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PRESENTER: Did you have to argue that in the caucus or did they all accept that yes that's right, Mr Key, let's go with it.

KEY: No that's been well and truly accepted in the caucus. I mean this is a position which I think has been spelt out over a period of time in fairness by Murray McCully since he's ah had the job as foreign affairs spokesman and I think has been very logical and coherent.

PRESENTER: So it's a pragmatic acceptance of the reality and also an acceptance that it wouldn't gain much traction with the electorate were you to try and change it.

KEY: And partly in acceptance that look I'm a new leader. I don't come with a lot of baggage that's around my ankles from, from battles fought long ago. I've always said and I continue to say in my speeches and I mean it, I'm interested in what works and what will serve New Zealand well and I think in modern 21st century what serves New Zealand well is an independent foreign policy where we make decisions here in New Zealand on what is in the best interests of New Zealand.

PRESENTER: You say National will seek an early opportunity to move the US bilateral relationship forward on areas of common interest. Do I take it then you didn't mention Iraq because that's not an area where we've got common interest.

KEY: We certainly don't have a common interest in Iraq and um I mean frankly ah, you know, the war in Iraq is, is over. I mean the war was over in a very short period of time. You've now got a