

# Bush says: ‘Now is time to draw line against evil’

WASHINGTON (AP) — With American pilots poised to unleash “bunker-busting” bombs against the Taliban in Afghanistan, President Bush declared today that “our calling” is the eradication of terrorism around the globe. “Now is the time to draw the line in the sand against the evil ones,” he said.

At the FBI, Bush unveiled a new list of 22 most-wanted terrorists, Osama bin Laden among them. And the administration urged networks to exercise caution in broadcasting prerecorded communications from bin Laden and his associates, lest they contain coded instructions for fresh terrorist strikes.

Pentagon officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said war plans included the use of 5,000-pound laser-guided bombs, first used during the Persian Gulf War a decade ago to attack Iraqi underground bunkers.

The president spoke after a morning breakfast with senior congressional leaders, where he and they smoothed over a disagreement about the distribution of classified information concerning the nation’s response to terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

Leaving the White House, House Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt said the group had also agreed on a desire for quick action on economic stimulus legislation: “Get money out to people before the holiday season.”

One senior administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the president had told lawmakers he wants new tax rebates to go to individuals who filed tax returns this spring but did not qualify for rebates mailed out earlier this year.

Bush and Republicans have proposed that Congress cut taxes; Democrats want any measure to be a blend of government spending and tax relief.

“I think we can work through this,” said Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss. “Right now, the Democrats are coming at this from a different direction than Republicans, but we’ll work through that.”

Earlier, Secretary of State Colin Powell credited the military for claiming “free range” over the Afghan skies but said much more remains to be done.

The skies came alive with anti-aircraft fire

over parts of Afghanistan a few hours later, apparently heralding a fourth straight night of bombing by American warplanes.

Apart from the use of bombs designed to penetrate underground bunkers used by Taliban leaders, senior defense officials said they will begin using cluster munitions — bombs that dispense smaller bomblets — against moving and stationary land targets such as armored vehicles and troop convoys.

These officials spoke on condition of anonymity.

At the same time, helicopter-borne special forces teams are poised for what is likely to be a prominent role in the next phase of the war.

In addition, an Army spokesman, Col. Bill Darley, said special forces “will have a significant role in all the areas they are trained to perform in.”

Bush, at FBI headquarters, made only passing reference to the conventional military campaign.

Instead, flanked by Powell, Attorney General John Ashcroft and other senior administration officials, he said the creation of the new

most-wanted terrorist list was designed to “shine the light of justice on them.”

“They must be found. They will be stopped, and they will be punished,” he added.

Battling terrorist networks “is our calling. This is the calling of the United States of America, the most free nation in the world,” he said.

From the White House podium, spokesman Ari Fleischer said the president’s national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, had urged networks not to air taped broadcasts by bin Laden spokesmen in their entirety.

“At best Osama bin Laden’s message is ... calling on terrorists to kill Americans,” he said. “At worst it could be actually signaling his operatives”

Fleischer said the White House was acting out of suspicion, rather than evidence of any specific coded instruction. Still, he added, “the means of communicating out of Afghanistan right now are rather limited. One way to communicate is through western media.”

Bin Laden has been blamed by administration officials as the mastermind behind the

Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon across the river from Washington. More than 5,000 people perished in the strikes, the worst act of terrorism ever in the United States.

He was listed as being wanted in connection with the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998.

Others were listed as wanted for a World Trade Center bombing in 1993; the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia in 1996 and the hijacking of a TWA flight in 1985.

With officials exercising extraordinary security measures, Bush bluntly accused lawmakers Tuesday of leaking classified information to the press — and made the point in person during Wednesday’s breakfast meeting with Gephardt, Speaker Dennis Hastert, Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle and Senate GOP Leader Trent Lott.

At the same time, Bush eased up on his decision to severely restrict congressional briefings on the anti-terrorism effort, and congressional leaders said they were satisfied they would get the information they need.

# Macedonia’s government struggles with issue of rebel amnesty

*By Associated Press INTERNATIONAL*  
SKOPJE, Macedonia — Macedonia’s president and government pledged amnesty to Albanian rebels, but parliament failed to convene and adopt measures granting the ethnic minority rights promised them under a peace agreement.

Even Tuesday’s amnesty pledge did not fully satisfy the ethnic Albanians.

“I hereby confirm my intention to grant amnesty to members of the so-called National Liberation Army who have voluntarily handed over their weapons,” said a statement from President Boris Trajkovski.

The president said the amnesty is designed to open the “process of reintegration” of Albanian militants but would not protect those who committed war crimes.

The statement was endorsed by most of Macedonia’s multiethnic government, which has delayed implementing other measures called for in a Western-designed peace accord signed in August. Representatives of the ethnic Alba-

nian community boycotted the key parliamentary meeting Tuesday, protesting an apparent attempt by majority Macedonians to alter some provisions of the fragile peace accord reached Aug. 13.

**NATIONAL**  
BOCARATON, Fla. — FBI agents wearing white moon suits and gas masks scoured the newspaper offices of two men whose exposure to anthrax has prompted heightened fear of bioterrorism across the country.

The search turned up no further sign of anthrax in Robert Stevens’ office since traces were discovered on his computer keyboard. Stevens, 63, a photo editor with the Sun tabloid, died last week of inhaled anthrax, a rare, particularly lethal form of the disease.

Anthrax spores also were found in the nose of mailroom worker Ernesto Blanco, 73. He remained in good condition at an area hospital. Florida health department spokesman Tim O’Connor said.

Health officials said there have been no additional cases of contamination,

but some 770 people were awaiting test results to determine whether they had contact with the anthrax at the Boca Raton headquarters of publisher American Media Inc. It could take weeks for blood test results to come back.

Attorney General John Ashcroft has stated there is no indication of terrorism in the anthrax case, but said the case could become a “clear criminal investigation.”

Health officials have emphasized that there is no public health threat.

**NEW YORK** — New York officials tackled the dire economic fallout from the terrorist attacks on two fronts, with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani predicting a \$1 billion revenue loss this budget year and the governor calling for \$54 billion to revitalize the city.

The state’s congressional delegation vowed to fight for the federal money Gov. George Pataki requested Tuesday, but Sen. Charles Schumer acknowledged that securing the full amount would be a “very heavy lift.”

“We will do everything humanly possible to get as much of this as we can,” said Schumer, D-N.Y.

Giuliani ordered a 15 percent cut in spending by most city departments Tuesday, predicting the terrorist attacks will cost the city \$1 billion in revenue and 100,000 jobs this fiscal year.

He and Pataki said New York is well-positioned to recover from damage inflicted when terrorists crashed two airliners into the World Trade Center, leaving lower Manhattan a graveyard for thousands.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., expressed confidence on that Congress would come through with the \$54 billion.

White House spokeswoman Claire Buchanan said President Bush was “committed to helping New York recover from the attack.”

**RICHMOND, Va.** — It was supposed to be the kind of trip that scuba divers dream about: warm Caribbean water and reefs teeming with parrotfish, eels and octopus.

Instead, a weeklong trip to Belize turned into a nightmare for 30 members of the Richmond Dive Club. At least 15 were killed when Hurricane Iris capsized one of two chartered boats.

Seeking refuge from the hurricane Monday night, both boats went up the Monkey River outside Belize City and moored in a small creek.

Boat operators had docked the Wave Dancer alongside two other boats, hoping to shield it from the 140 mph winds, said Lynn McNeal, co-owner of The Dive Shop in Richmond, who said she had been in touch with boat operators.

“I understand they were tied to some submerged type of dock. They had a very, very huge swell come through that snapped all the lines. When the ship came back down, I’m assuming it hit part of the dock,” she said.

Fifteen club members were confirmed dead and another two members were missing. Ten club members aboard a second boat, Belize Aggressor III, were unharmed.

**OKLAHOMA** — Tornadoes tore

through western Oklahoma Tuesday, destroying or damaging scores of homes and injuring several people.

Twisters also touched down in east-central Nebraska later in the day. Authorities said some homes were leveled, power lines downed and trees toppled.

Cordell, a town of about 3,000 in western Oklahoma, appeared to be the hardest hit in the series of twisters that began touching down about 3:30 p.m.

An estimated 150 homes were uninhabitable, according to Michaelann Ooten, a spokeswoman for the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management. She said seven people suffered minor injuries and two were missing.

Tuesday evening, at least six tornadoes were spawned in a four-county area in east-central Nebraska.

Up to 20 homes were damaged and outbuildings destroyed in Polk County, about 45 miles northwest of Lincoln. The county Sheriff’s Office said farm equipment and irrigation systems were damaged.

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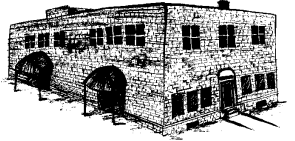
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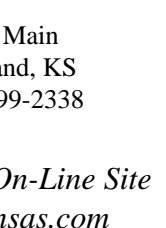
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