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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of THE VICE PRESIDENT

Internal Transcript

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TELEVISION INTERVIEW OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
BY TONY SNOW OF FOX NEWS

Room 459
Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building

10:27 A.M. EDT

Q Mr. Vice President, when did you first hear of the attacks on September 11th?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I was in my office with my speechwriter, and the secretary called in to say that a plane had hit the Trade Center. We turned on the television and sat there wondering, you know, how can an airplane hit the World Trade Center? It's a clear sky, no weather problems. How do you account for this? And then, as we watched, we saw the second plane hit. And at that point, we knew it was a terrorist attack.

Q So you didn't know any earlier than we did. We were all staring at the sets, doing exactly the same thing.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q Nobody had any sense that something was out of line until the second plane hit.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, somebody may have with the first. But in terms of my own situation, no, it was the second plane hitting that said "terrorist attack", and you knew it was deliberate.

Q Now, we've heard of the -- sort of the heartbreaking drama of Barbara Olson calling her husband, Ted, over at the Department of Justice. He obviously knew that there was a plane and it was headed someplace. Did you, at that point, know that American Flight 77 was headed back to Washington?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: What happened -- we saw the second plane hit. I began to -- of course, we had people come, Condi Rice came into my office; Scooter Libby, my Chief of Staff; and others. I talked to the President by telephone; he was in

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Florida. And that was our first call of the day. And then he went out and made his statement in Florida.

And shortly after he completed his statement, they evacuated me. My agent -- one of my agents all of a sudden showed up beside me and grabbed me and said, "Sir, we have to leave now." There was no chance for debate; he just sort of propelled me out of the office, down into the underground. And we got down to a place, a tunnel, that was protected. And the reason they'd evacuated me was because of the report from the air traffic controllers at Dulles that a plane was headed for the White House.

Well, the plane didn't hit the White House, obviously. It circled around and did a complete 360, and that's the one that went into the Pentagon. So, when I got down into the tunnel, we saw that the Pentagon had been hit. That was on television. And I called the President again -- he was then headed for the airport in Florida -- and urged him not to return to Washington, because Washington was now under attack and we didn't know the scope of it or anything.

And then from there we went on to the Presidential Emergency Operations Center. But I didn't know, even immediately, that it was an airliner that had hit the Pentagon. The first reports was it was a helicopter, because where it hit was next to the helipad on the west side of the building. It was only later that Secretary Rumsfeld confirmed that it was in fact an aircraft, and that we figured out it was the one that had been headed for the White House and had circled back and hit the Pentagon.

Q There was also a rumor afoot in Washington after the Pentagon was hit that there was another jet headed toward Washington. We all heard it in the news business -- we didn't broadcast it, because we couldn't confirm it.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q But it was widely known in the city that there was another. That turns out to have been Flight 93.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Correct.

Q Was it your -- what do you think the destination of that flight was?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I believe it was Washington. They were headed for Washington. This is the flight that had taken off, I think, from Newark, and was headed west. And it was late leaving the gate, so by the time the hijackers took over and turned it around and headed it back towards Washington, the passengers, of course, were able to find out from talking to people on the ground what had happened to the World Trade Center. And then

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they very courageously took on the hijackers and caused it to crash in Pennsylvania, rather than having to come back here.

But I think -- there's been some reporting since, you know, for example, an individual that we detained in Afghanistan, that the White House was the target of the fourth aircraft. There's some speculation it might have been the Capitol Building. But probably one of those two facilities was in fact the target.

Q When was it decided that there was an order to shoot that plane down if it got close to Washington?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, the order was, as I recall, was more generic. It was -- we put up the combat air patrol over the city. I talked to the President by telephone about rules of engagement for the aircraft. He had to make the decision, and specifically he decided that we would, in fact, authorize the pilots to shoot down a commercial airliner if in fact it refused to be diverted from the city.

And it was a crucial decision for him to make, obviously, but it was absolutely vital. At the time, we didn't know whether or not we'd have to shoot something down. We did have several reports of planes inbound, one of which was the Flight 93 that then crashed some 80 miles out up in Pennsylvania. But we had other reports of planes down -- we had one down on the Ohio-Kentucky border, turned out not to be true; that, I think, was American 77, that had gone off the radar screen, turned around and headed back towards Washington, and had mistakenly been reported as having gone down in that part of the country.

So there was a lot of confusion during this period of time as well, too. But fortunately, we never had to shoot. All the planes went down -- as I say, the one, Flight 93 was taken down basically by the very heroic passengers.

Q If those passengers hadn't been heroes, that flight only had a few minutes to go before it would have been shot down, correct?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, correct. That is to say, we had authorized the aircraft to do that. I don't know the exact moment by moment, in terms of when it crashed versus when the F-16s were ready to shoot. I -- you know, you might be able to break down the day by day time log and figure that out.

But the President made the decision, very important decision, and exactly the right decision. As I say, fortunately we didn't have to use it.

Q What's the policy now?

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THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, there are rules of engagement now for the combat air patrols that still fly various places around the country at certain times. Those are established by the Secretary of Defense, in conjunction with the combatant commander, in this case the Commander of the North American Defense Command, that has jurisdiction over those aircraft.

And we don't ordinarily publicize the precise language of those rules of engagement, but they're there for a reason, those aircraft are, and I'm confident they have the authority to act in the event that should become necessary.

Q So we still have regular overflights?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We do, although we've varied the system some. And again, we don't get into a lot of detail, because we want to protect the effectiveness of the operation. But we are still doing a lot by way of protecting the skies, and especially key locations around the country.

Q So, September 11th, you've been yanked into an underground tunnel. You've had to deal with all this chaos. At the end of the day, what did you tell your wife?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, it was interesting, Lynne joined me that day. She'd been downtown when all of this developed, and her agents brought her to the White House, and she joined me in the Presidential Emergency Operations Center, was there virtually all day long and on into the evening.

The President returned, his speech, and then that night, after his speech and after our National Security Council meeting, she and I got in a helicopter on the South Lawn and flew to a remote location, secure location, to spend the night. And as we lifted off, we could look down and see the Pentagon, and the smoke rising out of the Pentagon from where it had been struck.

It was a very emotional day, for everybody. But especially sitting there in the -- underneath the White House, in the Presidential Emergency Operations Center as all of this unfolded. And she was an observer.

Q You used to work -- you used to work in the Pentagon.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Sure.

Q What did you think?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, I'd been in touch with Don Rumsfeld several times during the course of the day, so I had a pretty good report on what had happened over there by then. We knew that -- you know, it had been a devastating blow, but the Pentagon was open for business, and forces were secure --

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Q I'm more interested in -- you walked the halls. You famously got lost on your first day there.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That's true.

Q Here's this big, sprawling building, you have friends, you have associates.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Sure.

Q Had to be a little bit angry. Maybe a lot.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, I think anybody looking down on the Pentagon that night, seeing the smoke rise from the big hole that had been blown in one side of the building, was angry. Determined to find out who did it, and to exact retribution.

Q Still feel that way?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I do. I think about the lives that were lost in New York and Washington, absolutely innocent people, harming no one, attacked by the al Qaeda organization at Osama bin Laden's direction. Yes, it's not hard to feel anger and -- but it's, you know, you don't want to let that color your judgment. We've got a job to do, and we'll do it, and this is not a matter of sort of retribution. We need to defend the country. And that's why we're doing everything we can to wrap up the al Qaeda organization.

Q Recent news reports indicate we may not be as close as we thought. Gold shipments to Sudan; the Swiss are saying that there's still a pretty significant monetary flow. Financially, al Qaeda still sound?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: They're less sound than they were. How much they've still got, we don't know. But we've had some fairly significant progress.

One of the things that we've learned through this whole process is the extent to which they relied on non-government organizations or charitable foundations to support their effort. And one of the creative ways they built their organization was not to have an organization for logistics; they just piggy-back on these outfits that were already there.

So an individual, or maybe in some cases a local unit of a charitable foundation, may siphon money off to support al Qaeda, may make travel arrangements, move people around and so forth, provide that logistics network you have to have in order to be able to mount the kinds of operations they've mounted. And they piggy-backed, in effect, on the back of that structure of

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charitable foundations that operates all over the world. And some of those we've shut down, others we've been able to disrupt.

So I think we've had a significant impact. I can't say that we've wrapped it all up; we clearly haven't.

Q The President has said either you're with us or you're against us. He's made it often, he's made it obvious, he's made it clear. Who is against us -- I'm talking about nations?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: They -- if they're out there, they're very quiet at this point, in terms of the war on terror. They -- I don't think anybody wants to be listed as an adversary of the United States with respect to the war on terror.

Q Well, they may not be thumping their chests, but one presumes we have intelligence that would indicate that some people are supporting al Qaeda. Is it true that Iran has offered some support to al Qaeda?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't want to get into sensitive sources and methods. There are -- in effect, what's happened is as a result of our operations in Afghanistan, a lot of the members of al Qaeda have fled. Some are still in Afghanistan, some are in neighboring countries, some have moved farther than that, sort of scurried like -- I won't use a descriptive term -- and landed various places.

Now, the extent to which they are there sort of with the official blessing of the host government, I think most host governments would deny that. The extent to which they're operating there without their knowledge or some kind of *sub rosa* arrangement, that's a different proposition.

But I think everybody out there in that part of the world, and around the world, knows that the United States is deadly serious about wrapping up the al Qaeda organization, and a great many nations are in fact being very helpful.

Q Does their help -- is their helpfulness directly related to our efficiency on the battlefield? In other words, when we succeed, are they friendlier?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q So we need to be successful in any future operations if we want their friendship?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: It's a question of respect. And I think it counts for a great deal. You can see the way other nations respond to the United States when we're strong and decisive, when we do what we say we're going to do, and we've got

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strong, effective leadership in the Oval Office -- that other nations respond to that.

And it may sometimes be out of friendship, it may sometimes be because they don't want to be on the losing side in a particular struggle or controversy. It may sometimes be out of fear. But whatever the reason, the United States has the right to protect ourselves, to defend our interests. And if that means conducting operations various places to wrap up a terrorist organization, they know we mean business.

The President's contribution to all of this was the Bush Doctrine -- that had never been enunciated before -- that in effect said that if you harbor a terrorist, if you provide sanctuary for a terrorist, you bear responsibility for their acts and you'll be treated as such.

Q And we will pre-empt, we will act before they can hit us?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Implicit in the way we're organizing now and thinking about this President, I think that's true. I mean, you ask the question, would we have pre-empted militarily if we'd been able to prevent the attacks of 9/11? And the answer is absolutely. I think any American would agree with that.

Would we pre-empt in the future if we had evidence that somebody was getting ready to attack us? And I think again the answer is most assuredly we would.

Q Is Saddam Hussein preparing to attack us?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We think he is increasingly developing the capability to do that, not only the U.S., but our forces overseas, our friends and allies in the region where he operates. We see, in the case of Saddam Hussein, a man who has been subjected to sanctions and strictures by the U.N. and the Security Council. The Security Council, six times between 1996 and '98, addressed this issue, each time found him in flagrant violation of the Security Council resolutions, refusing to disarm, refusing to do those things he committed to at the end of the Gulf War. And he's ignored the U.N. all six times, with impunity.

So what we have now is not only that period of time when he was rebuilding his capabilities, but in the four years since the inspectors left, since 1998, he's continued to improve his nuclear capabilities, pursuing nuclear weapons; improve his biological and his chemical weapons capability as well, too.

Over time, given the fact that he sits on top of ten percent of the world's oil reserves, that he has a significant cash flow coming in, that he already has well-established programs in this

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area, and that he's used some of this capability before, his chemical weapons, we think sooner or later the world is going to have to come to grips with and deal with the problem that Saddam Hussein represents.

Q Why is he a bigger threat than anybody else? Than the Iranians, than the North Koreans, than even the Chinese? Why is he the most threatening of all of the forces out there?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, the most threatening in the sense that he has clearly developed deadly capabilities. He's done everything he could for 11 years to thwart the efforts of the international community to get him to live up to his commitments.

There's a reason why he kicked inspectors out. It wasn't because he just didn't like inspectors, the color of their hair. He kicked them out so he'd have free hand to do what he wants by way of developing these weapons.

And he's used them. His conduct in the past -- he's twice invaded neighbors, Iran and Kuwait; he's launched ballistic missiles at three neighboring states. He has in the past provided sanctuary for terrorists. And the fact of the matter is we're worried not only about his own developing capabilities, but also the possibility, obviously, that at some point he could enter into an arrangement with al Qaeda.

Now, we know the al Qaeda organization has done everything they can to acquire chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. And they will continue to do that, and obviously, if they can get their hands on that kind of thing, they can launch a far more deadly attack than what we faced on 9/11. So, given that complex of concerns, obviously we think that the world can no longer sit by idly and watch Saddam as he continues to build this capability, which, as I say, he has used in the past.

Q You are seriously concerned, then, about an Iraq-al Qaeda alliance. Any proof of it?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: As a possibility.

Q A possibility.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: As a possibility.

Q No evidence of it yet?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I don't want to characterize the intelligence at this stage. I'm trying to be very cautious and very precise in terms of what I say, Tony. You've got to ask, but I've got to say we can't discuss sources and methods.

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But there is disturbing information available about his increasing capabilities, and the threat that that represents -- to our friends in the region, to U.S. forces, and to the United States proper.

Q There is a proposal making the rounds now for what they call "muscular inspections."

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q The idea would be for Saddam Hussein to accept 50,000 troops on the ground, to shut off two-thirds of the country from air and land traffic, and essentially keep him in fetters for as long as he might live. Does that proposal have any merit, in your opinion?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I've just heard about it this morning, and I've asked my staff to get a copy of it so that we can take a look at it. I wouldn't want to judge it until I've had a chance to look at it in more detail.

Q So in your opinion, he still may have one more chance?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I haven't said that. You've said there's a proposal out there; I haven't seen it. I've heard about it, and I've asked that my staff obtain a copy so that I can take a look at it. The President will have to make that decision. The President is going to go before the United Nations this week and lay out his concerns in this regard. And at this stage, obviously, I'll defer to my boss. He'll be the one who makes those decisions.

Q You participated in planning strategy for the Gulf War --

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q -- when you were Secretary of Defense. One of the linchpins of that was to build an international coalition and to get United Nations resolutions affirming the use of power against Saddam Hussein because he had taken over Kuwait. Will the United States seek similar resolutions out of the United Nations this time?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The President will address that, I believe on Thursday --

Q When he speaks to the United Nations?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: -- on the 12th, yes. He'll speak to the U.N. on the 12th, and he will take up those specific questions.

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Q Will he also lay out a bill of particulars that not only will silence U.N. skeptics, but also those on Capitol Hill?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, we're working separately with the Congress. I had a meeting just this morning with 26 Senators -- Secretary Rumsfeld, George Tenet, and myself. And we will be working with the leadership in the Congress, as well as the members, to get to them the information that's available to us. It obviously has to be handled carefully, because some of it is very sensitive and we can't afford to destroy sources and methods here.

But then the President will address the international community in connection with those issues, and lay out the case. I think he'll spend part of the time focusing on the fact that the Security Council and the U.N. have in effect been treated with a certain amount of contempt by Saddam Hussein. I mean, part of what's involved here is whether or not they're an effective organization. And they're the ones who have addressed this issue time after time after time, and he has ignored the U.N. with impunity. There's been absolutely no consequence for his having done so.

Q You said before that America's credibility is on the line when it comes to the use of force -- and furthermore, that we get respect when we use it. You have said also that Saddam Hussein needs to be removed from power. If that does not happen, would that not undermine our credibility, especially in the Arab world?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, that's a speculative question, Tony. And I think if anybody -- if anybody has learned anything about this President, is that he means what he says, and he does -- does exactly that. We're sometimes, as an administration, accused of being too decisive and too forthright and direct with our allies and friends around the world. They like a little more subtlety and diplomacy here.

But the President's a very straight talker, and people usually don't have any trouble sorting out what he means. And if anybody has any hesitation or reservation about his determination to carry through on his objectives, they should go talk to the Taliban. They were given an opportunity to pursue -- to produce Osama bin Laden. They refused, and of course they're now history.

Q Gerhard Schroeder, German Chancellor, was giving an interview to *The New York Times*, and he said this of you: "The problem is that he has, or seems to have, committed himself so strongly that it is hard to imagine how he can climb down. And that is the real problem, not only that I have, but that all of us in Europe have."

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Your reaction?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, we're interested in working with our friends and allies in Europe. We'd like to see them engaged in this effort. The President, of course, is speaking with Prime Minister Blair, with President Putin of Russia, Chirac of France, and others. So we're not by any means ignoring our allies.

But there's a couple of points here that need to be made, Tony, that I think they ignore. Not all of them, some of them; maybe Chancellor Schroeder's one of those.

The United States is the one that was attacked last September 11th. Nobody else lost 3,000 people a year ago the way we did. That perhaps makes this a more real problem for us to address than it is those who don't fear being attacked.

Secondly, nobody else can do anything about it, except the United States, from the standpoint of if it comes to military force, we're the only ones who are in a position to be able to deal with Iraq.

So I think, I guess the third key point is that from the standpoint of the President of the United States, he has a solemn obligation. It's his constitutional duty to protect and defend the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. And we perceive that there is a real threat to the United States, to our interests, and to the people of America. And this President is not going to ignore that threat.

He said yesterday, when he met with the congressional leadership, that the only option here is not doing anything -- that has been wiped out. The only thing that's not an option is no action at all. That the country and the U.N. must come to grips with this problem and figure out how to deal with Saddam Hussein.

Now, you know, Chancellor Schroeder's in the middle of an election campaign, so perhaps he -- I don't want to suggest that he'd have different views if he were in the middle of a campaign, but he's not faced with the problem that the President of the United States is faced with, which is how to defend the United States and how to deal with an emerging threat, given the fact that we are very much a target. And he's probably not.

Q Members of Congress, including Chuck Hagel, a Republican, a good number of members of both parties are saying this White House has not made a convincing case for removing Saddam Hussein. Do you think that's true?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I do not.

Q So why do you think they're saying these things?

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THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, we are now in the process of making available to the Congress information that they didn't have previously. I've had sessions, Director Tenet and I, with the Speaker and the Minority Leader of the House, the Majority and Minority Leader of the Senate, to discuss this issue and make available to them intelligence information that we have access to that obviously has been on a very close-hold, highly classified basis; has to be.

So I think as Congress has the opportunity to engage in hearings, to hear publicly as well as to review in closed session the information that is available, that Senator Hagel, who's a good man, will in fact understand why we feel that we have to deal with this problem, and that he in the end, my guess is, will be a supporter.

Q Senator Hagel a "good man" -- you're starting to sound like the President, too.

Okay, now, let's -- do you have any doubt that if and when the President seeks a resolution authorizing the use of force, that Congress will approve it overwhelmingly?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: My expectation is that they'll approve it. That's based in part upon what I know to be the case with respect to Iraq. It's based in part upon my respect for the institution. I served in the House for ten years. My experience with members at a moment like this has been that they take this sort of thing very seriously, and they should. They'll ask a lot of good questions, and they should. But I think in the end they will support the President in approving whatever means are necessary in order to deal with this problem. We don't yet know what that's going to be, because he's not yet made a final decision.

Q Well, one of the means that you consider necessary is the development of an office of homeland security, and here we have a political fight over it. The President says he needs the ability to hire and fire the right people. Is he going to stand on that? If Congress doesn't give him that, is he willing to go without a Department of Homeland Security?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We've made it clear in meetings with members of Congress on both sides of this issue that if the bill is not written to his liking -- that is to say if it places limits and restrictions on his authority as President -- he will veto the bill. We would expect, then, Congress would take it back and clean it up. But there shouldn't be any doubt in anybody's mind that he will insist on not having this piece of legislation become a device by which Congress weakens the power and the authority of the President.

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Q When you think about homeland security, you think about defending the borders, you think about defending the ports. What other threats are out there that people need to think about, that people need to keep an observant eye?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, if you let your imagination run, you can come up with all kinds of scary scenarios. Probably the most likely kind of an attack are ones using conventional explosives. I mean, if you think about the -- that's what they've done in the past.

But that's not the only possibility. And when we start to get into the areas of weapons of mass destruction -- we start to think about biological and chemical and nuclear weapons. And given our knowledge now that al Qaeda's aggressively pursuing that -- we all saw the film of them testing chemical weapons on live dogs -- we know they're trying to get their hands on that stuff. And we have to be concerned about that.

Now, that requires an aggressive preparation, if you will, by our public health service, by the Department of HHS. Tommy Thompson, the Secretary, has been working aggressively on that. We're working on things like smallpox vaccine and how we ought to deal with that problem. And I spent time down at CDC, the Centers for Disease Control down in Atlanta. And there's a lot of activity underway to get the nation in a position where we can defend ourselves against that kind of an attack.

But in terms of advice to the American people, you've basically got to say we've got to get on with our lives. We can't shut the country down; the terrorists win on that basis. But be alert, be vigilant, be aware of what's going on around you. And if you see something strange or out of the ordinary, it's perfectly appropriate to notify local authorities so they can check it out.

Q What about cyberattacks?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, we've seen some of those already. Now, that's not limited to the current war on terror. That's a significant problem in a society that's based, as heavily computerized and based on information technology, as we are. So we need to -- that's one avenue of attack that people can use on us.

Q You have been the head of a large and lumbering bureaucracy, the Pentagon. They're now talking about creating another large bureaucracy. How do you create that in such a way that it's nimble and able to answer needs and concerns of people who feel that they're still under some attack in the war on terror? How do you do that?

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THE VICE PRESIDENT: It's hard. My experience at the Pentagon was it was a big, cumbersome bureaucracy -- until a balloon went up. You know, when the crisis arose, when all of a sudden there was a mission, when we have to engage troops, as we did in the Gulf War, for example -- then a lot of the bureaucratic folderol falls away. The people are focused on the mission, and they do a great job.

And I'm hopeful that the same kind of spirit can be created in the office of homeland security. I think that's what the President would like to happen here. But it's important for us not to tie the hands of the President and the new head of that office by unwise limitations and restrictions imposed by the Congress at the behest of special interest groups.

And that's part of the battle we're having right now with respect to the Congress. We need to be able to manage and operate that in a way -- this is not some kind of political pot to pass out goodies with. It is in fact an agency that we expect, as you say, to be quick and nimble and able to respond aggressively to any threat against the homeland. And it'll take a lot of effort to make sure we do in fact stand up that kind of organization.

Q Two parting questions. The whole world's watching. This will be broadcast throughout the Middle East, what we're talking about right now. What do you have to say to anybody involved against us in the war on terror?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: You'd be wise to hang it up, go find other employment. The United States is deadly serious about winning the war on terror, and we will do it. And nobody should have any doubt about our commitment or this President's determination to see to it that we defend the United States. And if that means, as it probably does, using our forces to do so, we're prepared to do that.

Q And what do you say to the people of the United States?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: That it's a strong, vibrant nation. We're marking the anniversary of the terrible events of last September 11th, but you look back on that experience, and all that the nation went through during those difficult hours and days, you have to feel pretty good about the fundamental, underlying strength of the country -- about the decency of the American people, the way they rallied around the -- sort of their eternal optimism and hope about the future. And it's a great strength, the resilience of the nation.

But we do need to recognize we are in the middle of the war. As the President said repeatedly, it's one that may last for a long time. It may be quiet for a period of months, and then all of a sudden surface again. And it's the kind of war that could

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well result in more casualties at home than our forces suffer overseas, as has been true so far in this most recent conflict.

So it's -- I feel good about the future. But we need to remind ourselves of the price we paid last September 11th, and not let down our guard, and not grow complacent simply because nothing has happened here at home since then.

One of the reasons it hasn't is because we have been successful at disrupting the organization, the terrorist organization against us. But there's a great deal of effort that needs to be completed, and we need to have everybody alert, and we need to stay focused on our mission.

Q Mr. Vice President, thanks.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tony. Enjoyed it as always.

Q Thanks.

END

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