



Edwin R. Thomas III
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Record Type: Record

To: Joan Hunerwadel/NSC/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: TEXT OF A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE SENATE

6-month war powers letters went out today.

----- Forwarded by Edwin R. Thomas III/WHO/EOP on 09/20/2002 04:44 PM -----



Rachael L. Sunbarger 09/20/2002 04:31:32 PM

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Subject: TEXT OF A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE SENATE

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release
2002

September 20,

TEXT OF A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT
TO THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AND THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF THE SENATE

September 20, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On September 24, 2001, I reported the deployment of various

combat-equipped and combat support forces to a number of locations in the Central and Pacific Command areas of operations. On October 9, 2001, I reported the beginning of combat action in Afghanistan against terrorists and their Taliban supporters. In my report to the Congress of March 20, 2002, I provided supplemental information on the deployment of combat-equipped and combat support forces to a number of foreign nations in the Central and Pacific Command areas of operations. As a part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed, I am reporting further on U.S. efforts in the global war on terrorism.

Our efforts in Afghanistan have met with success, but as I have stated in my previous reports, the U.S. campaign against terrorism will be lengthy. To date, U.S. Armed Forces, with the assistance of numerous coalition partners, have executed a superb campaign to eliminate the primary source of support to the terrorists who viciously attacked our Nation on September 11, 2001. The heart of the al-Qaida training capability has been seriously degraded. The Taliban's ability to brutalize the Afghan people and to harbor and support terrorists has been virtually eliminated. Pockets of al-Qaida and Taliban forces remain a threat to U.S. and coalition forces and to the Afghan government. What is left of both the Taliban and the al-Qaida fighters is being pursued and engaged by U.S. and coalition forces.

Due to our success in Afghanistan, we have detained several hundred al-Qaida and Taliban fighters who are believed to pose a continuing threat to the United States and its interests. The combat-equipped and combat support forces deployed to Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, Cuba, in the Southern Command area of operations since January 2002, continue to conduct secure detention operations. We currently hold approximately 550 enemy combatants at Guantanamo. All are being treated humanely and, to the extent appropriate and consistent with military necessity, in a manner consistent with the principles of the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

In furtherance of our worldwide efforts against terrorists who pose a continuing and imminent threat to the United States, our friends and allies, and our forces abroad, we continue to work with the Government of the Philippines to protect U.S. and Philippine citizens and to defeat international terrorism in the Philippines. The combat-equipped and combat support forces that were deployed to the Philippines in January 2002 to train with, advise, and assist the Armed Forces of the Philippines made great progress in enhancing the Philippine government's counterterrorist capabilities. United States forces have reduced their presence in the Southern Philippines, but will continue a long-term effort to assist the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

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Additionally, we are conducting maritime interception operations in the Central and European Command areas of responsibility to deny the high seas as a haven for moving, arming, or financing international terrorists.

Combat-equipped and combat support forces also have been deployed to Georgia and Yemen to assist their armed forces in enhancing their counter-terrorism capabilities, including by training and equipping their armed forces. We continue to assess options for working with other nations to assist them in this respect.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. In addition, these actions are consistent with Public Law 107-40. As I stated in my previous reports, it is not possible to know at this time either the duration of combat operations or the scope and duration of the deployment of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter the terrorist threat to the United States. I will direct additional measures as necessary to exercise our right to self-defense and to protect U.S. citizens and interests. Such measures may include short notice deployments of special operations and other forces for sensitive operations in various locations throughout the world.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution and Public Law 107-40. Officials of my Administration and I have been communicating regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress, and we will continue to do so. I appreciate the continuing support of the Congress in our effort to protect the security of the United States of America and its citizens, civilian and military, here and abroad.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH