

this Nation, in a joint meeting. He is in the Chamber.

RECESS

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess for 3 minutes so that the Prime Minister of Australia may be greeted.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 11:10 a.m., recessed and reassembled at 11:13 a.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. NELSON of Florida).

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST
THE UNITED STATES—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Virginia is recognized for up to 10 minutes.

The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, my fellow Members of the Senate: This is a very sad day as we witness all of the heart-breaking implications, tragedies and lives lost as a result of yesterday's dastardly terrorist attacks on the United States.

Yesterday's attacks were attacks not just on our particular Commonwealth of Virginia or State of New York or the United States; rather it is an attack on freedom-loving people and all the principles that we stand for as a unique and great nation.

On Monday afternoon, Senator BOXER and I were ready to introduce a resolution condemning the suicide bombings in the Middle East. We would have introduced that resolution on Monday, but wanted to include another "whereas" clause recognizing the attacks in Israel on Sunday. We now see with great shock and horror that our United States is obviously not impervious to these suicide bombings and such vicious attacks on innocent people.

What we need to do now is coalesce. Coalesce as a people with our shared beliefs. Coalesce to comfort those who have lost loved ones. And then we must determine where we must improve and move forward to try to prevent such acts from occurring in the future. First, our goal and prayers right now must be focused on the rescue, hoping that we can save those who are still alive. Secondly, we need to find and ascertain as many details and information as to determine how our security was breached so as to hopefully prevent it in the future. And thirdly of course, we will hold accountable those who are responsible for this attack and attain justice.

Presently, we are hearing stories of great heroes just in the first day of recovery. People who knew that the building was going to collapse, but nevertheless stayed there trying to usher people out. On C-Span this morning, one of those who was just a volunteer helper knew what was going on . . .

where those who were emergency, fire and rescue workers and FBI agents were as well . . . knowing that the building was going to collapse . . . staying there knowing those were the last minutes of their life trying to save other people.

The same was happening in Virginia where we have lost many lives, untold numbers, undetermined as of yet, at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, as well as the passengers on flight 77 flying from Dulles, Virginia, that was hijacked and crashed into the Pentagon. Reports in Virginia indicate that casualties in the Pentagon may be as high as 800, or hopefully, as low as 100. I pray to God it is as low as possible.

There are great stories of bravery, with people going above and beyond what is expected, and that should give us comfort as a nation. This tragedy has affected many lives, and we still don't know how many lives. It will probably take a week if not weeks to determine how many lives have been lost. In the middle school that my daughter attends, children were crying because their parents work at the Pentagon. Others work at Fort Belvoir and they worried that Fort Belvoir was being hit. There's only maybe a couple of dozen houses in our development that my family just moved into but one youngster who came by our house to get to know my children . . . his father was on Flight 77 from Dulles.

So, as the days go forward, we're all going to be learning these stories of innocent people whose lives have been lost and the families that will forever be scarred with the loss of that loved one. Our thoughts and prayers must be with those families. Whether they're lost in the New York City attack which includes victims from New York, Connecticut and New Jersey. Lost also are many people hailing from Virginia. Here in the D.C. area, I am sure there are folks from Maryland and the District lost. Clearly people from Massachusetts and New England on the hijacked flight from Boston were lost. Also undoubtedly lost were many people from California, since the destination of all of those flights was to be California.

This is truly a day that will live in infamy. History will record this as the most violent, insane, vile act that has ever been perpetrated on our homeland in the United States of America. We need to be united, coalesced as Americans, along with our allies in our resolve, our resolve to pursue these cowardly conspirators who perpetrated these murderous acts.

Our response and justice must be sure; we need to be swift in our assessment of culpability; and we need to be commensurately severe. In my view, we have allowed terrorism to go on too long, thinking that we could be immune from it. But nevertheless, we need to recognize that we're going to have to wage warfare.

These people have struck against the symbol of American strength and power. They are not, though, going to be able to weaken the will of the people of the United States. We will become more united, defending our interests and our principles. We will also stick together, not just as Virginians and New Yorkers, but as Americans aiding and helping the families who have lost loved ones in whatever way we can. The senior Senator from Virginia, JOHN WARNER, and I will work together to make sure that for those Federal, military and civilian employees that the Government will do all that we can to assist the families. And it's not just as Virginians. I know that the Presiding Officer of the Senate, Senator NELSON, from Florida, cares just as much as anybody else does. And so we are all going to stick together in that regard for the grieving families of victims and harmed communities.

Finally, Mr. President, as we respond here at home to what we learn from these attacks, we cannot be tempted in any way to diminish what makes us a great nation. And what makes us a great nation is that this is a country that understands that people have fundamental God-given rights and liberties and our government is constituted to protect those rights. We cannot—in our efforts to bring justice—diminish those liberties.

Clearly, this is not a simple, normal criminal case. This is an act of war, and those rules of warfare apply. But at home and domestically, we need to make sure that we are not tempted to abrogate any civil rights such as habeas corpus or protections against unreasonable searches and seizures, the freedom of expression and peaceable assembly, or freedom of religion. And just because somebody may come from an ethnic background, that means nothing in the exercise of their rights as citizens. They are American citizens. And so let's make sure that in our anger and in our efforts to bring justice, we remember our basic foundational civil liberties and do not abrogate them.

We are a nation of laws, of good-hearted people, of loving people. And so I would say in closing, Mr. President, let's make sure we pray for and comfort those who have lost loved ones.

Let's get the facts, move swiftly and properly. But most importantly, as Americans, let's stay strong and vigilant. Let's stay resolved, and let's keep moving forward. Because, indeed, all the world is watching, not just the Senate; they're watching the United States and Americans. What will their impression? Let's keep moving forward. We are the beacon for freedom-loving people in the world, and by sticking together we will persevere. We will achieve justice. And we'll come out safer and stronger in the end.