of disdain toward global subjugation again in the 1980s, such as refusing to adhere to the rulings of the International Court of Justice, he said.

Taft said the world court was perceived as something weaker states could use to reduce the United States' power.

"The U.S. emerged from the Cold War as the world's lone superpower," he said. "In this circumstance, leaders thought our interests could be met by a unilateral approach to foreign policy, rather than by negotiations."

The United States made an effort at the beginning of its war on terror to gain international support for the wars in the Middle East, Taft said.

When the United States attacked Afghanistan, it had approval from the Security Council and support from NATO, he said.

"In this way, our traditional support for international law

contributed to our success in the beginning of Afghanistan," he said.

A major change came in 2002, when the United States declared that the Geneva Conventions did not apply to enemy combatants, Taft said.

He said the announcement alienated many of the United States' allies.

"They did not view this development favorably," he said. "In this way, the doctrine of unilateralism has become a self-fulfilling prophecy."

Support continued to wane as the United States began to seek approval for a military campaign against Iraq, he said.

Taft said the United States had legal authority to attack Iraq because U.N. resolutions required Iraq to disarm its nuclear weapons program, including Resolution 1441, which gave Iraq "a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations."

Law student Joachim Marjon, who attended the event, said Taft's justification was interesting.

Marjon said the resolutions do not justify the war in Iraq, and the U.S. should have found alternatives.

"I think invasion and ousting a government is a little more than a correction or force of compliance," he said.

Taft said too much emphasis is placed on what is going wrong with the war in Iraq, and not on things going well in the Middle East.

"Five years later, there is some good news, and that is the threat terrorism poses to our country has diminished significantly," he said. "The president and the administration deserve credit."

However, the Bush administration made a mistake by curtailing international law, Taft said.

"We can never defeat terrorism in Iraq or around the world without support from other states," he said. "I would simply say it's time to pick up where we left off."