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we will answer their hatred with compassion for the Afghan people.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:20 a.m. on October 12 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Videotaped Remarks to the American Society of Anesthesiologists

October 14, 2001

Thank you very much. I'm honored to have this opportunity to speak to the American Society of Anesthesiologists.

During the past few days, our Nation has experienced one of the darkest moments in our history. Yet, even in the midst of this tragedy, the eternal lights of America's goodness and greatness have shown through. We've seen it in the countless Americans who gave blood or donated money. We've seen it in the tales of heroic police officers and firemen who went into the World Trade Centers to save lives. And we've seen it in the simple yet profound gestures of love and patriotism from every part of the American family.

It's been said that public service is not limited to public office. And the events of the past few days have shown how true that is. I want to thank all of you in the American Society of Anesthesiologists for doing your part during the difficult past few days. Whether it was the doctors who worked overtime to help victims in New York and Washington or those who gave money and offered prayers, our Nation is blessed by so many dedicated health care professionals.

But the business of our Nation goes forward. America faces many challenges, including those in health care. Let me be clear about this: We will win the war on terrorism, and we will also continue to fight important battles at home. And that means my administration remains committed to improving the quality of health care for all Americans and improving Medicare for all seniors.

My administration remains committed to passing a real Patients' Bill of Rights. With your help, we'll pass a bill that puts the care of patients in the hands of doctors, not trial lawyers. I will continue to support commonsense reforms that enhance the rights of the patient without unnecessarily raising the cost of health care and increasing the number of uninsured. And I believe this can be done.

The compromise Congressman Norwood and I forged this summer—and passed by the House of Representatives—represents the best and most real solution. Simply put, it achieves both the goals of improving the quality of health without unnecessarily raising health care costs.

And for our seniors, we're committed to reforming Medicare. For too long, too many doctors and too many Medicare patients have had to fight not only illness but also bureaucracy. My goal in reforming Medicare is to make it less bureaucratic and more efficient.

Here are the main principles for strengthening and improving Medicare: Nobody on Medicare will see any change in Medicare unless he or she wants it. There will be new Medicare choices, and all of these new choices will offer prescription drugs. Medicare plans will compete by offering better service and lower premiums. Medicare will respond better to the needs of seniors, especially low-income seniors and seniors with high medical bills. And Medicare modernization will strengthen the program's long-term financial security.

These are principles which will strengthen one of our Nation's most sacred obligations, the health of our senior citizens. We will protect seniors now, offering exciting new services and more choices to seniors in the future and guarantee prescription drug coverage. And we will do it without overtaxing our children and our grandchildren.

Medicine is constantly improving. Medicare must keep pace. That's my administration's commitment today and its exciting new vision for health care in America.

Again, thank you all for allowing me to join you. And thanks for all you are doing to make America great. God bless you all, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped on September 24 at approximately 3 p.m. in the Library at the White House for later transmission to a meeting of the House of Delegates of the American Society of Anesthesiologists in New Orleans, LA. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters on Returning From Camp David, Maryland

October 14, 2001

Taliban

Q. Mr. President, there's a new offer from the Taliban to turn over bin Laden. What's your response to that, sir?

The President. Turn him over. Turn him over; turn his cohorts over; turn any hostages they hold over; destroy all the terrorist camps. There's no need to negotiate. There's no discussions. I told them exactly what they need to do. And there's no need to discuss innocence or guilt. We know he's guilty. Turn him over. If they want us to stop our military operations, they've just got to meet my conditions. Now, when I said no negotiation, I meant no negotiation.

Q. You reject his offer?

The President. I don't know what the offer is. All they've got to do is turn him over, and his colleagues and the stocks he hides, as well as destroy his camps, and the innocent people being held hostage in Afghanistan.

Q. They want you to stop the bombing and see evidence.

The President. There's no negotiation—they must have not heard—there's no negotiation. This is non-negotiable. These people, if they're interested in us stopping our military operations, we will do so if they meet the conditions that I outlined in my speech to the United States Congress. It's as simple as that. There's nothing to negotiate about. They're harboring a terrorist, and they need to turn him over—and not only turn him over, turn the Al Qaida organization over, destroy all the terrorist camps—actually, we're doing a pretty good job of that right now—and release the hostages they hold. That's all they've got to do, but there is no negotiation, period.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately noon on the South Lawn at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy and an Exchange With Reporters

October 15, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome the leader of one of our Nation's best friends, the Prime Minister of a country that has had so much to do with our Nation and its development. I'm also pleased to be able to give him a lunch. After all, I had one of the best lunches I've had at his—since I've been the President because of the Prime Minister.

We had a long discussion about our mutual desire to rout out terrorism where it might exist. He understands as well as I understand that the war on terrorism will be waged on many fronts, and I'm so pleased with the efforts of his Government to join with us in disrupting the financial networks of terrorist organizations. I'm pleased that we're sharing intelligence. I'm pleased that the Prime Minister understands that Al Qaida has cells all around the world, and he's more than willing to work with us to disrupt those cells, to bring people to justice. We're making progress. One reason we're making progress is because we've got good, strong friends such as the Italians and the Italian Government.

So Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. It's my honor to have you here.

Prime Minister Berlusconi. Thank you, Mr. President, I am here, first of all, to express our great pain and sadness for the attack on September the 11th and to say to you that if the same attack had been—had occurred on an Italian city, we would have felt the same pain as you are.

And also I'm here to express to you our desire to be as close as possible and to provide both moral and material support. As I mentioned earlier this morning, this attack was an attack not only against citizens but also against freedom and liberty. The U.S.