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003	Report	Pool Report 09/19/2001 #2 [page 2]	1	09/19/2001	P6/b6;

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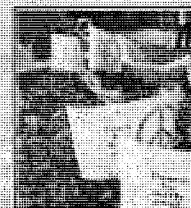
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President George W. Bush hosts a meeting with German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer (L) in the Oval Office of the White House, September 19, 2001. Bush said he would make an address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress on Sept. 20 to discuss the Sept. 11 attacks on Washington and New York. (Larry Downing/Reuters)

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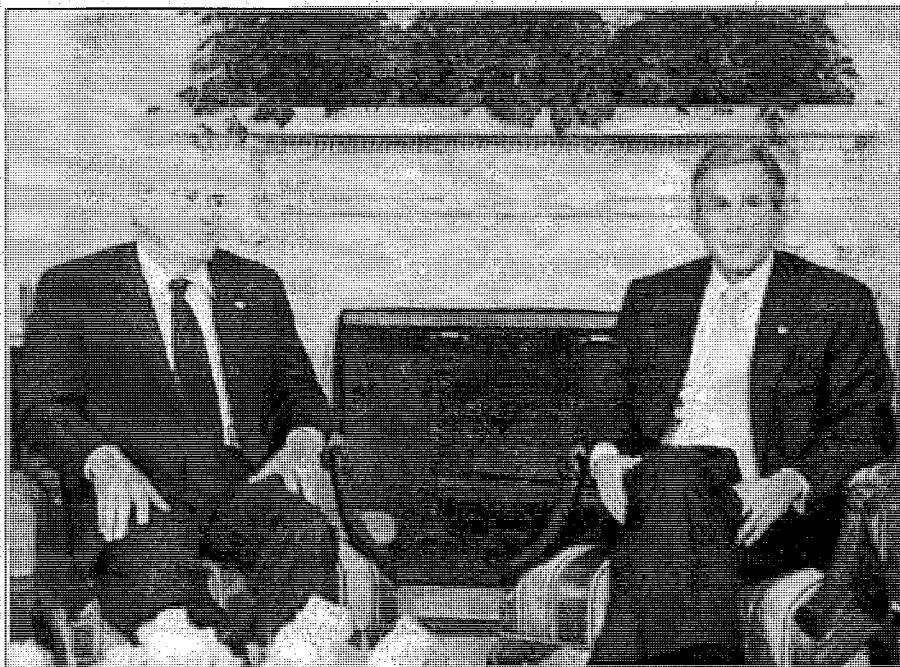
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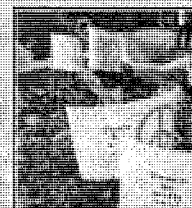
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U.S. President George W. Bush (right) hosts a meeting with Congressional leaders in the Oval Office of the White House, September 19, 2001. Seated with the president is Vice President Richard Cheney. Included in the meeting but NOT in this photo are: Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss), Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), Bush, Speaker of the House of Representatives Dennis Hastert (R-Ill) and House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO). The leaders discussed the thousands of victims of the brutal attacks on the United States last week after both the Pentagon and the World Trade Center Buildings in New York City were attacked September 11 after hijacked commercial jetliners crashed into the buildings. REUTERS/Larry Downing

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Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov leaves the White House September 19, 2001, after meeting with U.S. President George W. Bush. Bush is meeting with many of the allies of the United States in an effort to create a coalition to fight back against those who attacked the United States in New York City and Washington last week. REUTERS/Win McNamee

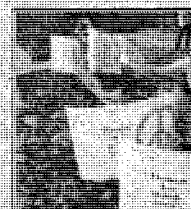
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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 19, 2001

PRESS BRIEFING BY
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR, DR. CONDOLEEZZA RICE

The James S. Brady Briefing Room

5:38 P.M. EDT

DR. RICE: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm here principally to answer questions. But I thought I might just give you a little feel for what today has been like for the President.

He has, of course, had several meetings, including a very successful with President Megawati of Indonesia. He took that opportunity at this meeting, which was planned before, but, nevertheless, came in the middle of this situation, to express to President Megawati -- where there is, of course, the largest Muslim population in the world in Indonesia -- his very great desire that everyone understand that America believes that the terrorism that we experienced is not the work of Islam, it is not the work of Islamic people, it is not the work of Arabs, it is the work of extremists. And he used the opportunity again to underscore his message of tolerance that he has been underscoring all week.

He also met with German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, who delivered a message of support from Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder; with Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov of Russia, who did the same from President Putin. And he had a couple of phone calls this morning -- one with President Mbeki of South Africa, and another with President Kim Dae Jung of South Korea.

The President has met with his National Security Council this morning. The pattern is that he meets with his National

Security Council in the morning. He chairs those meetings, himself. And then the principals reassemble later in the day to share notes, to consult and coordinate, and to prepare the next day's national security meeting.

The President also received the leadership of the Congress, the two House leaders, Speaker Hastert, Leader Gephardt, and the two Senate leaders, Senator Daschle and Senator Lott. And he was delighted to receive from Speaker Hastert an invitation to go and address the Joint Session of Congress tomorrow.

So it was a very busy day, but I think again, a very successful day as the President begins to lay out the first phases of this campaign that he wants to underscore is going to be a very long campaign in this war against terrorism.

Q Condi, will you tell us what he hopes to accomplish tomorrow? And will the American people have any better idea of who he's going to strike, where he's going to strike, when he's going to strike, what he's going to strike?

DR. RICE: Ron, this is not a speech to announce military action. The President has made very clear that he intends to be patient, that he is going to review his options, that he is going to look for ways to be effective in whatever it is that we do, and that we are now launched on a long campaign.

So what the President will do tomorrow is to use the opportunity to talk to the American people about the kind of threat that we face. The American people have a lot of questions about what kind of people would do this to the United States, why this kind of hate would exist against the United States. So we'll get a clearer picture of the enemy that we're facing.

I think the President is going to use this as an opportunity to talk about the sustained nature of this campaign, that this cannot be a campaign that is thought of like the Gulf War, where there was a capital with a leadership that one understood fully in the way that we traditionally understood leadership. I think he will use it as an opportunity to urge patience and reason, and to demonstrate again that his resolve is going to be over a long period of time, not in a single moment.

One other thing, Ron, I would just like to mention is that he's going to talk about what Americans can do to prepare for this effort, and he's going to talk some about the nature of the support that we're getting from around the world, which is really quite extraordinary. I think everybody understood that this was not just an attack on America, this was an attack on freedom.

Q You said that the President reiterated the message of tolerance and the importance that this is not a campaign against Islam or Arab nations, generally. Has it been communicated to the administration from those nations from that part of the world

that you've been talking to recently that it is a highly critical thing for the President to do, not just once, but over and over and over again? And President Megawati has returned to the building; we've seen her enter the West Wing just a few moments ago. Can you tell us with whom she is meeting and what we can read into that?

DR. RICE: I believe President Megawati was scheduled a long time ago during this to have a meeting with the Vice President. She's meeting with the Vice President. But it was not arranged hastily or anything like that; it was scheduled as a part of her program.

In terms of the tolerance message, it was very much the President's instinct from the very beginning that it was extremely important that he, first as President of the United States, make very clear that we had a lot of Muslims in the United States of America who are patriotic people, who salute the flag just like all of us do, who were appalled and saddened by what happened on September 11th, and that we are a country that judges people not by their religious beliefs or by their color, by the fact that we're all Americans.

So that was the first part of the message. The second part of the message is that we have a lot of friends around the world who are Muslim. We have countries that are long friends of the United States who are of the Islamic faith. And the President wanted to be very clear that this is not a war of "civilizations," that this is not a war against Islam. This is a war against people who in many ways pervert what Islam stands for. Islam stands for peace and stands for nonviolence. And he wanted to make that very, very clear.

Q If I may follow up --

DR. RICE: Yes, sure.

Q -- did that need become more pronounced after the President invoked the word "crusade" on Sunday, and that raised some alarms within the Muslim community in America and internationally?

DR. RICE: This has been part of our -- the message from the very beginning. And in every conversation that the President has had with leaders of all countries, but also with Muslim countries, he has been saying this from the very beginning.

Q Is the President prepared for the inevitable comparisons with President Roosevelt, vis-a-vis tomorrow's speech?

DR. RICE: Well, I think the President is going to deliver the speech on its own terms. But it allows an interesting point, which is that this isn't Pearl Harbor. I know that there are a

lot of comparisons to Pearl Harbor, but this is different. And it's different in a lot of ways. This is the first war of the 21st century.

In that case, we had a country with a capital, with marching armies and beaches to storm, and islands to take, and in the last war, deserts to cross. That is not the nature of this war. There will be, undoubtedly, some things that our military forces and the military forces of others can do. But this is also a war of will and mind. It is a war in which information may be the most important asset that we have. And so we're asking a lot of countries to help us with information. These are not traditional enemies, and so he's going to have a very different task.

Q -- will have a different speech for us than the one Roosevelt delivered?

DR. RICE: This is a speech that will seek to start to broaden and deepen the American people's understanding, indeed, people around the world -- the understanding of what it is we face and how we're going to have to face it. Because we're in this for the long haul.

Q Condi, does the President believe and will he try to prepare people tomorrow night for some sort of sense of sacrifice? For instance, we're already talking about spending some \$100 billion on things other than what it would have been spent on. Clearly, something has to give.

DR. RICE: I think that every American understands that life changed on September 11th. Now, what didn't change is our way of life. And we have to, as the President said when he welcomed workers back here at the White House Complex, it's every American's duty to try to get back to doing the things that make us American: Going to work and going to shop and taking your kids to school.

But there is no doubt that the country faced a severe shock and blow. And we have to respond to that. And he said to the leaders that this country is going to respond and its leadership is going to respond. He's been heartened by the fact of unity between the Congress and the Executive Branch on exactly this point.

But, yes, this is going to be a time of sacrifice. I think the President is not afraid to say that, and he will make that case.

Q Dr. Rice, a lot of nations around the world are calling for the United States to act with restraint, China, Egypt, Jordan, saying that we should act with restraint. Some are even suggesting we operate through multilateral institutions. What's the balance between this coalition-building that the President is doing, and the U.S. exercising its right under the UN Charter to

act unilaterally?

DR. RICE: The United States faces a situation in which we really are in a situation of self-defense. If no one believes that these are dangerous people to the health and well-being of the United States, then just look again at that tape on September 11th.

I would caution that this is a different kind of coalition. This is not the Gulf War coalition where we all mobilize our military forces and march off to war after 100 days. This is a coalition in which I think a lot of states have recognized that this is not just an attack on the United States, this is an attack on freedom-loving peoples everywhere. This is an attack that was meant to generate maximum fear in countries that don't want to close their borders, that don't want to act in a fearful way.

Now, there are going to be a lot of different fronts in this war; some on the information side, some on the financial side, some on the military side, some on other fronts. And I think that we will have broad support, different countries are going to play different roles. There are going to be countries that you may never hear of their contribution. But it might actually be the most important contribution in locating this network.

So this is a different kind of coalition. The President is absolutely committed to doing what the United States has to do. But I think that we have tremendous support and understanding that there have to be several phases to this, and this has to go on for a long time.

Q A quick follow-up. Does the U.S. feel constrained at all by the calls from other nations, especially as time passes and the urgency of the moment fades -- does the United States feel constrained about that?

DR. RICE: The President's made clear that he's not going to lose his focus. And with every foreign leader -- and I've sat in now on lots of meetings with leaders -- every conversation is about how the world cannot lose its focus on what happened; cannot start to get back to normal life -- we want to do that -- but forget that this is a threat that is out there and that will strike again if we don't take the necessary measures to root it out, to draw them out of their holes, as the President said, to bring them to justice. And so we are not going to lose focus, and we don't think that the rest of the world will lose focus.

But the main thing here is to do something effective; to do something effective in the first phases, but also to continue to do something effective over the long haul.

Q In my mind, the President left the impression today that in terms of coalition-building, the first objective is that

the U.S. has the right and the obligation to retaliate against those who are responsible for the World Trade Center attacks and the attack on the Pentagon, and that that's first. And that for the longer part of the sustained effort, the coalition-building may come after that. Is that a fair reading?

DR. RICE: No, I think that we believe that this first phase in which the President demonstrates, if you will, that what he said about being determined to root out those who perpetrated this act and those who harbor them -- in other words, that there isn't a distinction here -- that that is an important part of the next phase of this; that you have to be able to demonstrate to states that might harbor terrorists that that's not going to be a good thing to do in the future, and to give states that have been harboring terrorism a chance to change their ways.

But the President is committed to the coalition because the coalition is being committed to him. And I want to caution: Talking about the coalition again, we tend to think of the last war and we tend to think of the way that the Gulf War coalition was put together. But countries are going to contribute different things. And the most important contributions may come down the road as we deal with the financial networks of these organizations, that we deal with rooting them out of countries in which they are burrowed in and ready to strike.

This is a long conflict, a long struggle, and there are going to be a lot of different contributions along the road from a lot of different countries.

Q As you say, the President isn't going to announce military action tomorrow night, so what will he say that we have not already heard from him? Is he going to tell us anything new?

DR. RICE: The President will take this opportunity to make a case, I think, to the American people of why we are entering this long struggle and to understand better its nature. This is not something that is going to be over in a matter of months. And so the President feels, I think, an obligation to bring the American people along with him in his thinking, to bring them along with him in his deepening understanding of what it is we face, to understand that there may be sacrifice along the way. Also to rally the country and the world to understand that this really is an attack on freedom. It's a chance to bring this together in a way that lays the foundation for what is really going to be a long struggle.

Q Did the President today, Condi, sign any deployment order, as was reported on at least network, regarding additional airplanes to the Gulf region, to beef up the no-fly zone forces there and potentially clear up other forces to deal with something in Central Asia?

DR. RICE: The United States is repositioning some of its

forces to support the President's goal. I'm not going to talk about operational matters or further about troop movements. I can refer you to the Pentagon for anything further. But we are repositioning some forces.

Q But can you -- at least, without the specifics, as an order signed and approved by the President, whatever the order says?

DR. RICE: Well, you understand that the President has done a couple of things. The order on the call-up of the Reserves; he's talked with the Secretary of Defense about what is necessary to prepare the United States for any action that it might wish to take in accordance with the goals that he's laid out.

Q Dr. Rice, the Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, has been raising a quiet campaign that's quite different from the United States. He called several world leaders, including President Chirac, just been here yesterday. And what they are saying basically is that the United States, if you want to wage a war, you have to go through the United Nations Security Council and respect the so-called territorial integrity and the sovereignty issue. A lot of analysts are saying that the Chinese real target is Taiwan and Tibet. I just wonder whether the President has any idea on this. I mean, the Chinese Foreign Minister is due here tomorrow.

DR. RICE: Yes, the Chinese Foreign Minister is due here. But let me say that one of the first phone calls that the President had was with President Jiang Zemin. It was a very positive phone call that promised cooperation.

Again, we do not expect every country in the world to be involved in every phase of this operation, or in every aspect of it. We expect, though, that everybody understands that terrorism is a real threat to civilization, to freedom-loving peoples, and that we believe the Chinese understand and understand fully.

Q Do you need another U.N. resolution to do it?

DR. RICE: Look, the United States -- first of all, we had an expression from the U.N. of support for the United States, and an understanding that there are things that may have to be done. I can't tell you what further U.N. activity there may be or we may request. We have had several expressions of support from a number of countries, from a number of alliances, and I think the most remarkable in this regard was NATO's invocation of Article Very, that an attack upon one is an attack upon all.

But the United States, of course, has certain rights to self-defense. I think people understand that. Again, if you don't think that this is about self-defense, just look at those pictures on September 11th.

David.

Q Condi, several of the leaders have asked for evidence of Osama bin Laden's involvement. We heard this today from Pakistan; we've heard it from Chinese, as well. Within the constraints that you have, given the classification of the material, what are you prepared to go do, and what model -- in the way of sharing this evidence to help build the coalition? And what model do you use for this? Does it go back to sort of the Cuban missile crisis, where obviously some intelligence data was shared? What do you do and how central is that?

DR. RICE: Well, David, the first thing to say is that, obviously, there's an ongoing investigation, and so I can't get into details of what is being looked at. But I will say this: The organization that were talking about has a history. There are already indictments out against members of this organization and against Osama bin Laden, himself. This is an organization that is well-known to have been involved in several other terrorist incidents or attacks against American interests. There are a number of operatives whose names have popped up during this investigation that are known to be linked to Osama bin Laden.

I think that we know who we're dealing with and what we're dealing with here, and we've known for a long time. I would just say that we are more than happy to talk with allies and friends in the rest of the world about what it is we need to do. But the United States is going to have to take measures in self-defense to deal with this problem.

Let's be very clear: The President is concerned to protect the United States in any way that he can. And rooting this cancer out of the tens of countries that are out there in which it's operating has got to take place because that is in the self-defense of the United States, and frankly, in the self-defense of all countries that favor freedom.

Q Can you tell us anything about the speech preparation -- how long has his speech been in the works, and how is he putting it together? And what is the explanation for why people would do this?

DR. RICE: I'm sorry?

Q What is the explanation for why people would do this?

DR. RICE: Well, I think that I'd refer you to the President's speech tomorrow night. I think that he's going to really lay out this case for the American people as a fundamental, a foundation for what we're about to face. And I urge you very much to listen to it in its totality. The speechwriting process is, you know, the speechwriting process. There have been a number of people involved in it. It wouldn't surprise you that --

Q When did it start?

DR. RICE: You know, a couple of days. The President's been thinking about the speech for a couple of days, but not with a specific date in mind. I think he's known for quite some time that he wanted to make the case to the American people for what it is we're about to embark on, and he wanted to do that in a way that is not hurried, not a press sound byte here or there, but really lays out the case.

Q As far as the message of returning to a normal life, returning to school, returning to jobs, what does the President intend to do for those people who have no job to return to you in the wake of massive layoffs, particularly in certain sectors? Is he going to outline in any way or reassure the American people of any economic stimulus package, any assistance, to particular sectors that have been hit in the wake of all this?

DR. RICE: You know that the President is in discussions with his economic advisors and also with the Congress about what can be done to deal with the national emergency that we have faced. I think the President is quite aware, as everyone is, that there have been effects on the economy of what happened.

But I know that he said to the leaders today that he wants to work with them and that he is prepared to try to think about what it is that he needs to do. But beyond that, the details will come.

Q Many Americans expect some kind of decisive military action. From all that you've said, this being a campaign of mind and will and so forth, is part of the President's intention to suggest that perhaps what will be decisive here will not be military action?

DR. RICE: The President is going to be results-oriented. And he is bringing to bear all of our instruments of national power. He is also bringing to bear the assets and instruments of national power of a vast number of countries around the world.

I have no doubt that military power is some part of that. But we are not facing a traditional enemy here; we're facing a quite unconventional enemy. The President, though, made very clear that while he wants to root out those who are hiding who we've gotten accustomed to as the car bomber who runs and hides, but who, this time, perpetrated this well-orchestrated terror attack on some of the most important symbols of power and authority and prosperity of the United States, that he's got to get them. He's got to root out that organization, wherever it may be, but that he also believes that those who harbor them need to be -- it needs to be demonstrated to them that harboring these terrorists is not good for one's well-being.

So there will be a host of instruments brought to bear on this problem, and that's the case that the President is going to make tomorrow.

Final, final question.

Q. On the coalition, are you suggesting today that it might be useful to think of this as multiple coalitions for multiple purposes? And second, this 192 countries that have responded with condolences or offers of help include a lot of countries that are not, as you describe, freedom-loving countries, people that the Vice President's described as some unsavory characters. And I'm wondering, some of these countries are able to provide the most help in rooting out this terrorist threat. I'm wondering how you're going to be guided in striking a balance between how far the United States can go in dealing with these countries to get at this threat?

DR. RICE: Our values matter to us. And I want to make the point that our values matter to us internally as we try to think about how to secure ourselves better. Civil liberties matter to this President very much, and our values matter to us abroad. We are not going to stop talking about the things that matter to us, human rights, religious freedom and so forth and so on. We're going to continue to press those things; we would not be America if we did not.

We have a particular threat here to our -- not just our well-being, but to our way of life. And the coalition and what countries can bring to it, it's very important to take advantage of what can be brought from a variety of different countries and a variety of different means to address that threat. And yes, I think the notion of multiple coalitions is probably a good one.

There is clearly one, big, over-arching coalition that says, this could have been us, and we understand that when America was attacked, more than America was attacked. But what different countries will bring to the equation, what different fronts people will fight on against this war on terrorism I think will unfold over this period of time.

But I do want to say that the really interesting thing about what happened on Tuesday, if you try and step back from the horrors of it -- and it's just really horrible -- is that when the World Trade Center went down, the world's trade center went down. There were citizens from numerous countries that died in the World Trade Center. This was not just Americans. These were Pakistanis and Brits and people from the continent of Africa and Latin Americans.

What really was attacked was this world community that trades and works and tries to make people more prosperous and enjoys the freedoms and the kind of freedom of life that we're so accustomed to in the United States. And so when the President

says that he is doing this to rally the world, we have a very visible symbol of the fact that it was the world that was attacked, and it was the multiple nationalities that were attacked in the World Trade Center.

Thank you very much.

END

6:05 P.M. EDT

Rachael L. Sunbarger

09/18/2001 05:44 PM

Record Type: Record

To:

cc:

Subject: PRESS SCHEDULE OF THE PRESIDENT FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2001

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2001

PRESS SCHEDULE OF THE PRESIDENT FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2001

Intown Travel Pool

Wires: AP, Reuters, Bloomberg

Wire Photo: AFP, AP, Reuters

TV Corr & Crew: NBC

Lights: Fox

Mag Photo: Time

Radio: SRN

Print: Hearst Newspapers

- 8:30 am Intown Travel Pool gathers in Brady Press Briefing Room
- 11:25 am THE PRESIDENT meets with the President of Indonesia
Oval Office, The White House
POOL COVERAGE at top
- 2:00 pm THE PRESIDENT meets with the Foreign Minister of Russia
Oval Office, The White House
STILL PHOTOS at top
- 3:45 pm THE PRESIDENT meets with the Foreign Minister of Germany
Oval Office, The White House
STILL PHOTOS at top
- 4:10 pm THE PRESIDENT meets with House and Senate Leadership
Oval Office, The White House
POOL COVERAGE

Briefing Schedule:

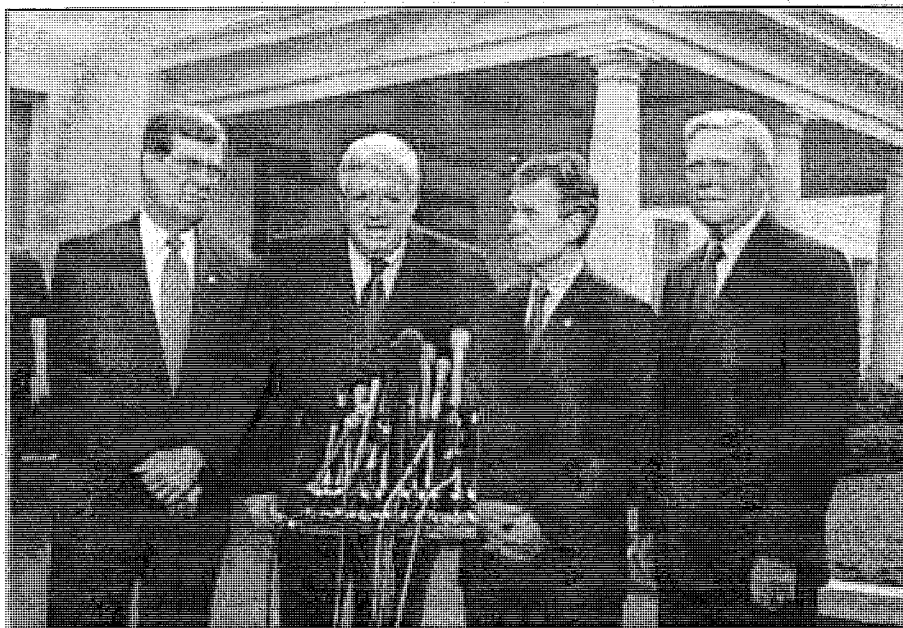
9:45 am **Gaggle by the Press Secretary**

2:00 pm **Briefing by the Press Secretary in the Brady Press Briefing Room**

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Congressional leaders, from left: Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., and House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., talk with reporters following a meeting with President Bush at the White House in Washington Wednesday, Sept. 19, 2001 to discuss options for the United States in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the United States last week. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

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President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, left, meet with Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., front left, and Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., front right, in the Oval Office at the White House to talk about how the U.S. will respond to the terrorist attacks at the World trade Center and the Pentagon. (AP Photo/Doug Mills)

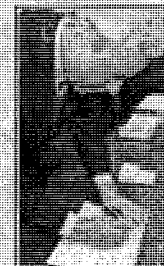
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Rachael L. Sunbarger

09/19/2001 05:04 PM

Record Type: Record

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Subject: POOL REPORT 9-19-01 #2

Pool Report No. 2, September 19, 2001

Bush & Cheney meet House-Senate leaders in Oval Office

Pool entered Oval Office at 4:35 p.m. to see the president and vice president seated in the chairs set before the fireplace, with Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle and Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott seated on the couch to their right; House Speaker Dennis Hastert and House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt seated on the couch to their left.

White House transcript follows.

The highlights:

Bush announced plans to address the House and Senate on Thursday night, the time TBD.

Bush said U.S. officials are working to avert follow-on terrorist attacks but cautioned: "We in government are on alert."

Bush reiterated that the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism is not directed at Islam.

Bush vowed open-ended efforts including tapping the Social Security surplus to underwrite the U.S. response to an "act of war" and to combat the economic slowdown. He said he would use whatever federal resources are available to prevail. "The definition of how much is enough to get American going again," Bush said.

Bush suggested that the economy had tipped into a recession. "Make no mistake about it: This has had an affect on our economy in a big way," Bush said, adding that the attack has been "a shock to our economy."

Bush praised cooperation by Pakistan's president. He suggested that the "horrible tragedy" of the terrorist attack on the United States could provide the

United States with "interesting" opportunities to help ease Israel-Palestinian tensions, "refashion" the relationship between India and Pakistan and "shake terrorists loose" from their sponsoring countries.

Stewart Powell -- Hearst Newspapers

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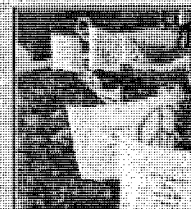
President George W. Bush hosts a meeting with Indonesia President Megawati Sukarnoputri (L) in the Oval Office of the White House, September 19, 2001. As Bush conducted a second day of face-to-face meetings with foreign representatives to build an international coalition to tackle terrorism, the U.S. rejected calls by Afghanistan's ruling Taliban for talks on the fate of Osama bin Laden. Bush demanded that Afghanistan bin Laden and leaders of his militant network. (Larry Downing/Reuters)

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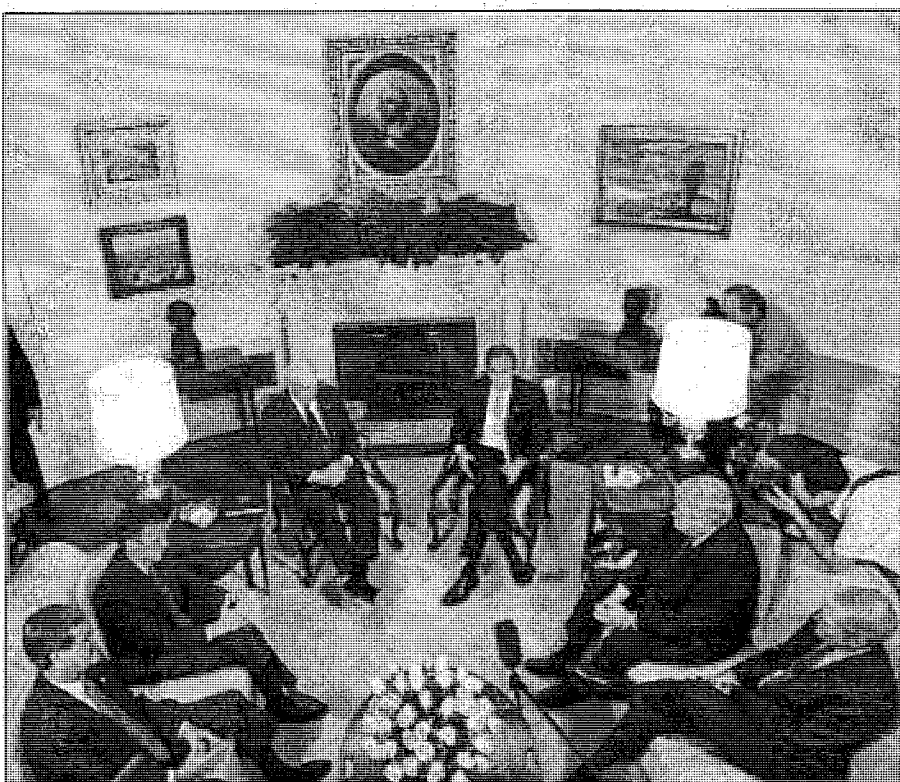
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President Bush sits next to Vice President Dick Cheney as he meets with House and Senate Leadership in the Oval Office at the White House, Wednesday, Sept. 19, 2001. From left to right is Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., Speaker of the House of Representatives Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., and House Minority Leader Dick Gephardt, D-Mo. Bush urged today the Taliban in Afghanistan to turn over members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida organization and said the U.S. was gathering evidence not just on the terror attacks in New York City and Washington but also on other incidents. (AP Photo/Doug Mills)

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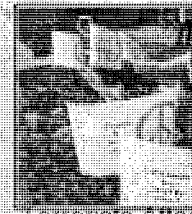
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U.S. President George W. Bush hosts a meeting with Congressional leaders in the Oval Office of the White House, September 19, 2001. Seated L-R: Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss), Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), Vice President Richard Cheney, Bush and Speaker of the House of Representatives Dennis Hastert (R-Ill). The leaders discussed the thousands of victims of the brutal attacks on the United States last week after both the Pentagon and the World Trade Center Buildings in New York City were attacked September 11. REUTERS/Larry Downing

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09/19/2001 04:54 PM

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Subject: PRESS BRIEFING BY ARI FLEISCHER

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 19, 2001

PRESS BRIEFING
BY ARI FLEISCHER

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 19, 2001

PRESS BRIEFING BY
ARI FLEISCHER

The James S. Brady Briefing Room

2:20 P.M. EDT

MR. FLEISCHER: Good afternoon. The President today spoke with South Korean President Kim early this morning. President Kim reiterated the deep condolences of the Korean people and the government, and said that South Korea will fully cooperate in the antiterrorist effort in the spirit of the United States/Republic of Korea Mutual Defense Treaty. He also noted South Korea's readiness to participate in the international coalition.

President Bush thanked President Kim for South Korea's support and concerns for American people, and said we will stay in consultation about the war against terrorism. They both look forward to meeting in Seoul next month.

The President also spoke this morning with President Mbeki of South Africa. President Bush expressed his appreciation for South Africa's offer of search and rescue teams and medical assistance to help in America's recovery. President Mbeki offered his condolences and said that President Bush has taken on an important task to mobilize a global coalition against terrorism. The Presidents acknowledged the common threat of terrorism to both the United States and South Africa, and President Bush explained that his effort to go after terrorist sanctuaries, as well as countries who sponsor such evil.

Earlier today, as well, the President had a meeting with his National Security Council. He met with the President of Indonesia, and the two Presidents condemned the attack on the United States and pledged that they would strengthen existing cooperation in the global effort to combat international terrorism. They also reaffirmed their commitment to the principles of religious freedom and tolerance and relations within and among nations.

As the leader of the world's largest Muslim population and the third largest democracy in the world, President Megawati joined President Bush in underlining the importance of differentiating between the religion of Islam and the acts of violent extremists, which has taken place in New York and here at the Pentagon in Washington, emphasizing that Islam is a religion of peace that neither teaches hatred nor condones violence.

President Megawati encouraged President Bush in his stated purpose of building a broad coalition across religious lines and cultures to deal with these new and dangerous threats. And noting also, President Bush noted also that Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the United States. President Bush assured President Megawati that the American people respect Islam as one of the world's great religions, and that the United States would join hands with freedom-loving people around the world of all religions to combat international terrorism.

The President will meet with the Foreign Minister of Russia this afternoon. He will meet with the Foreign Minister of Germany this afternoon. And he will also meet with a bipartisan leadership group coming down from the Congress, including Speaker Hastert, Majority Leader Daschle, Minority Leader Gephardt and Minority Leader Lott, to discuss recent developments with the attack on the United States, as well as to discuss the important issues on the domestic agenda, particularly concerns about the American airline industry and a possible economic stimulus package, as well as whatever else may be on the minds of congressional leaders.

Finally, the President has noted the speech of President Musharraf today in Pakistan. The United States is very pleased with the cooperation of Pakistan, and President Musharraf's speech is an indication of the strong relationship between the United States and Pakistan to counterterrorism.

With that, Mr. Fournier?

Q Is the President definitely for a stimulus package, and it's just a matter of what it is? And does he think it's time now to give businesses a tax break after giving individuals tax breaks earlier in the year?

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, the President, first and foremost, wants to work with Congress, and work closely with Congress. And that's why he's looking forward to this meeting with the leaders. And he wants to hear what the Democrats say, what the Republicans say, and he wants to see how narrow or how wide the differences may be, because we are in a new era where the differences, really, between the two parties are narrowing out of a sense of trying to help the country.

So he wants to work with Congress. He has talked about a variety of plans that could include tax relief, that include some

areas of spending. Certainly \$40 billion, which a large portion will be spent in a one-year period, of emergency assistance to deal with the consequences of this attack will have a stimulative effect on the economy. And the President is also prepared to listen to ideas about regulatory changes.

Q Such as?

MR. FLEISCHER: I'm not going to get into specifics. I'll allow them to have their meeting, and then as the President makes up any determinations or agreements are reached with Congress, I'll have more to indicate.

Q You know that the United States made specific requests/demands of Pakistan, and Pakistan is cooperating. Can you say whether in some of these meetings or in separate phone calls, the President is yet at the stage where he is making specific requests for various countries in the area of cooperating in this war?

MR. FLEISCHER: It varies. It varies from country to country. I think it's a safe assumption that in some cases the answer to that is yes; in other cases, it's developing, and will continue to develop as plans are made.

Q Can you say which countries have had various requests made of them?

Q Does the President feel any increasing pressure to act militarily? We see a new poll today, for example, that shows over 80 percent of Americans favor some sort of military action.

MR. FLEISCHER: As the President said last week, that while this attack may have begun by our enemies, it will end in a manner and at a time of America's choosing. I think the President is keenly mindful of the fact that this has to be done right. It cannot be done early, it cannot be done late; it has to be done for the right reasons, at the right time because the response will be effective.

And this is another reason why he's also mindful of the patience of the American people. The American people are a patient people. The American people also want to see action. But the President is going to be guided by a very resolute sense of only action that should be taken is action that will work, that will be effective, and that will be effective for the long-term. And so, therefore, whatever series of steps you take -- and I urge you to think beyond just the traditional military -- will be taken at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way, as the President sees fit.

Q What do you mean by "beyond just the traditional military"?

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, I keep reminding you that there are other steps that are financial, that are diplomatic, that are political. So I just think as you all approach this issue, you need to consider that mind-set, that this is, as the President points out, a different kind of war. It is the new war of the 21st century, and there will be more elements to it than only traditional military.

Q When you say it has to be done right, are you talking about going after the one person? And do we contemplate any change in our foreign policy that might have contributed to this?

MR. FLEISCHER: The President has said this is much bigger than any one person. This deals with all terrorist networks that contribute to this form of terrorism, and to those who harbor terrorism. The President has said that he sees in this an opportunity to do something for the next generations, so that people will not have to suffer these terrorist attacks that culminated in the attack on the World Trade Center.

Q So we could break diplomatic relations with any nation?

MR. FLEISCHER: I'm not going to get into any possibilities or hypotheticals, but the President has indicated clearly that they involve --

Q Well, those who harbor -- what would you do? You would invade their country?

MR. FLEISCHER: I'm not going to get into any of the specifics, but I have indicated earlier that it could involve things that are military, things that are diplomatic, things that are financial, all of the above.

Q Ari, last week officials were saying -- Secretary Powell, in particular -- that the U.S. would present convincing evidence to other governments and people around the world, if and when we acted, to show the justice and accuracy of our actions. This morning you seemed to indicate that in order not to compromise how we're gathering information, you might not do that. Did I read that right?

MR. FLEISCHER: I think the question was put to me, one, about the United Nations, would he go to the United Nations before he'd take any action and present evidence to the United Nations? I was also asked if I had anything that I could contribute publicly here from this podium about proof that we had. And that was the context of my answer. But the President will, of course, work with our allies and other nations as we make plans and move forward.

Q And so we will be presenting that convincing proof to other governments?

MR. FLEISCHER: I think we are going to build out alliances and coalitions. And that means interesting interplay, always, with different nations about how much they want to contribute, how much they will do based on their own desires and their own abilities. And that is going to vary from nation to nation. So I don't think you can make any one inference about sharing of information, for example, across the world. It would be different elements with different nations.

Q And one more on this. Given what a shadowy and nebulous creature we are dealing with in this terrorist network, is the administration finding it hard to forge those links from these atrocities to specific individuals?

MR. FLEISCHER: That's a question of what evidence have you gathered. And I'm not going to get into the process of the evidence-gathering.

Q Isn't it hard to prove this kind of thing, though?

MR. FLEISCHER: I think it's always accurate to say that the war on terrorism is a shadowy one. Terrorists do operate in a shadowy way. And that's why the President, from the beginning, has recognized that this is, as he put it, the new war of the 21st century. And that will be reflected in the actions he takes.

Jim Angle, who is sitting in the second row. He moved up.

Q On the question of evidence, I mean, obviously, it would be helpful to the U.S. and those it is asking to cooperate to help demonstrate that this is not a war against Islam, that it's based on specific evidence. That would obviously help the Pakistanis. It would obviously help a number of other people we've asked to participate in this with us. Is the administration inclined in some way and in some forum, or even privately on a one-on-one basis, to provide whatever evidence or some kind of evidence so that those who are also exposed in this battle can make the case that they have seen convincing evidence and that it's real?

MR. FLEISCHER: I think all you have to do is listen to President Musharraf's speech today. And based on the information that Pakistan is aware of and the conversations that Pakistan has had with the United States, they are taking action that the United States government is appreciative for. And so I think the questions about evidence, for example, many of the nations around the world are already ahead of your questions. They are already working with the United States very productively and cooperatively. And so I think you have to ask yourselves the question of, are the other nations around the world asking the same questions that you are, and I indicate that many of those nations are beyond what you're asking.

Q I don't think there is any question that our allies are prepared to believe this. What we're talking about are people who are not necessarily our allies and those who try to make the argument that the administration is simply waging war on Islam. Is there anything you can do to soften those views, or do you just chalk those people up as being beyond the pale in terms of your ability to convince them otherwise?

MR. FLEISCHER: I draw your attention to the meeting today, of course, in the Oval Office with the President of Indonesia, the conversations the President has had with other Arab nations and Muslim nations, and those conversations have been very productive.

So that's -- again, I'm trying to draw you off of that question a little bit, because it's not really reflective of what the United States is hearing from nations around the world. I indicated to Terry that to the degree there are any such concerns, different nations will have different issues that get addressed on a host of issues. And I think that's not surprising.

Q You're confirming that you have shared information with Pakistan and some other countries?

MR. FLEISCHER: No, I'm not confirming that. I said we could take a look at the statements that have been made by these nations, and they are satisfied with the actions we are taking or requesting, and we are satisfied with their response. That is why I am saying these nations have moved beyond your questions.

Q Ari, President Musharraf said that in his opinion, the United States need not seek any further authorization from the United Nations General Assembly or the Security Council to act militarily, because of the resolution passed last Wednesday. Does the administration agree?

MR. FLEISCHER: You have been asking me that question for two days, and I pointed out to you that under the United Nations charter, the United States has a right to self-defense. Of course, there was a Security Council resolution also. Whether or not any other action will be taken at the United Nations is not a determination the President has made at this point, which is the same answer I gave yesterday.

Q All right, let me ask you this. On the scope of this global effort, you said yesterday, first, that it was against terrorism generally. Then you said against terrorist organizations that pose a direct threat to America. A moment ago you said, seeking out a campaign against a people, terrorism that affects people. Is it still the administration's position that this is only a campaign against organizations that pose a direct threat to America?

MR. FLEISCHER: It is all of that. And that is why the President has indicated that in this new war of the 21st century against terrorism, the United States, in concert with our allies and coalition partners, will target terrorism and those who harbor terrorists. Terrorism presents a threat to people who love freedom and democracy throughout the world. And that was what I added to my statement yesterday, if you recall.

Q But is it a coalition against terrorism activity in, for example, Spain or Ireland or India?

MR. FLEISCHER: We talked about this yesterday. This is a worldwide attempt to combat terrorism, where terrorism threatens people who cherish freedom, and where terrorism is a threat to ourselves and to our allies and to our friends.

Q Given the President's sense of urgency to help bail out the airlines, does he also feel it necessary to provide direct financial aid to other industries, such as the insurance industry, reinsurance industry, hotels, motels, tourism in the state of Hawaii, that are also having financial difficulties that they can trace directly to the aftermath of the terrorist attack?

MR. FLEISCHER: On the domestic consequences, the President is looking at this, at least initially, in two distinct groups. There is one, the airlines, which clearly have been directly and adversely affected as a result of the attack on the United States. The President is considering what appropriate remedy is proper and wise and in the taxpayers' interest for the airlines, to help them deal with the consequences of the attack.

More broadly speaking, the President is also, as he will today, talking to members of Congress and to his advisors about what steps could be taken to help the economy in general. And of course, any steps that would help the economy in general could also have an impact on various industries.

Q But what about hotels and restaurants located in New York or Washington that can show you proof that they've also lost money as a direct result of --

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, that's why I was addressing the question of the economy in general, which, of course, has --

Q So you won't help any --

MR. FLEISCHER: -- which, of course, has an impact on other industries. I'm not prepared to go down a line tick-tocking them, and who knows where you want to start and where you want to end. I have given you the answer that the President is focused on the airlines, and then the economy in general, which, of course, has impact on others in other sectors.

Q Most Latin American Presidents have expressed messages

of condolence and support for the United States in this perilous hour. Now it seems that the foreign ministers will be meeting here in Washington on Friday to vote for what is called in Spanish by the acronym PIAR, which is the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Rio, which was signed in December of 1947, in which each nation must come to the aid of all the nation-members if one of them is attacked. Did the United States ask for this meeting, or was this meeting a spontaneous thing?

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, as you know, Secretary Powell was actually in Lima, Peru, meeting with the OAS General Assembly on September 11th when the attack took place. But like all other regional security arrangements that the United States has, or that we are a signatory to, the Rio Treaty provides also a collective security mechanism through which we can coordinate our response. We're gratified by the calls in the region to invoke the treaty and look forward to exploring how its elements can be used.

It's just another indication of how the world is speaking out and expressing unity and solidarity in a variety of ways with the United States in a way that will isolate the terrorists and enable the world to do combat with terrorism on a host of levels.

Q There's a press report I'm sure you're aware of that the pilot of one of the planes that hit one of the towers of the World Trade Center met last year with the head of intelligence from Iraq. Iraq denies it. Can you confirm that meeting took place?

MR. FLEISCHER: I'm aware of the report, but I'm not in a position to confirm or give you any further indication on that.

Q Ari, back to the President of Pakistan's speech. He said three things I wanted to see if you could confirm or elaborate on. First of all, on the point that you've been discussing, he said he was still asking the United States for evidence, which would seem to suggest that he wasn't completely satisfied yet with what he's seen concerning bin Laden.

Second, he said that the U.S. has asked for intelligence-gathering, logistics and permission to use air space. He said nothing about actually placing troops on the ground -- if you could discuss that. And, thirdly, he also issued a warning to India not to take advantage of the situation. I'm wondering whether or not the U.S. has also expressed concern to India that it not take advantage of this in any way, in Kashmir or elsewhere.

MR. FLEISCHER: First, I'm not prepared to go into the list of all of the specifics. President Musharraf did, himself, acknowledge three. I'm not prepared to go into whether there are any others --

Q Can you confirm those three?

MR. FLEISCHER: I'm not prepared to go into any beyond that, but I will confirm those three. On the first point, I've read his speech, David, and I'm not aware of that statement, so if you could point that out to me, I would appreciate seeing that. But the President, as I indicated, is pleased with the actions taken by Pakistan, and certainly this is an important speech that the President of Pakistan has given to his people today.

And your third question?

Q India.

MR. FLEISCHER: And what about it?

Q The President of Pakistan indicated concern that India might take advantage of this, that they were on high alert against India -- the military was. Has there been any U.S. communication to India about not taking advantage of this? Any intercession on behalf of Pakistan's behalf?

MR. FLEISCHER: The President did speak with President Vajpayee just the other day, and the President is aware of the regional implications of all the actions in this region. But the President is satisfied that the nations there understand the cause that they are all uniting behind -- India, Pakistan, together with the United States. The President is confident that broader context will be the modality in which those nations operate.

Q Did you specifically ask the President of India not to take any steps related to Pakistan that would make the --

MR. FLEISCHER: I would have to go back and look at the exact phone call.

Q This morning, the President talked about changing the mind-set about war. Here you've been stressing, or at least mentioning the other options, like financial, other things that can be done. Are you concerned that perhaps too much of an emphasis has been given to the military or the assumption of a military attack?

MR. FLEISCHER: Actually, I'm repeating the same thing I've been saying for three days. I continue to use that, because, again, I think it's so important for the American people who have for so many years understood war to be a traditional war, as the President points out, that involves capital cities and movements of fleets, and airplanes sitting on tarmacs, that this type of war is a totally different type of war.

And I was with the President all day on Tuesday last week,

as you know. Now, as the President arrived back into Washington, D.C., he got in his helicopter at Andrews Air Force base and came back to the White House. And it was late in the afternoon, early in the evening. And the way the helicopter comes into Washington, the President could see out of the left window of the helicopter the smoke coming out of the Pentagon.

And the President, looking out the window, said out loud and to nobody in particular, he said, "The mightiest building in the world is on fire. What you're just witnessing is the war of the 21st century."

I mean, he understood right from the beginning that this is different. And the manner in which our enemies, in this case, the terrorists, carry out the war against us is different -- hijacking airplanes with plastic knives and flying them into buildings in America. And our response will be different. Our response will not only be the traditional senses the American people have become accustomed to when it comes to war. But it will be all those other elements the President has talked about, while the financial networks that involve diplomacy, sanctions, trade, economy, politics, carrots, sticks. And there will be a host of items, a host of measures that go into this, and it will be different from things that people have seen before. It will also involve the patience of the American people, because it won't be conducted in the same manner the American people have seen on a limited basis; thank God.

Q Ari, two quickies. One, the Attorney General and FBI Director, they have been speaking only about attacks against Arab Americans, but not against the Indian Sikhs. Nobody has ever spoken yet, only except you have mentioned -- and, number two, in which category will you put Pakistan, which has been harboring terrorism -- India's Kashmir and their -- centers even for Osama bin Laden and others.

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, I think on your second point, that's why the President indicated that this is a chance for Pakistan. The President has said that he has spoken with President Musharraf, and this is a time to see that requests have been made, and not it will be a time to see. And the President is pleased what he has seen at this point.

On your first question, it's a vital question, and I think it's so important every day for everybody in government to continue to remind the American people, as General Ashcroft did this morning, that the American people should show no intolerance toward anybody based on what has happened. The fabric of our society is tremendously strong, but there are some weak edges. And everybody in our country has a role to speak out and do what we can to stop those weak edges.

Q -- because Indian American community, especially Sikhs, are really worried to come out because a number of Sikh persons

have been also targeted in Virginia, and they are worried and -- yesterday, and they are asking President Bush especially to --

MR. FLEISCHER: The President, when he visited the Islamic Center -- and I understand you're making a valid point about the difference between religions -- the President was very touched when somebody explained that his mother was afraid to come out of the house because she did want to wear her traditional headwear, and she was fearful that if she did, she would be subject to violence. And that really touched the President. And it's a reason why the President spoke out as he did, and I think it's just something that every day, every way, people in positions of responsibility have got to address.

Q In terms of your talking about war, during wartime we sometimes make changes both with legal immigration and illegal immigration. Are there any changes planned in how we're going to be treating immigrants to this country?

MR. FLEISCHER: No, there is nothing that's been brought to my attention. I know, in fact, that the President is still committed to honoring his promise to work with President Fox on immigration changes to deal with Mexico and that's part of the program and ways of making America welcome to immigrants.

It's so important at all times to remember the things that make America strong, and immigration is one of them. We can be a nation with immigrants; we can also be a nation of laws, and we have to be both.

Q You mentioned yesterday that the response from the Taliban had been all over the lot. Is there any more clarity today, and if not, does that in itself indicate that they're not going to cooperate?

MR. FLEISCHER: No, I would say there has been no more clarity today.

Q Also, in wartime, we've had history of drafts. Is that something that's under consideration, or can we take it off the table?

MR. FLEISCHER: No, there is no consideration of that at this time. And from my conversations at the Pentagon, it's not something they anticipate.

Q One Irish question and one British question, please. There were some references made by the IRA yesterday. Does the administration believe that one side of that conflict is more guilty than the other? Does the administration believe that the IRA is a terrorist group, or the new IRA, or the Real IRA?

MR. FLEISCHER: Certainly, the Real IRA is listed on the official list of terrorist groups. But I think the President

said what he said for a reason. He is sending a message and he's rallying a coalition, that those who engage in terrorism and those who harbor terrorists need to be worried about the actions that our government will take.

Q Is one side in that conflict more guilty than the other? Is one more of a terrorist group than the other?

MR. FLEISCHER: I don't look at it in a linear fashion.

Q On Britain tomorrow -- in a military sense, what do you plan to ask Prime Minister Blair to contribute, if you can?

MR. FLEISCHER: Of course, Connie, as you know, I'm not going to indicate what military actions we'll request.

Q Ari, based on information you've gotten over the past week, what is the President's level of concern about additional attacks on U.S. soil?

MR. FLEISCHER: Ongoing. I can't point to anything that would make it fluctuate up or down. But I can tell you that the President is concerned on an ongoing basis about maintaining security around the United States, and that's why, for example, the Department of Transportation has been working with the Air Marshal Program to protect aviation. That's why there has been such beefed up security at airports across the country.

It's a reminder that our open society has vulnerabilities. But, of course, being an open society is what has allowed us to be as strong as we are so that we would be able to prevail in this conflict.

Q If I can just follow up on that, there is some law enforcement concern that because some of the hijackers, alleged hijackers, were booked on flights on the 22nd of September, that there may be some kind of second wave out there. Is there any concern in the White House that --

MR. FLEISCHER: Terry, there is nothing I've heard about any specific dates, information like that. But as I indicated, it's an ongoing concern where security is being beefed up, stepped up. And the events of the 11th have sadly brought home to all Americans that we have to be mindful of violence here within our own borders.

Q Do you think there was more -- that there were more attempts either scheduled to be made the same day or on some other date, even if it's not the 22nd?

MR. FLEISCHER: You know, I can't speculate, Bill. I know that --

Q You've not heard one way or the other?

MR. FLEISCHER: I haven't heard anything conclusive. I just know that this is a time to be cautious. Concerns are ongoing.

Q Back on foreign policy just quickly. Many nations are calling for restraint of U.S. actions, China in particular. How much of what the U.S. is doing is bound by these bilateral and multilateral concerns, and how much of what you are doing is unilateral?

MR. FLEISCHER: It is going to be a healthy dose of both. The President is determined to lead on this question, make no doubts about it. And there will be many nations around the world that stand shoulder to shoulder with the United States. There will be other nations that stand a little bit less than shoulder to shoulder with the United States, and some less than that. But to the degree that any nation has a contribution to make, the United States will work with those nations. To the degree that nations have a robust series of actions they can take, we will work with them as well.

Q Ari, are our hands tied at all by these calls for restraint? Is the United States still able to act unilaterally?

MR. FLEISCHER: I think, frankly, it is just the opposite, Terry. When you take a look at how NATO has invoked Article 5 and how the Rio Treaty is being looked at now, I think it is just the opposite. The international community is rising up, as close to one as an international community can get.

Q May I follow up?

MR. FLEISCHER: Jim?

Q May I follow up, Ari, please?

MR. FLEISCHER: No, Jim had his --

Q Well, I've got another one germane to Terry's question.

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, let me -- you had a follow-up just a minute ago, and Jim has been patient. Jim has been patient, and then we have patient people there, and then -- be patient and I will get back to you.

Yes, patient Mr. Angle?

Q The President's view has been somewhat skeptical of the need for new economic stimulus, saying he wanted to wait and see how what was already in the pipeline had taken effect. How has that view changed since last Tuesday?

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, clearly the immediate aftermath for the economy sends worrisome signals, and it is important to fully

assess those signals, and when it comes to the making of appropriate policy on an economic point of view, what to do -- what type of stimulus package, if there should be additional tax cuts, if there should be additional spending, if there should be regulatory changes. The President is going to adopt a very consultative approach with the Congress, and a deliberative approach, as well. He will take a look at the context of the economy, and he will make a judgment.

Q But has he already reached the judgment that there obviously is some need for stimulus? My understanding is that experts on Capitol Hill are already talking about one percent lower growth than was anticipated in the third quarter --

MR. FLEISCHER: He's leaning that way, Jim.

Q Is that all you can say on that?

MR. FLEISCHER: Yes, I think you have to let him have the meeting with the members of Congress. I mean, the purpose of these meetings is to listen to the members of Congress. And you know, the President wants to hear from them. They are in touch with their constituents, they are in touch with the nation. He wants to gather their input, and then he will probably have more to say. And certainly you all will see the President soon yourselves when he is in that meeting.

Q What are his economic advisers saying about the status of the economy now, and the need for stimulus? Are they telling him one way or the other what they think is necessary?

MR. FLEISCHER: They are coming up with a series of options for the President, some of which I have tried to describe here.

Q I still have a follow up.

MR. FLEISCHER: We'll get back. I promised you I would. Go ahead.

Q Thank you, Ari. I just wanted, I think, to ask something related to Terry's question, which is the weight that the President is giving his coalition building efforts. Does he feel that he wants to devote time and effort to that now, and then he'll worry about possible military action? Or is he willing to forge ahead, take military action first and let others follow?

MR. FLEISCHER: I'm not prepared to predict the timing of anything military. The President will continue to build his coalition and talk to allies, and events will follow from that.

Q He doesn't feel that he's got some work to do first?

MR. FLEISCHER: I think he's doing all the work at the same

time.

Q Air, two questions real quick. What -- if the White House can expound on this relationship between the Taliban and Osama bin Laden? And also, what specifically can the White House speak to on the labor front? All of these people's jobs are getting lost and all of these companies, as a result -- all these questions -- as a result of these terrorist attacks last week.

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, on the first point, the President has made it clear that the Taliban should not harbor terrorists. It doesn't get more complicated than that.

Q What kind of relationship is there between Osama bin Laden and the Taliban?

MR. FLEISCHER: It's very close.

On the second point, of course, that's exactly why the President is taking a look at some of the ideas for how to stimulate the economy. He's very worried about the impact on the economy in general, various sectors specifically, on the working men and women of this country at all economic strata who are at risk of losing their jobs, from airline layoffs to minimum wage workers, to people who worked in the World Trade Center in entry-level jobs and who are alive, but have no job to go to.

So the President's worries extend widely. And that's why he's meeting with members of Congress today and talking to his economic team about what steps can be taken to help this country.

Bill Plante has been very patient.

Q If I can follow up Terry's question about whether we have bilateral or unilateral action. Your answer really suggested that the United States is going to do as it sees fit, and other nations can come along to the extent that they're willing to. But it doesn't sound as though you're really talking about consultation with anyone.

MR. FLEISCHER: Well, I think that the nations that the President is talking to would strongly disagree with what you've just said. And that's the whole reason that the President has called more than 20 world leaders, that he's been meeting with a series of Presidents and foreign ministers. He had dinner with the President of France last night -- that's exactly the purpose of consultation and leadership. The two go hand in hand.

Q Is it consultation, or is it telling them what we intend to do?

MR. FLEISCHER: It's both. That's called leadership, and that's called consultation. And that's all, added up, called diplomacy.

Q You made the point just a moment ago that it's also a reality that -- well, let me put it this way -- the President intends to move forward knowing that there are going to be a number of countries that may not be standing shoulder to shoulder with the United States, and the United States will move ahead anyway.

MR. FLEISCHER: As I indicated, the world has stood up rather powerfully and in a way that I've never seen before, in terms of the numbers of nations that have stood up and said that we're with the United States. So I think it's really just the opposite. Are you saying that the United States should do nothing unless there's world unanimity? I'm not aware of any such doctrine.

Q Why should the American people believe that this government has such solid evidence linking Osama bin Laden to these terrorist acts when it wasn't even able to determine that there were four planes that were going to get hijacked and kill thousands of people? Why should we believe you?

MR. FLEISCHER: Jim, I think you're free to come to any conclusions that you choose. But if you take a look at the track-record, for example, Osama bin Laden is already in indictment for the things that he has done before. There is no question in the previous bombing of the World Trade Center that the al Qaeda organization, Osama bin Laden were behind it. The bombing of our embassies in Tanzania and Kenya were all attributed to Osama bin Laden and his organization. There are indications that the bombing of the Cole were attributed to Osama bin Laden.

And as the United States government continues to gather evidence in this case, it will be shared with governments. If any of the governments share your concerns, I'm sure they'll make it clear to us. We're hearing scant little of that.

Q Ari, our Pentagon correspondent, Jamie McIntyre, is just reporting that 100 military aircraft are being deployed to bases closer to Afghanistan. Can you confirm that? And what would you tell the American public about the general movement of military assets the last two or three days that we've seen?

MR. FLEISCHER: Major, that's the first I've heard of that. And as you know, I have a longstanding policy of any information that you obtain in the course of my briefing I wait to confirm before I get into.

Q Ari, Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan decided earlier today to dispatch the self-defense forces to provide logistical support for the U.S. military and the other coalition members. It was a historic decision for Japan, given the constitutional constraint on its military action overseas. Would you welcome

the decision? And is the President willing to meet with Prime Minister of Japan anytime soon to discuss his decision?

MR. FLEISCHER: Of course, the President is always willing to meet with the Prime Minister of Japan. And conversations that are at all levels of government have been and will continue to take place. And I think what you just indicated is another sign of the cooperation around the world as nations stand in solidarity with the United States.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

2:58 P.M. EDT

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

September 19, 2001

9:30-10:30 a.m.

Situation Room

PARTICIPANTS LIST

The President

The Vice President

Colin Powell, Secretary of State

Paul O'Neill, Secretary of Treasury

Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense

John Ashcroft, Attorney General

Andrew Card, Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff

George Tenet, Director of Central Intelligence

Condoleezza Rice, Assistant to the President for National
Security AffairsAlberto Gonzales, Assistant to the President and White House
CounselSteve Hadley, Assistant to the President and Deputy National
Security Advisor (notetaker)Lewis Libby, Assistant to the President, Chief of Staff to the
Vice President and Assistant to the Vice President for National
Security Affairs

Paul Wolfowitz, Deputy Secretary of Defense

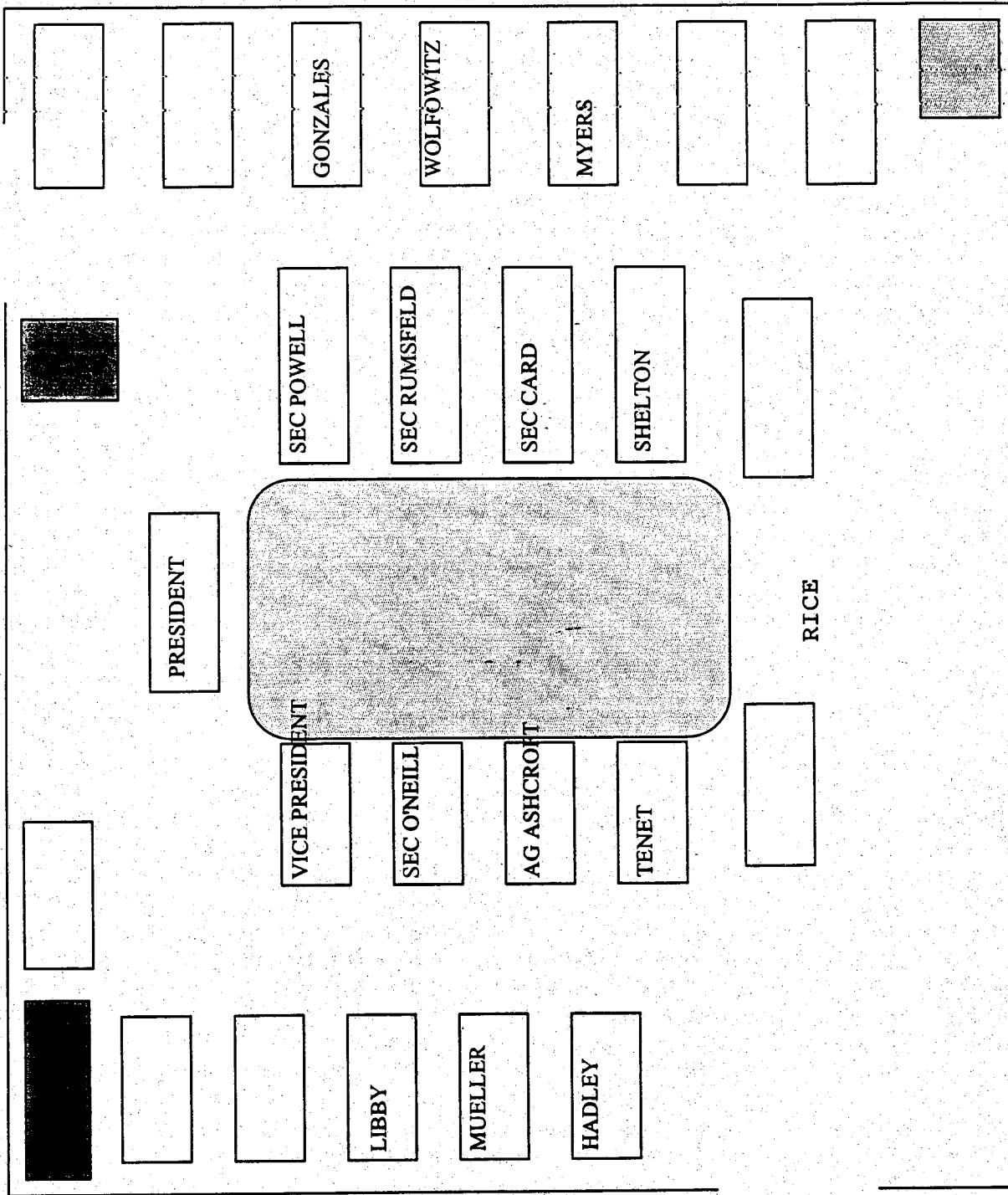
General Hugh Shelton, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

General Richard Myers, Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Robert Mueller, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

SITUATION ROOM

NORTH



WEST

EAST

Date
9/19/01

SOUTH

● Angela I. Fritz

01/15/2002 12:03:16 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Janet M. Philips/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: sept. 19th

j-do you have the VP and Wolfowitz in on the U.S./Indonesian pre-briefing in the OO/late am? thanks.-a

● Angela I. Fritz

01/15/2002 03:39:36 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Janet M. Philips/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: sept. 19th

j- do you have the following attendees for U.S./Russian pre-briefing (mid-pm/OO): VP, Powell, Card, Rice, Hadley, Fried, Pifer, & Afanasenko?drinks and tapas after work today..i can hardly wait!!!!-a



Janet M. Philips

01/15/2002 12:40:20 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Angela I. Fritz/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: sept. 19th 

I don't have the VP. I have Wolfowitz, Ari Fleischer, Andy Card, Torkel Patterson and Jim Kelly (Asst. Sec. of State for East Asian and Pacific affairs). Rice comes in before the meeting, but not sure if she was there for the whole briefing.

J

sure is nice out there it seems

▶ **Janet M. Philips**

01/15/2002 03:49:18 PM

.....

Record Type: Non-Record

To: Angela I. Fritz/WHO/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: sept. 19th 

Who are Pifer and Alan whatever????? Are they in the actual meeting??? For a prebriefing we only have a few tight pictures, Powell, rice, Fried, lewis Libby (I think) and one man is introduced by Powell, I don't know who it is.

Where are you going for such delectables? Are you still interested in skating??

j