

We learned some interesting lessons, that we're now vulnerable at home. I remember giving a speech to a group of high school seniors right after September the 11th, and it dawned on me in the middle of this talk that this is the first high school class that—in a long time, that is graduating in a time when somebody is attacking America.

These evil ones still want to hit us. But after September the 11th, America is now ready. We're after them. Any hint of somebody wanting to harm our country, we're acting. We've got thousands of FBI agents chasing down every single lead. We respect people's constitutional rights, and we will continue to do so. But if we think somebody is fixing to hurt the American people, we will move in this country. We're now on an alert because of September the 11th. And I want to thank the police officers who are here. And I want to thank whoever—if any FBI agents are here, and all law enforcement officials in the State of California and all across our country who are working endless hours to make sure with gather any information possible to protect the American people.

My most important job is the security and safety of the American people. Every morning I wake up, and when I wake up, I go to the Oval Office. I'm kind of an early morning guy, by the way. I take Barney and Spot out. [Laughter] They take a good look at the Rose Garden—[laughter]—up close and personal. [Laughter] And then I head into the Oval Office, and I read about the potential threats to America. And one of my first meetings is to visit with the head of the FBI, and my question every morning is, "Mr. Director, what are you doing about this threat? What's happening with this lead? Are you taking care of this piece of business?"

The culture of our law enforcement has changed to the point where they now know what I know, that we've got to do everything in our power to protect the American people. But the best way to secure the

homeland of America is to find the evil ones wherever they try to hide and bring them to justice. And that's exactly what the United States military—[applause].

I am very proud of the U.S. military. They've done exactly what we've asked them to do. For those of you who wear the uniform, thank you. For those of you who have got loved ones who wear the uniform, thank you as well. We're making steady progress in Afghanistan. The evil ones awakened a mighty giant. You know, we're a compassionate people, and we're a decent people, but if you come after us, you will learn that you have made a big mistake.

It seems like the more TV channels there are, the more anxious people become on TV. But I want to remind my fellow citizens, we've only been at war for 90 days. That's not a very long period of time. But in 90 days, we've made incredible progress. The Al Qaida, the Usama bin Laden group, can't claim Afghanistan as a haven anymore.

You know, they were like parasites. I know we've got some ranchers and farmers here; you understand what a parasite is. Parasites try to take over the host, and if there's enough parasites and if they've been there long enough, the host itself becomes ill. The host no longer is in a position of power in Afghanistan; the Taliban has been routed. But you know what my most meaningful memory has been recently? And that has been the joy on the face of women and young girls in Afghanistan as they have been liberated from one of the most brutal regimes.

We're taking action. We're taking action against evil people, because this great Nation of many religions understands, our war is not against Islam or against faith practiced by the Muslim people; our war is a war against evil. This is clearly a case of good versus evil, and make no mistake about it, good will prevail.