

The President. I've had very good conversations with Vladimir Putin about the war on terrorism. I know the Chancellor has, as well. I'm, as a matter of fact, going to be meeting with the President of Russia within 2 weeks, in Shanghai, and I'm looking forward to those meetings.

I have made it clear to him that I appreciate his strong statements about America's efforts and the coalition's efforts to fight terrorism where we find it. I also made it clear to him that he needs to respect minority rights within his country. And he listened very carefully, and I think he's appreciative that our message has been consistent. From the very first conversation I had with President Putin, I expressed concern about how his government was viewing the minority that exists and how they were being treated. So my position has been very consistent.

To the extent that there's Al Qaida organizations in his neighborhood, they need to be brought to justice, as well. And we look forward to sharing information with him, just like he's sharing information with us. He is—he was one of the first—I will tell you an interesting story.

I was airborne on Air Force One and put our—on September the 11th—and put our troops to a high-alert status. And one of the first phone calls I got through my national security office was from Vladimir Putin, announcing that he has stood his troops down—which is significant. In the old days, if we'd have put our troops on heightened alert, they would have put their troops on more heightened alert—[*laugh-*

ter—which would have caused our troops to go on higher alert. And all of a sudden we would have had a conflict, a potential conflict out of the realm of the incident that caused the troops to go on alert.

So he quickly called and said, "We're standing our troops down." It's a new attitude toward relationship. He understands the cold war is over, and so do I, which provides great opportunity for not only America but Germany to work with Mr. Putin for our nations' interests and his nation's interests.

And I think we're going to find a lot of common ground, one of which will be to fight terrorism. But as I explained to him, it's going to be hard to have common ground if he represses the press and/or treats minorities within his own country in a way that the Western world simply doesn't understand.

Listen, thank you all for coming. Thank you, Chancellor. I appreciate you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. in the Colonnade at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to anthrax victim Robert Stevens; President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. He also referred to the Report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, chaired by former Senator George J. Mitchell, issued April 30. Chancellor Schroeder spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Combat Action in Afghanistan Against Al Qaida Terrorists and Their Taliban Supporters October 9, 2001

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

At approximately 12:30 p.m. (EDT) on October 7, 2001, on my orders, U.S. Armed

Forces began combat action in Afghanistan against Al Qaida terrorists and their Taliban supporters. This military action is a part

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of our campaign against terrorism and is designed to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations.

We are responding to the brutal September 11 attacks on our territory, our citizens, and our way of life, and to the continuing threat of terrorist acts against the United States and our friends and allies. This follows the deployment of various combat-equipped and combat support forces to a number of locations in the Central and Pacific Command areas of operations, as I reported to the Congress on September 24, to prepare for the campaign to prevent and deter terrorism.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. It is not possible to know at this time either the duration of combat operations or the scope and duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States. As I have stated previously, it is likely that the American

campaign against terrorism will be lengthy. I will direct such additional measures as necessary in exercise of our right to self-defense and to protect U.S. citizens and interests.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution and Public Law 107-40. Officials of my Administration and I have been communicating regularly with the leadership and other members of Congress, and we will continue to do so. I appreciate the continuing support of the Congress, including its enactment of Public Law 107-40, in these actions to protect the security of the United States of America and its citizens, civilian and military, here and abroad.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Robert C. Byrd, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks Announcing the Most Wanted Terrorists List *October 10, 2001*

Well, thank you very much for that warm welcome. I'm pleased to be back at the FBI to unveil a new line of attack on our war against terrorism, the Most Wanted Terrorist list. Terrorists try to operate in the shadows. They try to hide, but we're going to shine the light of justice on them. We list their names; we publicize their pictures; we rob them of their secrecy. Terrorism has a face, and today we expose it for the world to see.

Mr. General, thank you very much for your leadership, your strong resolve, the values you espouse. I want to thank all the Justice Department folks who are here today.

I'm so honored to be up here with the Secretary of State. He's doing a fabulous job of rallying the world to our cause. And I want to thank the State Department officials who are here today, as well.

And of course, Director Mueller, I want to thank you and the fine men and women of the FBI for your diligent efforts to disrupt and find anybody who tries to harm Americans.

I also want to introduce Tom Ridge, the Director of the Office of Homeland Security. Thank you for being here, Governor, as well as General Wayne Downing, the Deputy National Security Adviser for Combating Terrorism. Thank you all for coming.