

Global support

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ist activity," President Bush said after meeting at the White House with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. "Make no mistake about it — this is good versus evil."

Unbowed, Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network of extremists threatened additional strikes. Bin Laden is the prime suspect in the Sept. 11 assaults that killed nearly 7,000 people in the United States and provoked a major redrawing of worldwide alliances.

"Wherever there are Americans and Jews, they will be targeted," said a statement faxed by al-Qaida

to news organizations in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad. "We can defend ourselves. The holy warriors are fully prepared."

In Washington, President Bush urged investigators and all Americans to remain vigilant.

"The people who did this act on America, and who may be planning further acts, are evil people ..." he told FBI agents during a visit to their headquarters. "Stay at it. The nation's counting on you."

Several senators who have received intelligence briefings said new attacks were a real possibility. "I really fear that this may happen again," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif.

In severing relations with Afghanistan's Taliban leaders, Saudi Arabia issued a stinging religious condemnation, accusing them of "causing harm to Islam and besmirching the name of Muslims everywhere."

The diplomatic action left Afghanistan virtually isolated, with only one embassy still open. The Taliban's sole remaining window to the world: a two-story concrete house on a quiet, tree-lined street in Islamabad.

Only Pakistan maintains relations with Afghanistan, but that nation is leaning toward the West and has withdrawn its diplomats from the Afghan capital of Kabul.

In Washington, Bush emphasized that the Afghani people are not the enemy.

"We have no issue and no anger toward the citizens of Afghanistan," he said. "We have obviously serious problems with the Taliban."

Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar appealed to Americans to "use your sense" rather than support any attack on his country.

"You should know whatever incidents and sorrow you suffer ... are a result of the erroneous policies of your government," he said in a message faxed to the Reuters news agency.

While U.S. troops and equip-

ment flowed into the region by sea and air, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld attempted to throttle expectations of a massive, visible military strike.

"Needless to say, there will not be a D-Day, as such," he said. "And there will not be a (surrender) signing on the deck of the (USS) Missouri, as such. This is a broad, sustained, multifaceted effort that is notably, distinctively different from prior efforts."

Related coalition-building efforts spanned the world Tuesday:

- Knight Ridder learned that an American military delegation in Islamabad will ask the Pakistanis to brief the United States on past technical assistance they have provided to bin Laden.

- According to another senior administration official, the U.S. Central Command has its command and control center at the Prince Sultan Royal Saudi Air Force Base outside Riyadh up and running, with 200 Americans already at work coordinating the buildup of air power around Afghanistan.

- In an Oval Office meeting with Bush, the Japanese prime minister offered his nation's help in sharing intelligence information and freezing the assets of suspected terrorists. Koizumi also pledged diplomatic assistance, medical supplies, refugee aid, equipment transport and \$40 million in aid to Pakistan as a reward for its cooperation in the war on terrorism.

- "We Japanese are ready to stand by the United States to fight terrorism," Koizumi said as he and Bush stood in front of U.S. and Japanese flags. Two Japanese newspapers reported that Japan soon will send warships to the Indian Ocean to carry out intelligence and surveillance missions.

- Russian President Vladimir Putin, who consulted at length by telephone with Bush over the weekend, called during a visit to Berlin for the "complete ideological and political isolation" of international terrorists.

- Finance ministers of the United States, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Canada issued a joint statement after participating in a conference call placed by U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill.

"Since the attacks we have all shared our national action plans to block the assets of terrorists and their associates," the statement said. "We will integrate those plans and pursue a comprehensive strategy to disrupt terrorist funding around the world."

In other developments:

- The death toll at the World Trade Center rose Tuesday to 279 and 6,398 people remained missing and presumed dead. One hundred eighty-nine died at the Pentagon, 44 in a plane crash in Pennsylvania.

- U.S. consumer confidence has plunged in the last month, according to a report released Tuesday. But the stock market stabilized Tuesday, at least for the day. The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed at 8,659.97, up 56.11 points. The NASDAQ closed at 1,501.63, up 2.23 points.

- On Capitol Hill, Attorney General John Ashcroft stepped up his campaign for a broad range of expanded police powers, citing the danger of additional attacks.

He said some suspects in the Sept. 11 attacks may have obtained licenses to transport hazardous materials, and he urged the public to be on alert. On Monday, he confirmed that some of the hijackers had checked out crop-dusting planes in Florida.

(Knight Ridder correspondents Frank Davies, Tom Infield, Sudarsan Raghavan, Mark McDonald and Carol Rosenberg contributed to this report.) (c) 2001, Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.

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