

rights of minorities, and implementing military reforms. These values are the hallmark of the NATO alliance, and they must not be neglected.

Secretary Armitage underscored this point to NATO aspirant countries at the V-10 summit in Bucharest. He reaffirmed President Bush's commitment to enlargement, which the President made clear in his remarks in Warsaw, Poland last June. Secretary Armitage called on the aspirant countries to continue their work, saying, "We believe that the conditions are better than ever to pursue a robust enlargement. Now it's up to you. You have worked hard on your Membership Action Plans . . . You have pursued political and economic reform programs; and you have continued to restructure your militaries. These efforts must continue."

I was pleased when NATO foreign ministers again confirmed their belief in the importance of NATO enlargement at the ministerial meeting last week, noting "At their Prague Summit in November this year, our Heads of State and Government will launch the next round of NATO enlargement. This will confirm the Alliance's commitment to remain open to new members, and enhance security in the Euro-Atlantic area."

As the U.S. Government has done, NATO foreign ministers called on aspirant countries to continue their work to join the alliance not only in the upcoming months, but in the years beyond November's summit.

As we approach the Prague Summit, I look forward to continued discussion about the key issues facing the NATO Alliance. I am pleased that the Secretary of State's visit to Reykjavik was productive, providing a solid foundation for the ambitious agenda to be tackled in Prague. I am confident that our visit to Bulgaria for the meeting of the NATO parliamentary assembly will also serve as a forum to further discussion on the subjects of new capabilities, new members and new relationships.

I am pleased that the Senate voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Freedom Consolidation Act last week, which passed by a vote of 85 to 6. This bill puts the Senate on record in support of enlargement of the alliance in Prague, expressing the belief that NATO should remain open to Europe's new democracies able to accept the responsibilities that come with membership.

At the same time, as I expressed last week and many of my colleagues made clear during Senate debate of the measure, this does not guarantee Senate support for the extension of invitations to all nine candidate countries in Prague. There is still work to be done, and NATO aspirants should continue to make progress on their membership Action Plans in the months leading to Prague.

As a member of Congress who has long been involved with Euro-Atlantic issues, I understand the importance of

NATO expansion to strengthening security and stability in Europe. I supported enlargement of the alliance in 1997; I will again support enlargement at Prague. And I believe NATO should be open to further expansion in the future.

It is clear that the selection of new members this year will take place in a world vastly different than it was during the last round of enlargement; nonetheless, we should continue to explore questions on enlargement as NATO moves forward to strengthen its ability to provide for the collective defense of Europe in the post September 11th security environment.

I strongly believe that supporting NATO expansion demonstrates our country's commitment to freedom, democracy and peace, and I will continue to promote expansion of the Alliance to include Europe's new democracies which demonstrate the ability to handle the responsibility of NATO membership.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S KNOWLEDGE OF SEPTEMBER 11

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I take a moment to add my voice to those who were outraged and offended last week at these idle attempts by some Members of Congress to impugn the integrity of our President, George W. Bush. Sure, they all now will deny that was their intent because they have been home and they have heard from their people, and the people do not believe it. They know it is cheap politics.

Let's not kid ourselves. The statements some of our colleagues made on this floor, in the other body, and in the press had one clear inference and insinuation: They were suggesting, even charging, that President Bush had prior knowledge about what was going to happen on September 11, that he could have done something to prevent the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, and he did not do anything about it.

While they were making these accusations based on leaks from classified intelligence briefings, they were clearly questioning the competence, the truthfulness, and the integrity of our President. As Vice President DICK CHENEY said Sunday, these charges made through these kinds of statements were outrageous and beyond the pale. Anyone who has the slightest understanding of intelligence briefings knows that raw scraps of information, of which there are hundreds and thousands at any given time, cannot be equated with knowing the details of a specific plot.

I have served on the Senate Intelligence Committee since 1994. We get briefings, and the briefings come in sometimes daily, sometimes weekly, sometimes monthly, where they have an assessment of accusations, a threat

assessment, and there is kind of a summary page on top for people who do not want to wade through all of that material. In any given report, there are sometimes over a thousand threats, and the threats having to do with this never made it to the executive summary.

While these people were making these accusations based on leaks about classified intelligence briefings, they were clearly questioning the competency of this President.

I am heartened that the American people have so resoundingly repudiated the suggestion that President Bush is somehow culpable for what happened on September 11. Let's also be clear that any truly thorough investigation of what happened on September 11 must extend back into the actions and inactions of the previous administration and what it did and did not do in addressing terrorism on its watch.

Today's editorial in the Washington Times spells out a few things we need to remember in order to put September 11 in context. In the February 1993 World Trade Center bombing, six people were killed, a thousand wounded; Ramsey Youseff, attack mastermind, connected to Iraq intelligence. In October 1993, during the Somalia firefight, we remember so well the 18 American Rangers who were killed in Mogadishu, their naked bodies dragged through the streets. Militia were trained at that time by the al-Qaida. We know that today.

June 1996, Khobar Towers bombing: 19 U.S. soldiers killed in Saudi Arabia, al-Qaida terrorists among those involved. August of 1998, two U.S. Embassy bombings in Africa: 224 people were killed. Al-Qaida terrorists were involved again. Then-President Clinton launched 75 cruise missiles at an empty Afghan camp and a Sudanese pharmaceutical factory.

October 2000, the U.S.S. *Cole* bombing: 17 U.S. sailors were killed. Again, al-Qaida was involved. All evidence points to the fact that they were involved.

In each case, the Clinton administration sought to avoid taking firm steps against Osama bin Laden and other terrorist groups that have targeted U.S. interests, U.S. soldiers, and U.S. citizens. Certainly, any investigation of failures in the war on terrorism will take these issues into careful consideration.

As the Washington Times editorial says today:

Given the abysmal performance of the Clinton administration in combating terrorism during the 1990s, it would be a huge mistake for Democrats to attempt to gain political mileage by blaming September 11 on President Bush.

I ask unanimous consent that the entire editorial be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. (See Exhibit No. 1.)

Mr. INHOFE. A few of the quotes that came from Senators, and I am

only going to quote four Members of Congress, one House Member and three Senators. Although I could quote about 10 of them, I think my point is made by these four. One Senator said:

I am gravely concerned about the information provided us just yesterday that the President received a warning in August about the threat of hijackers by Osama bin Laden and his organization. It clearly raises some very important questions that have to be asked and have to be answered.

Another Senator said:

We have learned something today that raises a number of serious questions. We have learned that President Bush had been informed last year before September 11 of a possible plot by those associated with Osama bin Laden to hijack a U.S. airline.

Another Senator:

I don't know, again, what he knew and what the White House knew and when they knew it and what they did about it . . . but if prior information had been warnings were there . . .

Another Member on the floor said:

Yet we have had the gnawing question: was there something that could have been done to prevent the attacks on September 11?

I am very proud of the Senator occupying the chair now because he refrained from trying to engage in this type of political activity.

What do all four Members who made these statements on the floor of the House and Senate have in common? They are all four running for President of the United States. It is unconscionable that anyone would imply our God-fearing President, George W. Bush, might have known something about this and not done everything he could to prevent it. This is simply politics at its worst.

EXHIBIT 1

DEMAGOGUING SEPTEMBER 11

Just a few days ago, Democrats on Capitol Hill seemed quite eager to make political hay out of news reports suggesting that President Bush might have known in advance about the September 11 attacks. Prominent Democrats like Sens. Tom Daschle, Hillary Rodham Clinton and House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt have loudly demanded investigations into what the administration knew about the possibility that terrorists were preparing to attack the United States.

By Sunday, however, some of the harshest Democratic critics were clearly having second thoughts about such a brazen attempt to use September 11 to score political points against Mr. Bush. "I never, ever thought that anybody, including the president, did anything up to September 11 other than

their best," Mr. Gephardt said. This is a politically prudent move on Mr. Gephardt's part. Given the abysmal performance of the Clinton administration in combatting terrorism during the 1990s, it would be a huge mistake for Democrats to attempt to gain political mileage by blaming September 11 on President Bush.

Time and time again, the Clinton White House tried to avoid taking firm steps against Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda and other terrorist groups that have targeted the United States. As David Horowitz noted on The Washington Times' op-ed page yesterday, the Clinton administration did nothing in response to al Qaeda's February 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, in which six persons were killed and nearly 1,000 wounded. Moreover, President Clinton and his aides sought to play down the fact that the mastermind of the attack was Ramzi Youssef, an Iraqi intelligence agent. Journalist Andrew Sullivan quotes Clinton aide George Stephanopoulos as saying that the Clinton administration ignored the implications of the WTC attack because "it wasn't a successful bombing."

Nine months later in Somalia, Mohammed Farah Aided's militiamen, who were trained by al Qaeda, killed 18 American soldiers and dragged their bodies through the streets of Mogadishu. Mr. Clinton's response was to end the U.S.-led humanitarian mission in Somalia and send veteran diplomat Robert Oakley to negotiate surrender terms. In June 1996, 19 American servicemen were killed when al Qaeda joined forces with the Iranian- and Syrian-backed Hezbollah to bomb the Khobar Towers apartment complex in Saudi Arabia. The Saudis refused to cooperate with FBI agents sent to investigate the matter, so Washington just forgot about it. Mr. Sullivan notes that in October, a former Clinton administration official told The Washington Post that, had Mr. Clinton made a serious effort to rein in al Qaeda then, "We probably would have never seen a September 11."

In 1998, as Mr. Clinton was preparing to inform the nation of his affair with Monica Lewinsky, al Qaeda killed 224 persons in bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. So Mr. Clinton responded by firing 75 missiles at suspected bin Laden training camps in Afghanistan (bin Laden escaped unharmed) and to mistakenly destroy a "nerve gas factory" in Khartoum which was actually making pharmaceutical products. Two years later, the United States did nothing of consequence in response to the bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen, in which 17 Americans died. "Clearly, not enough was done" to combat terrorism during the Clinton years, former Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick acknowledged shortly after the September 11 attacks. Mrs. Gorelick added that even though President Clinton doubled the size of the FBI's counterterrorism budget, the bureau was so slow to hire agents that the money was never used.

As for Mrs. Clinton, investigative journalist Steven Emerson notes that she and her husband "repeatedly wine and dined at the White House" members of the American Muslim Council (AMC), including Abdulrahman Alamoudi, an apologist for Hamas, which has repeatedly denied it is a terrorist group. The AMC, Mr. Emerson adds, provided talking points for Mrs. Clinton's syndicated newspaper column and speeches and was even permitted to organize a reception for itself at the White House. In short, the Democrats are in no position to smear Mr. Bush on September 11 or terrorist in general.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, May 22, 2002.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:51 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, May 22, 2002, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate May 21, 2002:

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

JAMES THOMAS ROBERTS, JR., OF GEORGIA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE JOHN W. CALDWELL, TERM EXPIRED.

JAMES ROBERT DOUGAN, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE BARBARA C. JURKAS, TERM EXPIRED.

DAVID SCOTT CARPENTER, OF NORTH DAKOTA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF NORTH DAKOTA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE BRIAN C. BERG, TERM EXPIRED.

JAMES MICHAEL WAHLRAB, OF OHIO, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE ROY ALLEN SMITH, TERM EXPIRED.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate May 21, 2002:

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) VIVIEN S. CREA
REAR ADM. (LH) ROBERT F. DUNCAN
REAR ADM. (LH) KEVIN J. ELDRIDGE
REAR ADM. (LH) THOMAS J. GILMOUR
REAR ADM. (LH) JEFFREY J. HATHAWAY
REAR ADM. (LH) CHARLES D. WURSTER

THE ABOVE NOMINATIONS WERE APPROVED SUBJECT TO THE NOMINEES' COMMITMENT TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS TO APPEAR AND TESTIFY BEFORE ANY DULY CONSTITUTED COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE.

COAST GUARD NOMINATION OF MIKEAL S. STAIER.