

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Military Action Against Terrorist Sites in Afghanistan and Sudan

August 21, 1998

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

At approximately 1:30 p.m. eastern daylight time, on August 20, 1998, at my direction, U.S. forces conducted strikes in Afghanistan against a series of camps and installations used by the Usama bin Ladin organization, and in Sudan where the bin Ladin organization has facilities and extensive ties to the government. I ordered these actions based on convincing information from a variety of reliable sources that the bin Ladin organization is responsible for the devastating bombings on August 7, 1998, of the U.S. Embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, that killed over 250 persons. United States forces struck a facility in Sudan being used to produce materials for chemical weapons. They also struck facilities in Afghanistan that are being used for terrorist training and as basing and supply camps for staging terrorist activities.

The United States acted in exercise of our inherent right of self-defense consistent with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. These strikes were a necessary and proportionate response to the imminent threat of further terrorist attacks against U.S. personnel and facilities. These strikes were intended to prevent and deter additional attacks by a clearly identified

terrorist threat. The targets were selected because they served to facilitate directly the efforts of terrorists specifically identified with attacks on U.S. personnel and facilities and posed a continuing threat to U.S. lives.

The U.S. forces involved in these strikes have completed their mission. No U.S. personnel were injured or killed in connection with this action.

I directed these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress as we continue to take all necessary steps to protect U.S. citizens at home and abroad.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 22.

The President's Radio Address

August 22, 1998

Good morning. I want to talk to you about our strike against terrorism last Thursday. Two weeks ago, a savage attack was carried out against our Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Almost 300 innocent people were killed; thousands were injured. The bombs were aimed at us, but they claimed anyone who happened to be near the Embassies that morning. They killed both Africans and Americans indiscriminately, cruelty beyond comprehension.

From the moment we learned of the bombings, our mission was clear: Identify those re-

sponsible; bring them to justice; protect our citizens from future attacks.

The information now in our possession is convincing. Behind these attacks were the same hands that killed American and Pakistani peacekeepers in Somalia, the same hands that targeted U.S. airlines, and the same hands that plotted the assassinations of the Pope and President Mubarak of Egypt. I'm referring to the bin Ladin network of radical groups, probably the most dangerous non-state terrorist actor in the world today.