

I cannot conceal that I was very pleased indeed that the President did appreciate the contribution Germany is making within Afghanistan. We very much are trying to make this a sustainable contribution, and I think our people on the ground are doing a good job. And therefore, I have to say I'm proud of the work they're doing for us and for us together.

We then proceeded to actually talk about the situation in Iraq, and indeed, we very much feel that the differences that have been, have been left behind and put aside by now. We are both agreed that we want to look into the future together. And I would like to reiterate the fact that Germany has a very strong, in fact a vested interest, in a stable and very democratic Iraq and to development to that effect. It is very important not just for Iraq as such but for the whole of the region, for Germany and, therefore, also for Europe.

We certainly have emphasized the fact, and I have once more said this to the President myself, how very much we would like to come in and help with the resources that we do have. We could very much envisage that we will assist in providing training for security staff, be it police functions or be it some form of military function. We do have the capacities for that available in Germany, and we would very much like to put them to that purpose.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

President's U.N. Address

Q. Mr. President, what about the response to your speech yesterday?

President Bush. I can only judge by your reaction to it. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Congressional Passage of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2004 *September 24, 2003*

To win the war on terrorism, we are staying on the offensive abroad and protecting Americans at home. I applaud Congress for passing the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. These funds will help make Americans and their

families even safer through stronger border enforcement, improved transportation security, and continued support for police, firefighters, and emergency-response teams. I look forward to signing this legislation.

Statement on the Death of Hugh Gregg *September 24, 2003*

Hugh Gregg left an indelible mark on the State he loved and on the lives of the people of New Hampshire. He served his country in time of war and served his State with distinction as Governor, statesman, and successful business leader. In all of his

endeavors, he acted with integrity and honor. He will be missed. Laura joins me in sending our condolences to his wife, Catherine, his two sons, and his family during this difficult time.