

*Sept. 15 / Administration of George W. Bush, 2001*

Nation. I will not settle for a token act. Our response must be sweeping, sustained, and effective.

We have much to do and much to ask of the American people. You will be asked for your patience, for the conflict will not be short. You will be asked for resolve, for the conflict will not be easy. You will be asked for your strength, because the course to victory may be long.

In the past week, we have seen the American people at their very best everywhere in America. Citizens have come together to pray, to give blood, to fly our country's flag. Americans are coming together to share their grief and gain strength from one another.

Great tragedy has come to us, and we are meeting it with the best that is in our country, with courage and concern for others, because this is America. This is who we are. This is what our enemies hate and have attacked. And this is why we will prevail.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:55 a.m. in the Laurel Cabin at Camp David for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

## Remarks on Arrival at the White House and an Exchange With Reporters *September 16, 2001*

*The President.* Today millions of Americans mourned and prayed, and tomorrow we go back to work. Today people from all walks of life gave thanks for the heroes; they mourned the dead; they asked for God's good graces on the families who mourn. And tomorrow the good people of America go back to their shops, their fields, American factories, and go back to work.

Our Nation was horrified, but it's not going to be terrorized. We're a great nation. We're a nation of resolve. We're a nation that can't be cowed by evildoers.

I've got great faith in the American people. If the American people had seen what I have seen in New York City, you'd have great faith too. You'd have faith in the hard work of the rescuers. You'd have great faith because of the desire for people to do what's right for America. You'd have great faith because of the compassion and love that our fellow Americans are showing each other in times of need.

I also have faith in our military. And we have got a job to do. Just like the farm-

ers and ranchers and businessowners and factory workers have a job to do, my administration has a job to do, and we're going to do it. We will rid the world of the evildoers. We will call together freedom-loving people to fight terrorism.

And on this day of—on the Lord's Day, I say to my fellow Americans: Thank you for your prayers; thank you for your compassion; thank you for your love for one another. And tomorrow when you get back to work, work hard like you always have. But we've been warned. We've been warned there are evil people in this world—we've been warned so vividly—and we'll be alert. Your Government is alert. The Governors and mayors are alert that evil folks still lurk out there.

As I said yesterday, people have declared war on America. And they have made a terrible mistake, because this is a fabulous country. Our economy will come back. We'll still be the best farmers and ranchers in the world. We're still the most innovative entrepreneurs in the world. On this day

of faith, I've never had more faith in America than I have right now.

*National Economy*

Q. Mr. President, are you worried this crisis might send us into a recession?

*The President.* David [David Gregory, NBC News], I understand that there are some businesses that hurt as a result of this crisis. Obviously, New York City hurts. Congress acted quickly. We worked together, the White House and the Congress, to pass a significant supplemental. A lot of that money was dedicated to New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, as it should be. People will be amazed at how quickly we rebuild New York, how quickly people come together to really wipe away the rubble and show the world that we're still the strongest nation in the world.

But I have great faith in the resiliency of the economy. And no question about it, this incident affected our economy. But the markets open tomorrow, people go back to work, and we'll show the world.

Yes, Bill [Bill Plante, CBS News].

*Usama bin Laden*

Q. Mr. President, do you believe Usama bin Laden's denial that he had anything to do with this?

*The President.* No question, he is the prime suspect. No question about that.

*International Cooperation Against Terrorism*

Q. Mr. President, can you describe your conversation with the President of Pakistan and the specific promises he made to you? And in addition to that, do you see other promises, similar—I know you've asked Saudi Arabia to help out—other countries?

*The President.* John [John King, Cable News Network], I will—obviously I made a call to the leader of Pakistan. We had a very good, open conversation. And there is no question that he wants to cooperate with the United States. I'm not at liberty to detail specifically what we have asked

him to do. In the course of this conduct of this war against terrorism, I'll be asked a lot and members of my administration will be asked a lot of questions about our strategies and tactics. And in order to protect the lives of people that will be involved in the different operations, I'm not at liberty to talk about it, and I won't talk about it.

But I can tell you that the response from Pakistan, Prime Minister Vajpayee today of India, Saudi Arabia has been very positive and very straightforward. They know what my intentions are. They know my intentions are to find those who did this, find those who encouraged them, find those who housed them, find those who comfort them, and bring them to justice.

I made that very clear. There is no doubt in anybody's mind with whom I've had a conversation about the intent of the United States. I gave them ample opportunity to say they were uncomfortable with our goal. And the leaders you've asked about have said they were comfortable. They said, "We understand, Mr. President, and we're with you."

*U.S. Response to Terrorist Attacks*

Q. Mr. President, the Attorney General is going to ask for enhanced law enforcement authority to surveil and do other things to disrupt terrorism that might be planned here in the United States. What will that mean for the rights of Americans? What will that mean for Americans—

*The President.* Terry [Terry Moran, ABC News], I ask you to talk to the Attorney General about that subject. He'll be prepared to talk about it publicly at some point in time. But what he is doing is, he's reflecting what I said earlier in my statement, that we're facing a new kind of enemy, somebody so barbaric that they would fly airplanes into buildings full of innocent people. And therefore, we have to be on alert in America. We're a nation of law, a nation of civil right. We're also a nation under attack. And the Attorney General will

address that in a way that I think the American people will understand.

We need to go back to work tomorrow, and we will. But we need to be alert to the fact that these evildoers still exist. We haven't seen this kind of barbarism in a long period of time. No one could have conceivably imagined suicide bombers burrowing into our society and then emerging all in the same day to fly their aircraft—fly U.S. aircraft into buildings full of innocent people and show no remorse. This is a new kind of—a new kind of evil. And we understand. And the American people are beginning to understand.

This crusade, this war on terrorism is going to take a while, and the American people must be patient. I'm going to be patient. But I can assure the American people, I am determined. I'm not going to be distracted. I will keep my focus to make sure that not only are these brought to justice, but anybody who's been associated with them will be brought to justice. Those who harbor terrorists will be brought to justice. It is time for us to win the first war of the 21st century decisively, so that our children and our grandchildren can live peacefully into the 21st century.

Patsy [Patricia Wilson, Reuters].

Q. Mr. President, you've declared that we're at war and asked the military to get ready. Should the American people also be ready to expect casualties in this war?

*The President.* Patsy, the American people should know that my administration is determined to find, to get them running, and to hunt them down, those who did this to America. Now, I want to remind the American people that the prime suspect's organization is in a lot of countries. It's a widespread organization based upon one thing, terrorizing. They can't stand freedom. They hate what America stands for. So this will be a long campaign, a determined campaign, a campaign that will use the resources of the United States to win.

They have roused a mighty giant. And make no mistake about it: We're determined. Oh, there will be times when people don't have this incident on their mind; I understand that. There will be times down the road where citizens will be concerned about other matters, and I completely understand that. But this administration, along with those friends of ours who are willing to stand with us all the way through, will do what it takes to rout terrorism out of the world.

Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

#### *International Cooperation Against Terrorism*

Q. Mr. President, getting back to your conversation with the leader of Pakistan, did you make any requests or demands of him that he turned you down on, or did you get what you asked for?

*The President.* The leader of Pakistan has been very cooperative. He has agreed with our requests to aid our Nation to hunt down, to find, to smoke out of their holes the terrorist organization that is the prime suspect. And I am pleased with his response. We will continue to work with Pakistan and India. We will work with Russia. We will work with the nations that one would have thought a couple of years ago would have been impossible to work with—to bring people to justice but, more than that, to win the war against terrorist activity.

The American people are used to a conflict where there was a beachhead or a desert to cross or known military targets. That may occur. But right now we're facing people who hit and run. They hide in caves. We'll get them out.

The other day I said, not only will we find those who have affected America or who might affect America in the future, we'll also deal with those who harbor them.

#### *September 11 National Security Decisions*

Q. Mr. President, would you confirm what the Vice President said this morning,

that at one point during this crisis you gave an order to shoot down any civilian airliner that approached the Capitol? Was that a difficult decision to make?

*The President.* I gave our military the orders necessary to protect Americans—do whatever it would take to protect Americans. And of course, that's difficult. Never did, in anybody's thought process about how to protect America, did we ever think that the evildoers would fly not one but four commercial aircraft into precious U.S. targets—never. And so, obviously, when I was told what was taking place, when I was informed that a unidentified aircraft was headed to the heart of the Capital, I was concerned. I wasn't concerned about my decision; I was more concerned about

the lives of innocent Americans. I had realized, there on the ground in Florida, we were under attack. But never did I dream we would have been under attack this way.

That's why I say to the American people, we've never seen this kind of evil before. But the evildoers have never seen the American people in action before, either, and they're about to find out.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India.

## Remarks to Employees in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building September 17, 2001

*The President.* I'm here to remind people that the best way to fight terrorism is to not let terrorism intimidate America. A lot of people who work in this building were deeply worried about their lives last week. There are a lot of courageous people here, and they're coming back to work. And I want to thank them for that and remind them we've all got a job to do, people digging out the rubble in New York have

got a job to do, those of us in Government have a job to do.

*Q.* Mr. President, any reaction to the Taliban's refusal to—

*The President.* I'll talk to you all later.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:58 a.m. outside the cafeteria. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Remarks to Employees in the Pentagon and an Exchange With Reporters in Arlington, Virginia September 17, 2001

*The President.* First, let me start off by saying to the members of the Pentagon press, the Secretary told me about how you conducted your business on that fateful day. I want to congratulate you and thank

you. Many of your members of the Pentagon press went out to help in the evacuation and the aid of the people who work