

1. Friends and Enemies

ARMITAGE: I went with colleagues from the CIA and military, and we had what I describe as a "no shit conversation" // **SHA'ATH:** I knew that this is really like seeing the cub of the lion being eaten by the hyenas and knowing that the lion is going to roar and just go mad at everything that moves in the forest // **MUSHARRAF:** I wouldn't say I was being bullied, but certainly one could understand that there's a lot of anger in United States. //

ED: Almost the moment it happened it was evident that nothing would ever be the same.

We have been talking to the people who rewrote the rules for the world after September 11th - to Presidents, Prime Ministers and Kings, to their diplomats and advisers, to the discreet servants they call on in times of crisis.

There was no hint that early autumn morning that this would be the most important day of the new century. The British Prime Minister's diary looked testing, but reasonably routine.

BLAIR: I remember it very, very clearly obviously because I was about to give a speech to the Trade Union Congress in Brighton, and so I was preparing my speech

NPR: Details are sketchy . . . but it appears a plane has crashed into the upper floors of the World Trade Centre . . .

ANNAN: I was home - I was just about to leave for the office - and my wife and I had gone, had breakfast, gone through the papers . . .

BBC NEWS 24: There's a further dramatic explosion we're just witnessing there . . .

POWELL: I was just leaving lunch at the Garrick Club

MAYER: I was having breakfast with John Major

BBC NEWS 24: Both towers now appear to be on fire . . .

ED: It becomes a day that will change everything - from Washington to Asia and the Middle East.

WORLD SERVICE /ARABIC/RUSSIAN/NEWS 24:

ED: It was around nine am in New York, two o'clock in London, when the attacks began. President Bush is alerted almost immediately by his National Security Advisor, Condoleezza Rice.

RICE: I was standing in my office at my desk that morning, and at 8:47 a.m. or so, my executive assistant came in and said that a plane had hit the World Trade Center. And I remember thinking, what a strange accident. And so I called the President, who was in Florida at an education event, and I said, Mr. President, a plane has hit the World

Trade Center. And he said, that's a strange accident. And I said, I'll call you when we know more. Initially, the reports were that it was maybe a twin engine plane of some sort, maybe a private plane. And then when I got down to have my morning staff meeting, down in the Situation Room, my executive assistant handed me another note and it said, a second plane had hit the World Trade Center. And I thought, my God, this is a terrorist attack.

ED: When the storm breaks, Richard Armitage, Vietnam veteran and bulldog diplomat, is at its heart. The number two at the State department, he is minding the shop for Colin Powell, who is away on official business in Peru.

ARMITAGE: I was seated in this very room, and my executive assistant came in and said a tower had been hit by an aircraft. I ran in there, immediately picked up the phone, called to the Assistant Secretary for Counter-Terrorism. Even before the second aeroplane went in, I thought it was impossible to have this happen accidentally on a clear day, and said, "We've got a problem." And about that moment, the second aircraft went into the tower, which I watched on television. And immediately after that, I was told to go to the operations center here to get on call to the Vice President.

CD 99546: BUSH: Emma Booker Elementary School, Sarasota, Florida [09.30 am/ 14.30 pm Britain] "Today we've had a national tragedy. Two aeroplanes have crashed into the World Trade Center in an apparent terrorist attack on our country. I have spoken to the Vice President, to the Governor of New York

ED: George Bush is bundled onto Airforce One with scarcely time to sit down for take off - his security staff seeking sanctuary in the skies. In the White House Condoleezza Rice is struggling get in touch with his principle lieutenants; the Vice President Dick Cheney is there but Powell of course is away and she can't reach the Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

RICE: And so I stopped to call the President, who said, I really should come back to Washington. We said, no, Washington is under attack, you mustn't. And I then got down to the bunker and I spent the rest of the day, first of all, trying with the Vice President and the Secretary of Transportation to ground civil aviation and to be able to track where all of the aircraft were, so that you knew what else was happening.

ED: Three and a half thousand miles away, the speech Tony Blair is preparing to deliver in Brighton is a critical one – the trades unions' anger about the public services is just beginning to bubble over, and this, the TUC Conference, is their chance to make their feelings known. The speech is never given.

CD 99546 The Rt Hon Tony Blair MP speaking at the TUC Conference: [1000 am in America/ 1500 in UK]: There have been the most terrible shocking events taking place in the United States of America within the last hour or so. I am afraid we can only imagine the terror and the carnage there and the many, many innocent people that will have lost their lives.

ED: No Airforce One for Mr Blair - the Prime Ministerial team head back to London by train, rattling through the Sussex countryside and the London suburbs. Alastair Campbell, Number Ten's Communications Director, is as ever, at the centre of things.

CAMPBELL: People imagine that because you're the government and you're travelling with the prime minister that all these of you know incredible ways of finding out what's happening and all the rest of it, and the truth is we were listening to Radio Five. We had somebody with us who was just listening to Radio Five where there was by then sort of continuous coverage and in the meantime obviously people phoning up from the MoD, from the Foreign Office, Home Office just sort of you know briefing us as to what was happening by way of preparation for the meeting the Prime Minister was going to chair.

BLAIR: Before I left Brighton, we had already agreed that we would have an emergency meeting of the Ministers and of our own internal security people to make sure that we were making every protection we needed to against any possible attack ourselves because at that time nobody knew what was happening and there were people worried about Canary Wharf, worried about possible attacks on the Houses of Parliament or wherever. This was such a huge and brutal thing to happen in circumstances and in a place where no-one would have contemplated it happening, that we would obviously look to our own internal homeland defence first.

ED: At the White House, with the President still being kept away from Washington because of concerns about his safety, the team in the bunker are determined to reassure the world that nerves are holding steady.

RICE: I called or had my deputy call the then Acting Secretary of State, Rich Armitage, to get the posts around the world to send out a message that the United States of America had not been decapitated, and that it was indeed working. And I think it was my old nuclear war training, you know, that you have to let people know that the government is still functioning. But I was not concerned that we couldn't function, no. It was clear that we still had communications and everything. But somebody might read that we couldn't function or think that we couldn't function, and I thought that was something that needed to be taken care of.

ED: And by the middle of the day the systems at the UN are working well enough for a Security Council statement. The uncompromising message delivered by the Secretary General, Kofi Annan, sets the tone for what follows.

ANNAN: We issued a statement lunch time, indicating how appalled we were, and in subsequent statements indicated that, even though this was an attack on the United States and one nation, it was an attack on our common humanity, and that we needed to stand together and to fight this terror.

CD 99546 The Rt Hon Tony Blair MP first official statement [1400 US/1900 UK]: "This is not a battle between the United States of America and terrorism but between the free and democratic world and terrorism. We therefore here in Britain stand shoulder to shoulder with our American friends in this hour of tragedy and we - like them - will not rest until this evil is driven from our world.

ED: Tony Blair's comments come hard on the heels of the statement in New York – the signs of an unprecedented international unanimity of purpose are beginning to emerge.

BLAIR: I thought instinctively right from the beginning that it was going to be huge, that it would be a defining moment for American foreign policy, and their attitudes towards the

world, but also that it presented a momentous challenge to the world at large because it was clear that this was directed at America, but at America as a symbol of the western world and the values we held and there was no doubt to my mind, one that we had to stand very, very closely with America, that America should realise straight away that it wasn't alone in such a situation, and number two that we should regard this an act as if it was an attack on any of us and all of us.

ED: Some two hours after the attacks Vladimir Putin telephones the White House to speak to George Bush - President Bush is on Airforce One, so Condoleezza Rice takes the Russian leader's call.

RICE: He said that Russia was standing down its military exercises because they knew that the United States had gone on a higher state of alert. And for an old Soviet specialist, who was accustomed to stories about spirals of alert between American and Soviet forces, to have the Russian President say, we understand that this is an attack on you and that this is a co-operative effort, was very moving.

ED: Many of America's top diplomats and military planners are away from Washington pursuing the Bush foreign policy agenda -including, as it happens, a team in Moscow negotiating with the Russians. Douglas Feith, an under-secretary at the Pentagon with a hawkish reputation is caught at the United States embassy there when American airspace closes as a precaution against further attacks. He vents his frustration by composing a memo for his boss.

FEITH: The principal thought that struck me was that, this was not in essence a law enforcement matter. It was an act of war. And the United States had reacted for ten years or so to a series of significant attacks on the United States by sending out the FBI, by sending out criminal investigators, by sending out prosecutors and it struck me that the key thought at that particular moment was that this was a war and not in essence just a crime. It is now clear in retrospect that the same thought was occurring to various people in this administration, I imagine, simultaneously.

ED Before September 11th is done, a war on terrorism has been declared.

The President returns to Washington at seven in the evening. He has an hour and a half before his address to the nation - time to run through his text with the team that's been holding things together in his absence.

RICE: The President was very early on convinced that this was something that was global, that it was New York and Washington that had been hit, but that it could be anyplace and we talked about the fact that we needed to be able to show and to let people know that, even on the night that we'd been attacked, that we believed this was global and this was something that we shared with other freedom-loving people. We talked about the one line that probably was the most important line, which was that if you harbour a terrorist, then you will share their fate. Because that was really the core of what journalists later called the Bush doctrine.

CD99546 Bush's address to Nation: We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them. America and our friends and allies join

with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism.

ED: So much for strategy - what about a target?

The British ambassador in Washington Sir Christopher Meyer.

MEYER: The name Osama Bin Laden came into conversation very early on. I can't tell you exactly how early on but by the time we all went to bed on the first day, I mean I think he was already, already a prime suspect.

SEGUE

ARMITAGE: Well we were quite suspicious of Osama bin Laden.

ED; Richard Armitage, Colin Powell's deputy.

ARMITAGE: Around the 1st of April, the State Department had announced to the rest of the administration that although we had a policy in Afghanistan, and South Asia more broadly, that unless we got a handle on Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, then we couldn't have any policy in South Asia. So we were quite suspicious of Osama, but it took us several days for that noose to tighten significantly enough to make the President absolutely confident that he could point the finger.

ED: America is angry and its target is Islamic terrorism - throughout the Arab and the Muslim world they wait in fear. Nabil Sha'ath is a veteran of Palestinian politics and a senior member of Yasser Arafat's Cabinet.

SHA'ATH: This really like seeing the cub of the lion being eaten by the hyenas and knowing that the lion is going to roar and go mad at everything that moves in the forest and I knew the United States was going to act in ways that will seek vengeance and security and assurance and deterrence for its own people. And that might mean adopting policies that will fly against many of the principles of international law and international relations including many of those positions practised by the US in the previous administration lets say.

ED: In Cairo President Mubarak calls a meeting of his closest advisers, among them his foreign minister Ahmed Maher.

MAHER: We wanted to know what exactly had happened, and why it had happened, and whether it was something that would be emulated in other places, whether this was a sort of global plot or something that would have global repercussions. The information was very little. We knew what had happened but we did not know why.

ED: And on this night even the most sophisticated diplomatic nerves are jangled. Sir Jeremy Greenstock is the British ambassador to the United Nations.

GREENSTOCK: There was an expectation in the air that the Americans would launch something within 24 hours, and if you remember, that night in Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance threw some stuff at the Taliban in Kabul, and the sky was lit up with some weapons falling at night, it was on CNN at the time, and our first thought was "Blimey they've started

within eighteen hours", but it proved not to be the case and the fact that that could have been the United States reacting didn't really get a murmur from around the international community here.

ED: Day 2 and the talking begins. President Bush settles into the Oval Office at seven in the morning, and half an hour later he begins a series of calls – to President Putin, Jacques Chirac, Chancellor Schroder in Germany and Jiang Zemin in China. First on the list is Tony Blair in Downing Street.

BLAIR: He was obviously shocked, but calm, and I simply expressed my total solidarity and support for America, and we agreed we would have to review all the possible military options, since it was very likely that it was the Al-Qaeda right from the very beginning. (A lot of people at that stage thought the Americans might do something very quickly, some kind of knee-jerk reaction. Is that something that you were reassured about during that phone call.) Well it wasn't so much that I was reassured. I mean we both agreed that as George Bush put it to me, there was no point in just pounding sand. We had to make sure that we did action that was effective, and not worry about people expecting us to take action that day, the next day or even the next few weeks.

ED: The phone call is minuted by the civil servants, and a full account comes back to the British ambassador in Washington. From that moment Christopher Meyer has a clear picture of where London and Washington are heading.

MEYER: Well I think a number of points were fixed then which were very relevant operationally as the following days and weeks went by. And they started in this very early discussion to discuss the merits or otherwise of presenting the Taliban with an ultimatum and I suppose really emerging from that first conversation came the idea that Blair should come over as soon as - you know - the smoke had cleared a bit and talk eyeball to eyeball with the President about strategy. (There was quite a lot of talk about Iraq within the administration at that stage. Was that something you were aware of or sought to influence?) Yep. That also came up in that very first conversation, the issue of whether Saddam Hussein had been involved in the attacks and at the time the jury was completely out. It wasn't clear. And already emerging in British thinking was the notion that if it was UBL and al-Qaeda based in Afghanistan, any retaliation should focus first and foremost on them and other things - Iraq or whatever - should await a second phase.

ED This first morning of the new diplomatic dispensation produces a moment of history. In Brussels the NATO General Secretary, Lord Robertson, offers to take the Alliance over a threshold it's never crossed before.

ROBERTSON [12/9]: I came in in the morning and spoke to Colin Powell who was doing a round of telephone calls I think from Peru which is where he had been at the time and that was when I pointed out to him that Article 5 of the Washington Treaty might well be relevant in this case. And he said 'I don't know what you mean George'. And I said 'Well Article 5 is an attack on one is an attack on us all'. And he said 'I know what Article 5 is' he said 'but what is the relevance?'. And I said 'Well you have been attacked and I think there are people here who think this is an issue that you might want to raise and I have got a draft statement ready'. He said "Well I hadn't really thought about it," he said "I'll come back to you." So they did about fifteen minutes later and said "Yeah this is of real interest". (Interesting that the idea came from you and not from the Americans and that they hadn't thought of the idea

of getting Nato on board at that stage..) Well I think America by and large was still in shock. . .

..

ED: Never, not even during the long years of the Cold War, has the right to mutual defence been invoked - until September 12th.

CD99547 Lord Robertson Nato press briefing [fading up]:.... accordingly the United States Nato Allies stand ready to provide the assistance that may be required as a consequence of these acts of barbarism. [evening of 12th Sept]

ROBERTSON: (Did you expect that the implications would be that member states would wind up with troops shooting bullets or not?) I think it was a very clear possibility that if you invoke something as important and fundamental to Nato that countries were going to accept an obligation that went along with it. (But even at that stage it was clear to you that the real import of what you'd done was diplomatic and related to the process of building a coalition rather than military?) In the first instance it was political. It was a sign of solidarity and it was also a signal to the terrorists that they had stepped over a real threshold.

ED: The United Nations is moving with unprecedented speed – the resolution that goes through on the nod on September 12th gives America the green light to strike. And no one seems to mind.

ANNAN: By the standards of this house, it was surprising.

ED: Kofi Annan:

ANNAN: But if you consider the nature of the act, which I described as an attack on all of us, I wasn't surprised either, yea, because of course we were attacked and collectively we rose to the occasion, realised we had to defend ourselves. (Did you have any doubt in your own mind at that stage that this was something that was covered by self defence for the United States, and that if they wanted to take military action it would be covered by that idea) I felt that if they wanted to the Council would go along with that because of the nature of it, the brutal nature of the attack.

ED: Support comes from the two big powers on the Security Council which have always been wary about America's strength. Whenever the United States has showed signs of flexing its military muscles China and Russia have usually urged caution or threaten vetoes - not so today. Wang Ying-Fan is the Chinese ambassador to the UN.

WANG: I was there and I made my own statement. I stressed that China, the Chinese people and the Chinese government strongly condemned this terrorist attack and I also stressed that this was an attack on world civilisation.

Sergei Lavrov is his Russian counterpart.

LAVROV: The sheer magnitude of the, of the act I believe removed any doubts, if, if anybody had any doubts, that a response to this thing must be very strong and very decisive and unequivocal.

ED: The French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine is on his way to Moscow for a meeting with his Russian counterpart which they'd planned before the crisis. His hosts are acutely sensitive about Afghanistan because of the sorry history of their own entanglement there, and they still have the thin skins of a great power that has slipped down the ratings. But to Monsieur Vedrine, who's experience goes back to the power games President Mitterrand used to play in the Cold War years, the Putin position immediately makes sense.

VEDRINE: President Putin is someone who wants to transform present-day Russia into a great modern country, through patriotism and ambition. He knows that it's going to be complex and he knows it will be a long process and he knows it won't be possible without the close co-operation from the west and he understood straight away on the 11th of September, and showed by his immediate call to President Bush whose side he was going to be on. And that gave him a lever, an instrument to force in the right direction the Russian administration, the Russian army and Russian diplomacy. I sensed that straight away. I saw no hesitation whatsoever from Moscow.

ED: But a struggle over strategy is now breaking out within the American administration. George Bush junior has filled his team with veterans of his father's term in office during the Gulf crisis a decade earlier, and Saddam Hussein casts a long shadow over this White House. Some of the hawks at the Pentagon think it's the moment to act decisively against Iraq – the State department says no.

ARMITAGE: At that stage there was a lot of talk about it because of the historic predilection of Iraq for terrorism, and we had some preliminary information about some possibility of an al-Qaeda tie-in. We have not in our investigation since then found large doses of al-Qaeda in Iraq, but we are attentive to it. (How close did you think America came to taking action against Iraq at that stage?) At that time? No, I think we were concentrating on Afghanistan. If we had found direct evidence, I can assure you there would have been action, subsequent action against Iraq, but we didn't find it and we concentrated on Afghanistan.

ED: The Bush team focuses its collective mind on the logistics of an attack on Al Qaeda.

Pakistan holds the key; it is Afghanistan's neighbour, and its government has close ties with the Taliban. Fate finds the head of the Pakistani intelligence service in Washington, and Richard Armitage calls him into the State Department.

ARMITAGE [13th Sep]: I had him in, explained to him on the 12th that this was not a time for negotiation; that as far as we were concerned, history began today, that if he was going to cooperate with us, he ought to get back to his president and make a decision, they were with us or against us; and put before him a list of seven key demands which the Secretary and I drew up here and they were very stiff and very strong. And Mahmood said that he would check with the president, he thought the president would be for this. And in effect, we were asking for the keys to kingdom. Mahmood came back the next day. He accepted in the name of his president all of these demands. Immediately after that, almost immediately upon completion of that meeting, I went to see the Secretary, who called President Musharraf to make it crystal clear, make it clear in our minds, that they had indeed accepted these demands and that Musharraf himself was aware of the enormity of what we were asking and he acknowledged that he was on board and at 2 o'clock that afternoon, that is only a few minutes

after the completion of the call, the Secretary and I were on a secure conference call with the president explaining to him what we had done.

SEGUE

MUSHARRAF: I wouldn't say I was being bullied, but certainly one could understand that there's a lot of anger in United States over this terrorist attack,

ED: President Musharraf of Pakistan.

MUSHARRAF: Rightly so I would say, this anger was there and this anger was visible in their talking to me, and as far as demands are concerned, on that day really the demand was whether we would join the coalition against terrorism around the world and we did, I said yes we will.(A lot of people were very surprised by the speed with which you agreed to join the coalition, what was the calculation that you made, was it simply that you had no real option?) I think I weighed all the pros and cons. I took first of all, the basis was on a matter of principle, and on a matter of principle on the side of right I thought it was certainly a terrorist attack - whoever did it - and therefore the decision on a matter of principle was, was that we should join the coalition. The other of course was our own national interest..

BUSH: "Obviously, I made a call to the leader of Pakistan. We had a very good, open conversation. And there is no question that he wants to co-operate with the United States. I'm not at liberty to detail specifically what we have asked him to do.

ED: The list of demands is indeed daunting; Pakistan is being asked to contemplate an end to links with the Taleban, the regime it helped into power, and to provide America with a springboard for operations in Afghanistan.

CD99547 US National Anthem played at the Changing of the Guard, Buckingham Palace

ED: September 13th - the guards at Buckingham Palace play the Star Spangled banner - in America the gesture catches a mood, from the White House down.

RICE: I had been up very late. I'm usually a very sound sleeper and I had not slept very well on September 11 and September 12th. And I went home very late on the night of the 13th and I turned on the television for the first time -- I'd actually not watched television this entire time. And it was so moving, I really just broke down. It was really a wonderful, fine -- of how our friends were responding. You need friends at a time like that, and it was very good to have friends.

MEYER: Well, it really knocked my socks off to be honest with you.

ED: The British Ambassador.

MEYER: We started to be inundated, not only the Embassy here but all our consulates around the United States, with e-mails, faxes, phone calls, messages expressing in the most emotional terms gratitude and thanks for this very unusual - unique, unprecedented - expression of support.

PRESIDENTIAL Helicopter ACTUALITY

ED: George Bush leaves Washington for Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland. He's called together those closest to him for what is effectively a council of war; Colin Powell is back at the centre of things now - the Vice President, Dick Cheney, is there too, along with Donald Rumsfeld, the Defence Secretary, and Condoleezza Rice.

RICE: The President listened a lot that morning. He wanted to hear the military's presentation on what was possible. And it really came down to, were you going to go after this with cruise missiles only, would you do some combination of cruise missiles and bombers but still mostly air power, or were you prepared to put - as it became called - boots on the ground, to put ground forces in to take care of this problem. The President listened to all of this, he listened to what the Central Intelligence Agency might be able to do with Afghan forces that were already there, the Northern Alliance in particular. And after listening to this rather intensive briefing and discussion for a period of almost four hours, he said, I want us all to have lunch, and then I want everyone to go and get some exercise and rest, and then I want you to come back at 4:30 and I want people to tell me what you think we ought to do. He came back, he listened, there was a lot of -- really, a lot of agreement that it had to be global, that al Qaeda was probably the initial target, that doing just air power had a lot of down sides. And he said, I'll let you know. And he ended the meeting and he came back here and the next day he called me into his office up in the Residence and he said, I know what I want to do.

ED: Tuesday, September 18th, Richard Armitage flies to Moscow.

ARMITAGE: I went with colleagues from the CIA and military, and we had what I describe as a "no shit conversation" about a threat we had, and we felt a threat Russia had as well; and that we made it very clear to our friends in the Russian Federation that we were going to prosecute this war, and we'd like their help; they had some expertise, particularly in Afghanistan, and we'd like to make use of it.

ED: The Russians see an opportunity here - for years now they've been trying to persuade western countries that their war in Chechnya is a war against terrorism. Sergei Lavrov is the Russian ambassador at the UN.

LAVROV: Long before September eleven we have been sharing with Americans and with our other colleagues, including the British, information which we had on international links of terrorist and Chechnya. And this knowledge was available in western capitals, provided by Russia, and I understand by western intelligence itself as well. So when this happened I think it happened in a situation when the information already got into the heads of the western leaders. And September eleven just triggered the reaction which was basically prepared already. (Did you find your American colleagues more sympathetic to the problem of Chechnya after September the eleventh?) Well to be very frank I have not noticed any unsympathetic attitude from our American colleagues before September eleven. But understanding yes. I think understanding increased, not just in the United Nations, among the diplomats and the secretariat, but also in the American and the western media.

ARMITAGE: There was no quid pro quo. I think in a very real way, beginning to get an understanding the problem, they had from the Arab Mujaheddin in Chechnya was the

beginning of payback. But, no, there wasn't a specific quid pro quo that was ever requested - assistance or aid or anything like that. (But they said, "Now you understand what we've been getting on about the Chechen . . .) Well, among other things, yeah.

St Thomas's Church actuality:

MEYER: That was a day of -- it was a day of very high emotion, it was a very testing day, testing day for everybody - but ultimately very uplifting

ED: Thursday September 20th, and Christopher Meyer is with his Prime Minister at St Thomas's Church in New York.

CD99550 Blair at St Thomas's Church, New York: Remarks by the President and Prime Minister of United Kingdom Tony Blair, The Grand Foyer, St Thomas's Church NY: We wanted to be here today to offer our support and our sympathy to the families of the lost ones. Many are British as you know so the bonds between our two countries, so strong for so long, are even stronger today.

ED: When the Prime Minister and his party leave the quiet of the church they face mayhem in Manhattan.

MEYER: The combination of hideous gridlock in New York, appalling weather, appalling weather, rain streaming down and then we were fighting the clock all the time so we had this wonderful deeply emotional service in the church and then had to get in a cavalcade of cars and fight our way out of Manhattan.

ED: George Bush is waiting in Washington - his diary cleared for a meeting with the Prime Minister. But the British party is running so late that it is almost time for the formal dinner when Mr Blair is finally welcomed to the White House by the President. Alastair Campbell.

CAMPBELL: The two of them went over to a corner of this quite big reception room that we'd been in and they had quite a lengthy time just the two of them. And you know in terms of how the Prime Minister recalled that afterwards, it was really just obvious that they were on exactly the same wavelength.

BLAIR: Well, we were both thinking through the consequences of what needed to be done, of how we handled Afghanistan. Whether there needed to be an ultimatum to the Taliban. All this type of stuff was being discussed and I am often somebody who likes to see both sides of an issue and to feel my way consensually but there are moments, and you have got to recognise this in politics, where there is no meeting of minds. The people that carried this out didn't have a negotiating strategy. There wasn't a dialogue that you were going to get into, there wasn't a change of heart that was going to come about as the result of talking to them. There was the simple brutal fact that they had annihilated thousands of people without any compunction at all, and indeed would have annihilated many thousands more had they been able to do so. I am afraid there is no point in mucking around with that situation. You either get them, or they get you.

CD 99548: Members of Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honour of presenting to you the President of the United States. (cheers)

ED: The course of the next few months is more or less set now – the dinner plates cleared, the two men make the short journey to Capitol Hill.

CD 99548 President Bush's address to Joint Session of Congress: In the normal course of events, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight, no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people (applause).

ED: Everyone expects a polite acknowledgement of help from allies – no one is quite prepared for this.

CD99548 President Bush's address to Joint Session of Congress and the American People. 2100 United States Capitol, Washington, D.C. . . . so honoured the British Prime Minister has crossed an ocean to show his unity with America. Thank you for coming, friend. (Applause.) . . .

CAMPBELL: I was sitting just a couple of rows behind the Prime Minister in the audience at President Bush's speech and it was quite a powerful feeling to be there and it was obvious that this whole gathering which represented the United States was rising as it did to recognise Britain. It was a very powerful moment.

ED: The President so often pilloried for a clumsy tongue and a failure of vision has found a mission.

CD99548 President Bush's address to Joint Session of Congress and the American People. 2100 United States Capitol, Washington, D.C.: Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. (Applause.)

THEME MUSIC UNDERLAY TILL END