

in New York, how it killed her, and who are afraid it could happen to them?

President Bush. I would say to the American people that we're learning a lot about anthrax, and we're doing everything we can to find out all the facts. And when we get the facts, we'll share it with the American people.

I will also say to the American people, I believe that the hard work of our public health officials has saved lives. I believe the fact that we've got people all around our country working hours upon hours have helped saved life in America. And for that, the American people are grateful, and so am I.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim separatist group operating in the southern Philippines. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Reception Honoring the United Service Organizations

November 2, 2001

Good afternoon. Laura and I want to welcome you all to the White House. Welcome. Thanks for coming.

I also want to thank all who work with the USO. It is important. It's important for our country, and it's important for the world. And I want to thank you for coming so we can honor such a fine, fine organization.

I also want to thank Wayne Newton for being here. I appreciate so very much your leading the USO Celebrity Circle. I don't know whether or not you spent much time with Bob Hope before you took the assignment, but this job has got a 60-year term limit to it. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Dick Myers and the other members of the Joint Chiefs who are here. I am proud of the job you all are doing. I want to thank the Secretary of the Navy, Gordon England, for coming, as well. I appreciate so very much Members of the United States Congress who are here. Senator Reed, thank you so very much. I don't know if Congressman Edwards is here—my congress-

man. He's the congressman for Crawford, Texas. Good to see you, sir. Answer my mail, will you? *[Laughter]*

I appreciate Norm Mineta, who is here. Part of our battle against terrorism is to have a strong homefront and to make sure our airlines are secure. And we've got a really good man running the Department of Transportation to make sure that happens. Norm, I'm proud of the work you're doing. I'm proud of your leadership.

I'm glad Joyce Rumsfeld is here. Thanks for coming, Joyce. Don is on his way overseas. And he, like the rest of the Pentagon, is doing a fabulous job, I mean a really good job, of defending our country. I look forward to getting him back. I'm looking forward to hearing how the trip went.

John Gottschalk, thank you very much for taking on this assignment. And General Tilelli, thank you, as well. I appreciate so very much your being here. I want to thank Neil McCoy. I want to thank Rob Schneider and Jessica Simpson, as well. These are some of the great talent who are going to entertain our troops and bring smiles to the faces of people who are a long way away from home. It's a noble cause, and I appreciate you all doing this.

Next week, when the tour begins, people are going to travel all around the globe. And there they will find young men and women of the highest caliber—of the highest caliber—some of whom will be facing extreme danger in the months to come, all of whom are proud to serve. In our war against terrorism, we can be thankful—all of us in America, and for that matter, all the people who have joined our vast coalition can be thankful that we are defended by men and women of such incredible character and such great courage.

Our USO performers are all a part of a very special American institution. For more than six decades, the USO has brought a touch of home to Americans in distant places. Millions of veterans still cherish memories of USO shows, hospitality centers, and the good folks who have traveled thousands of miles to show their support. The USO brought more than entertainment to the troops.

Here is what Harry Truman had to say. He said, "The USO lets our service men and women know the people of the United States are behind them." Well, that's still true at the beginning of this century, and for a very different kind of war, a war that is being fought on many fronts: a war that's being fought here in the homeland; a war that's being fought because of the relentless efforts of our law enforcement; a war that's being fought by a diplomatic front the likes of which the world has never seen before; a war that's being fought by cutting off funds to the evil ones; and a war that's being fought on the field of battle.

We face an enemy—an enemy the likes of which we've never seen before, an enemy without a government, an enemy that's tried to hijack a great religion, an enemy that is so evil that those of us in America can't possibly comprehend why they do what they do. But it will be an enemy that will be defeated.

This enemy will be defeated because this Nation is strong and this Nation is united. This enemy will be defeated because this Nation won't stand for evil. This enemy will be defeated because we understand we fight for our very freedoms. This enemy will be defeated because we understand that what we do today will determine whether our children and our grandchildren can grow up in a free society in a free world.

This enemy will be defeated because across the world, our soldiers, marines and sailors, airmen, and coastguardsmen are the defenders of freedom. And once again, they will know that the American people stand squarely behind them.

This is a war that has required our military to adjust. It is a different kind of war. And we have got a strategy that meets this different kind of war. After all, these days we've got a B-2 bomber pilot who boards his aircraft in Missouri, delivers his ordnance, and comes back to Missouri. And the men and women of today's armed services also are different from the past. Most are likely to be married. Most are likely to have young children.

And the good news is, the USO has kept pace with these changes. It, too, has changed to reflect the nature of modern war and a modern military. And it, too, is directing its

mission not just for those in the military but for their family members, as well.

The USO leadership is as diverse and talented as ever. And I want to thank you all very much, and so do the American people. Some of the members of the Celebrity Circle Executive Committee, including Tom Hanks and Quincy Jones, could not be here. But tell them I thanked them, and tell them we appreciate their hard work.

And for our troops abroad, USO's touch of home will mean even more—even more—as we head toward Thanksgiving and eventually the holiday seasons of the winter. And you can tell them they are greatly needed where they are and they are greatly missed back home. And you can tell them the American people and the President are proud of their service.

May God bless the USO, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers Wayne Newton, Bob Hope, Neil McCoy, Rob Schneider, Jessica Simpson, Tom Hanks, and Quincy Jones; Joyce Rumsfeld, wife of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld; John Gottschalk, chairman, USO World Board of Governors; and Gen. John H. Tilelli, Jr., USA (Ret.), president, USO.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 28

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned from Camp David, MD, to the White House.

October 29

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh to congratulate her on her election victory and to discuss cooperation against terrorism. Also in the