

like this won't happen again, that there won't be another—

The President. Yes. Well, I can just tell them—people that, first of all, we have—we're slowly but surely dismantling Al Qaida. We are not only destroying terrorist training camps, cutting off their money; we're either killing or capturing a lot of their leadership.

And as I told the American people right after September the 11th, 2001, this would be a different kind of war, and this would be a long war. And we're fighting this war on a lot of fronts, the major front of which is now in Iraq. And we're making steady progress toward achieving our objective, and we will continue to make progress. You can't negotiate with these people. You can't try to talk sense to these people. The only way to deal with them is to find them and bring them to justice, and that's what the United States—and a lot of other countries working with the United States—will continue to do.

U.N. Resolution on Iraq

Q. Sir, are we any closer to getting a U.N. resolution?

The President. Colin is going to be overseas starting tomorrow and over the weekend, and we'll see when he comes back.

But the key thing for the United Nations resolution is that it will hopefully encourage other nations to participate. And I think other nations have an obligation to participate. A free Iraq will be in their Nation's benefit. It will make the world more peaceful and more secure. And a free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will make it more easy for us to not only secure America and other free nations but will make it easier for there to be peace in the long run.

And therefore, I would hope that nations would participate, and to the extent that some nations need an additional United Nations resolution, this could be helpful in encouraging international participation. But Colin is sitting down with other foreign ministers from the Perm 5 as well as Kofi Annan, starting tomorrow.

Okay, well, thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. In his remarks, he referred to Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Secretary of State Colin L. Powell; and Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Military Personnel and Families at Fort Stewart, Georgia September 12, 2003

The President. Thank you all very much. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's a fine day here in Georgia. Of course, the Governor told me every day is a fine day in Georgia.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. It's a great day to visit the soldiers and the families of the 3d Infantry Division and to visit Fort Stewart. When I came here in February of 2001, it was my first—one of my first official

trips, my first visit to an Army post as Commander in Chief, and my first chance as President to say: Hooah!

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. Since we last met, soldiers of the 3d Infantry Division have fought in Afghanistan and have hunted terrorists in Pakistan; you've launched the coalition offensive into Iraq, defeated the enemy in Najaf; you took the Saddam Hussein International Airport and seized his palaces; and

you led the fighting into Baghdad the day the statue of the dictator was pulled down.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. Following that day of liberation, 3d ID soldiers have helped the Iraqi people to recover from years of oppression, to begin the work of building a free Iraq. Two months ago, the Sergeant Major of the Army, Jack Tilley, spoke to the 3d ID troops in Fallujah. He said this—he said, “Be proud of who you are. Stand up straight. You made history.” As Commander in Chief, I second those words. You made history. You’ve made our Nation proud. And you have earned the Presidential Unit Citation.

After a long deployment, the 3d ID is now home. America is grateful for your devoted service in hard conditions. America is grateful to the men and women right here on this base who supported your mission.

And we’re especially grateful to our military families. I know it has been a tough 9 months for Fort Stewart families. But you’ve been loyal and patient, and you’ve looked out for one another. I want to thank you for the support you’ve given to your loved ones. Thank you for the love of your country. Our Nation is grateful.

I want to thank General Blount for inviting me here today. I told him, I said he’s a pretty eloquent speaker for a good warrior. [*Laughter*] I appreciate General Ellis, good to see him again today, the commander of U.S. Forces Command.

I’m honored to be traveling with two fine United States Senators, Senator Zell Miller and Senator Saxby Chambliss of the great State of Georgia, strong supporters of the United States military. As well, we traveled down with Jack Kingston and Max Burns, two fine Members of the House of Representatives. As well, they are strong supporters of the United States military.

Of course, I already mentioned the Governor once. He said, “Every day is a beautiful day in Georgia.” I’m proud to be

with him. He’s a good friend, solid American.

I also am pleased to be here with Brigadier General Joe Riojas, assistant division commander; Bob Caslen—Colonel Caslen, assistant division commander; Colonel Larry Burch; Colonel John Kidd; Sergeant Major Kellman; and Captain Vern Tubbs. I want to thank you all very much for bringing me here today. It’s an honor to be here.

Two-and-a-half years ago—or 2 years ago, this Nation came under enemy attack. Two years ago yesterday we were attacked. On a single morning, we suffered the highest casualties on our own soil since the Civil War. America saw the face of a new adversary, an enemy that plots in secret, an enemy that rejects the rules of war, an enemy that rejoices in the murder of the innocent. We made a pledge that day, and we have kept it: We are bringing the guilty to justice; we are taking the fight to the enemy.

In this new kind of war, America has followed a new strategy. We are not waiting for further attacks on our citizens. We are striking our enemies before they can strike us again. As all of you know, wars are fought on the offensive. The war on terror will be won on the offensive, and America and our friends are staying on the offensive. We’re rolling back the terrorist threat not on the fringes of its influence but at the heart of its power.

In Afghanistan, America and our broad coalition acted against a regime that harbored Al Qaida and ruled by terror. We’ve sent a message that is now understood throughout the world: If you harbor a terrorist, if you support a terrorist, if you feed a terrorist, you’re just as guilty as the terrorists. And the Taliban found out what we meant. Thanks to our men and women in uniform, Afghanistan is no longer a haven for terror, and as a result, the people of America are safer from attack.

We are hunting the Al Qaida terrorists wherever they still hide, from Pakistan to

the Philippines to the Horn of Africa. And we're making good progress. Nearly two-thirds of Al Qaida's known leaders have been captured or killed. The rest of them are dangerous, but the rest of them can be certain we're on their trail. Our resolve is firm. The resolve of this Nation is clear: No matter how long it takes, we will bring justice to those who plot against America.

And we have pursued the war on terror in Iraq. Our coalition enforced the demands of the U.N. Security Council in one of the swiftest and most humane military campaigns in history. Because of our military, catastrophic weapons will no longer be in the hands of a reckless dictator. Because of our military, Middle Eastern countries no longer fear subversion and attack by Saddam Hussein. Because of our military, the torture chambers in Iraq are closed, and people who speak their minds need not fear execution. Because of our military, the people of Iraq are free.

Now we're working with the Iraqi people to build a decent and democratic society, a country that is an example of peace, not an exporter of violence. This undertaking is difficult, and it is costly. Yet it is worthy of our country, and it is critical to our security. You've seen how Saddam holdouts and foreign terrorists are desperately, desperately trying to undermine Iraq's progress and to throw that country into chaos. You know, they understand that a free Iraq will be free of them, free of assassins and torturers and secret police. As democracy and freedom rise in Iraq, their ambitions will fall just like the statues of Saddam Hussein.

The terrorists have a strategic goal. They want America to leave Iraq before our work is done. You see, they believe their attacks on our people and on innocent people will shake the will of the United States and the civilized world. They believe America will run from a challenge. They don't know us very well.

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. They're mistaken. Iraq is now the central front in the war on terror.

This Nation will complete our work, and we will win this essential victory.

The people of our military have faced many hardships in Iraq, and you faced them with courage. You know the names of some who fought for our country and didn't come home, who died in the line of duty. You remember them as comrades and friends. This Nation will remember them for their unselfish courage, for their sacrifice in a time of danger to America. We honor their memory. We pray for God's comfort on their family and loved ones.

All who serve understand what this fight is about. Our military is confronting terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan and in other places, so that our people will not have to confront terrorist violence in our own cities.

Our strategy in Iraq has three objectives. First, we are destroying the terrorists by swift and decisive action. We continue to launch raids against these enemies. We're rounding them up. We're seizing their weapons. And as for the leaders of the former regime, we're working our way through the famous deck of cards. The Iraqi people are helping with critical leads, and with each new capture the word gets out.

In a letter home this summer, an American soldier described the following scene in Baghdad after two of those cards were dealt with. He wrote: "The whole city was erupting in gunfire. There were tracer rounds flying through the air all over. Everyone was hyped to the max. Then we got the call over the radio. It was celebration fire because we caught Saddam's sons." Altogether, 42 of the 55 most wanted former Iraqi leaders have been captured or killed. It's a matter of time for the rest of them.

Our second objective is to bring in other nations to help Iraq build a free country; that'll make the world more secure. Already two multinational divisions—perhaps you saw brothers and sisters in combat when

you were in Iraq—divisions led by the Brits and the Poles, they're sharing responsibilities with us. And we thank all the nations who have contributed.

It's time for others to join us. Tomorrow Secretary Powell will be in Geneva, consulting with friends and allies and the officials of the United Nations. He'll carry a message: No free nation can be neutral in the fight between civilization and chaos. Terrorists in Iraq have attacked representatives of the civilized world, and opposing them and defeating them must be the cause of the civilized world.

Our third goal is to encourage the orderly transfer of sovereignty and authority to the Iraqi people. We're helping to train Iraqi civil defense forces and police and border guards. In these and other roles, some 60,000 Iraqis are now helping to secure their country. Iraq's new Governing Council represents the nation's diverse groups. Ninety percent of the communities have local councils. In Baghdad, a new city council is at work, chosen by all the neighborhoods in the cities. In the months ahead, the Iraqis will be drafting a new constitution, and this will prepare the way for elections. With our help, and with the great strength of its own people, Iraq is getting rid of the days of dictatorship and terror and is moving toward a future of stability and freedom. And life is returning to normal for a lot of the citizens in Iraq.

The day the regime fell, only 30 percent of the hospitals in Iraq were functioning. Now almost every hospital in Iraq is open. America and our coalition have provided more than 22 million doses of vaccine to over 4 million children and a million pregnant women. We're refurbishing more than 1,000 schools in Iraq.

One school in Baghdad is called the Hiba School. It was founded by a woman named Sarahiah, for children with Down syndrome. The old regime gave the Hiba School no help. You see, Down syndrome children were viewed as hopeless and useless. By now a unit of American soldiers

has—but now a unit of American soldiers has taken the Hiba School under its wing. They've been collecting donations from home to pay for supplies and clothing for the children and salaries for the teachers. The effort has been led by Lieutenant Colonel Bowyer of the 1st Armored Division. He's got a special interest. You see, his own son, Samuel, has Down syndrome.

Sarahiah calls Colonel Bowyer "our first friend and our best friend." And in the Hiba School, the Iraqi children have put up a picture of Sam Bowyer on the wall to thank him—to thank his dad, to thank our country.

See, the Iraqi people are coming to know the kind of men and women we've sent to liberate their country. In your courage and in your compassion, the people of our Armed Forces represent the best of American character.

When I addressed the Nation a few nights ago from the White House, I read a letter I'd received from an Army captain serving in Baghdad. Some of you know him. You gave him a pretty good seat here today—Captain Vern Tubbs. He wrote about his pride in serving a just cause and about the deep desire for Iraqis for liberty. "I see it," he said, "in the eyes of a hungry people every day here. They're starved for freedom and opportunity." Captain Tubbs and all of you have helped put Iraq on the path to freedom and opportunity. And every man, woman, and child in Iraq can be certain of this: The old regime is gone, and the regime is never coming back.

As America carries out its strategy for security and reconstruction, we need the resources to do the job in Iraq. Soon I will send Congress a request for additional money we need to keep our commitments. In this time of challenge of America, as we ask so much of our military, we in Government have a solemn responsibility to give you every tool you need to achieve victory.

This base and all of you serving here are critical to the defense of the United

States. You've shown that, once again, by enduring a long deployment and performing brilliantly every day under difficult and dangerous circumstances, that you're worthy of the task, and you're worthy of our trust. Our whole Nation has been reminded that we can never take our military for granted. I will keep our military strong.

This was the message of another President, John F. Kennedy, when he visited Fort Stewart in 1962 and spoke to the troops on Donovan Field. President Kennedy said this: "Regardless of how persistent our diplomacy may be in activities stretching all around the globe, in the final analysis it rests upon the power of the United States, and that power rests upon the will and courage of our citizens and upon you in this field." Soldiers and families of Fort Stewart, those words are still true today. Peace and America's security depends on you.

In meeting the dangers of a new era, the world looks to America for leadership. And America counts on the men and women who have stepped forward as volunteers in the cause of freedom.

I want to thank you all for your good service. Thank you for the credit and honor you bring to our country every day. May God bless you. May God bless your families, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:02 a.m. at Trent Field. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Sonny Perdue of Georgia; Gen. Larry R. Ellis, USA, commanding general, U.S. Army Forces Command; Gen. Buford C. Blount III, USA, commanding general, Brig. Gen. Jose D. Riojas, USA, assistant division commander, Col. Robert L. Caslen, Jr., USA, assistant division commander, Col. Glenn L. Burch, USA, chief of staff, Col. John M. Kidd, USA, garrison commander, and Sgt. Maj. Julian A. Kellman, USA, division command sergeant major, 3d Infantry Division, Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; former President Hussein's sons, Uday and Qusay, who were killed July 22 by U.S. military forces in Mosul, Iraq; and Lt. Col. Richard Bowyer, USA, 1st Armored Division.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Gubernatorial Candidate Haley Barbour in Jackson, Mississippi *September 12, 2003*

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. I'm glad to be back in Mississippi. I thank the warm welcome for a former Texas Governor who's proud to be on stage with the future Mississippi Governor. I'm here to remind the good people of this State—Republican, Democrat, or independent—if they're interested in good government, if they want somebody to call upon the best of Mississippi, if they're interested in every person being able to achieve their dreams in this State, they need to elect Haley Barbour as the Governor of Mississippi.

I like his slogan: Mississippi can do better. It says when he's your Governor, he'll have an optimistic outlook for all the people of this State. He believes in high standards and raising that bar. He believes in the vast human potential of Mississippi. There's no doubt in my mind that when you elect Haley Barbour as Governor of Mississippi, Mississippi will do better.

And I know him. This isn't just your typical hot air. [*Laughter*] I know him well. He recounted some of our history. We've been friends for a long time. So when I say, for example, he believes in personal