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## Powell shares thoughts, plans with Butler crowd

Ex-secretary of state says he's not seeking a job in the next administration

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Former Secretary of State Colin Powell told a packed auditorium at Butler University on Monday that he had no plans to seek an office in the next presidential administration.

"But if any president -- if he or she comes up to you -- you have to think about it, you have to take it seriously," he said. "But I am not currently seeking a position in any administration."

The retired four-star general peppered with anecdotes an hourlong speech that touched on diversity, immigration policy and international diplomacy.

During a question-and-answer session with the audience, he said the U.S. needs to pursue talks with Iran over that country's disputed nuclear program.

"We're the strongest nation in the world -- why should we be afraid to talk to them?" he said. "I think our policy is shortsighted."

Powell also said he endorsed an immigration policy that would protect America's borders, regularize the roughly 12 million people who are here illegally and devise a plan to allow immigrant workers to enter the country "legally and with dignity."

He lauded the increased openness and economic growth of China and predicted the country would be the world's largest economy in 20 years and an important U.S. trading partner.

"Don't expect them to become Jeffersonian Democrats in our lifetime," he said. "But the only thing they'll be fighting us for is more shelf space at Wal-Mart."

Powell also told the crowd of about 2,000 people gathered for the speech that U.S. leaders need to unify with other countries to address global warming, to increase jobs for the poor and to fix the country's troubled schools.

"I didn't expect him to have such a sense of humor," said 57-year-old Indianapolis resident Joyce L. Moore. "I also expected him to be more toward his party, but he was more for humanity."

Powell's speech marked the 20th anniversary of Butler's Celebration of Diversity Distinguished Lecture Series. Past speakers have included former President George H.W. Bush, Coretta Scott King and Spike Lee.