

# Inderfurth asks LTTE to abandon terrorism

HD-14  
29/11  
By Nirupama Subramanian

COLOMBO, Nov 28. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Mr. Karl Inderfurth, today appealed to the LTTE to "abandon terrorism" and pursue its political aims through peaceful methods.

"Continued acts of terrorism

will only result in deaths of more innocent people and greater international condemnation of the LTTE," he is reported to have said at an exclusive briefing for the Sri Lankan media.

Mr. Inderfurth said the U.S. strongly backed Norway's efforts to facilitate a dialogue between the Sri Lankan government and

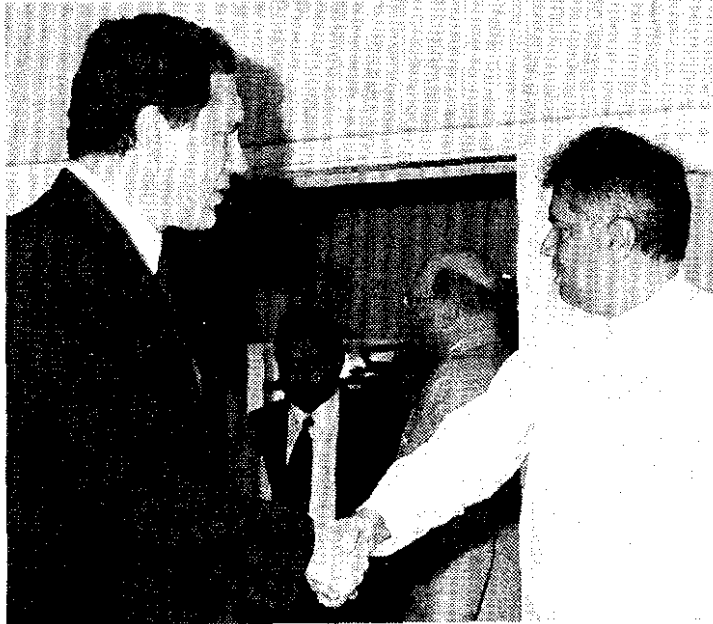
the LTTE. "In this regard, we believe a vital first step is for Sri Lanka's major political parties to agree to a common, bipartisan approach to these negotiations," he said.

Mr. Inderfurth, who arrived here yesterday on the first leg of his South Asian tour, said his mission in Sri Lanka, was among other things, to express his government's strong support for a negotiated political settlement to the ethnic conflict within the territorial integrity and unity of Sri Lanka. "It also favours a solution that protects the dignity and security of all Sri Lankans," he said.

Mr. Inderfurth left Sri Lanka for New Delhi today.

The Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar, on Monday handed over to Mr. Inderfurth the Instrument of Ratification of the U.S.-Lanka Extradition Treaty signed last September.

A joint statement said the Treaty would take effect the day the Instrument of Ratification of the U.S. was handed over to the Sri Lankan government after signature by the U.S. President and counter-signature by the Secretary of State. This was Mr. Inderfurth's fourth visit to Sri Lanka. He was accompanied by Mr. Gary Usrey, director in the South Asian Affairs Bureau, and Mr. Donald Camp, director in the U.S. National Security Council.



The U.S. Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs, Mr. Karl Inderfurth (left), shaking hands with the Sri Lankan Opposition leader, Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, in Colombo on Tuesday. — AP

THE HINDU

21 NOV 1988

# New US curbs on Pak

REUTERS & DPA

WASHINGTON, Nov. 22. — The USA has said it is waiving sanctions against China for past missile technology transfers to Iran and Pakistan, but imposing them on these two states for receiving the equipment.

China was liable for sanctions because of the transfers of technology including whole missiles — as in Pakistan's case — or of components to make them, as in Iran's, state department spokesman Richard Boucher said yesterday.

But outgoing President Bill Clinton had granted a waiver because China had pledged to

halt its exports of long-range missile technologies.

The move has been hailed in Washington as a serious blow to Pakistani and Iranian efforts to develop means to deliver weapons of mass destruction.

Mr Boucher said the existing sanctions on Islamabad, clamped after the Chagai nuclear tests in 1998, spelled limited impact on Pakistan, but the new ones sent "a strong signal that the USA opposes these countries' missiles programmes".

The new sanctions include a two-year ban on exports from the USA to Pakistan's defence ministry and Space and Upper-Atmosphere Research

Commission.

Pakistan today termed the sanctions unjustified and urged the USA to lift them. Foreign ministry spokesman Riaz Mohammad Khan denied Pakistan had received technology which contravened international guidelines on missile technology transfers.

"It is our hope the USA will review the decision and remove these latest sanctions as well as those which it had imposed ... two years ago."

Khan said it was too early to say what impact the restrictions would have on Pakistan.

"But there is very little technology we receive from the USA these days."

THE STATESMAN

23 NOV 2000

# US spares China, imposes fresh sanctions on Pak, Iran

Washington, November 22 23

IN A significant development, the United States today imposed fresh sanctions against Pakistan and Iran for two years for importing missile-related equipment and technology from China for their highest level missile programmes and removed sanctions on Beijing imposed earlier for exporting missile technology.

"In consideration of China's commitment to strengthen its missile-related export control system, we've decided to waive economic sanctions required by US law for past assistance by Chinese entities to missile programmes in Pakistan and Iran, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said.

The new sanctions against Pakistan and Iran "do send a strong signal that the United States opposes these countries' missile programmes," he said adding "the waiver to China does not apply to any transfers that might occur in the future."

Boucher said all individual export licenses for commerce or state-controlled items, and all new US government contracts are denied to the Pakistani and Iranian entities.

## 'Pak needs no help'

PAKISTAN POSSESSES a minimum nuclear deterrence that needs neither American nor Chinese technology to sustain it, Mohammed Riaz, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Wednesday. A promise made by China not to pass on missile technology to nuclear capable states won't hurt Pakistan's missile programme, he said. **AP, Islamabad**

Taking note of India's concerns about the Chinese aid to Pakistan's missile programmes, Boucher said: "We certainly believe that the Indian Government would agree with our determination that

Chinese entities have made missile-related transfers to Pakistan. We believe that India should welcome the comprehensive and explicit assurances that China has given that no such cooperation (with Pakistan) will take place in the future."

However, Boucher said that "in consideration of China's commitment not to assist the development of MTCR (missile technology control regime) class ballistic missiles in any way, and to strengthen its missile related export controls, we are waiving the sanctions required against the Chinese entities."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry in Beijing issued a statement saying "China has no intention to assist, in any way, any country in the development of ballistic missiles that can be used to deliver nuclear weapons (ie, missiles capable of delivering a payload of at least 500 kilograms to a distance of at least 300 kilometres)."

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

23 NOV 2000

# Vietnam grumbles as Clinton harps on rights

By Amit Baruah

SINGAPORE, NOV. 19. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, today ended a four-day visit to Vietnam with an address to the business community in Ho Chi Minh City, and the announcement of a \$200 million credit line to Vietnam.

Mr. Clinton, who spent three of his four days in Hanoi, could not have missed the symbolism of his last day in Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) — from where the helicopter evacuation from the American Embassy ended the American presence in Vietnam.

Differences between the U.S. and Vietnam persist on a number of issues, and the repeated references made by Mr. Clinton to human rights in Vietnam have drawn a sharp response from the country's leadership.

In his meeting with Mr. Le Kha Phieu, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), yesterday, Mr. Clinton was told that while the past could not be changed, it was important to understand the nature of the past — particularly the "anti-aggression resistance" which the Vietnamese people had to fight.

Mr. Phieu, CPV's top leader, told Mr. Clinton that Vietnam waged the resistance war to "end the country's occupation by imperialists", the Vietnamese News Agency (VNA) reported. Mr. Phieu also raised the question of "why" the U.S. forces invaded Vietnam.

"We respect the choice of life style and political system by other nations. We, in return, ask for other nations to respect our people's choices. The fact that nations have different political systems does not prevent cooperation for mutual development, if they know how to respect each other's national independence and sovereignty, and not to intervene in the other's internal affairs," the VCP chief stated.

"It's certain that the 21st century will be defined by technology and science. But it also means a larger gap between rich and poor nations. The total property possessed by more than 300 billionaires the world over is equal to the incomes of more than two billion people in poor countries."

"The future of the Vietnamese nation is independence and socialism," he stressed. He was hopeful that "relations between the two countries would further develop without any repeat of the past".

It is evident that while welcoming a new relationship with the U.S., the Vietnamese Government has shown little hesitation in telling off Washington areas of concern to it.

Earlier, the Vietnamese President, Mr. Tran Duc Luong, made it clear that the U.S. must address the consequences of the American war in Vietnam.

"The war has taken a very heavy toll of Vietnam. As such, the Vietnamese people have all come to the view that the U.S. Government should be aware of its responsibility for the tremendous losses that the Vietnamese people have suffered."

"In the immediate future, we believe that the U.S. side should pay due attention to and respond, in an appropriate manner, to Vietnam's humanitarian issues by cooperating with us to seek information on Vietnamese missing personnel; demine and neutralise unexploded bombs and ordnance; detoxify former military bases and provide necessary assistance to Agent Orange victims and solve other humanitarian issues left behind by the war," Mr. Luong had said.

While Mr. Clinton did say yesterday that America would support Vietnam till the last landmine was located, he stopped short of making concrete, public pledges on the humanitarian concerns of the Vietnamese Government.

Instead, Mr. Clinton, stressed both in Ho Chi Minh City today and in his earlier address to students at the Vietnamese National University, Hanoi, for political freedom.

"Imagine how much more you will achieve as even more young people gain the freedom to shape the decisions that will affect their lives," Mr. Clinton was quoted as telling Vietnamese business leaders.

THE HINDU

20 NOV 1995

# Flight that shook US world role

Bill Clinton couldn't possibly say in Vietnam that the war was a mistake. Twenty-five years after it ended, that is a measure of the political taboos still surrounding America's longest conflict and greatest humiliation.

He is the first American President to visit Vietnam since the war ended and the first ever to visit Hanoi in a trip that was thought too politically charged to be made before the presidential elections.

Even though the intricacies of the Florida ballot are gripping the USA, to head for Vietnam at this point shows a genius for symbolism, because the turmoil of the 1960s is the key to the electoral quagmire Mr Clinton has left behind.

More than anything in Americans' recent history, the Vietnam years have shaped their current ambivalence about their presidents and their role in the world. Mr Clinton, the archetypal baby boomer, understood that in a way that neither Al Gore nor George W Bush seems to have done.

At the start of the 1960s, the USA was unchallenged in its optimism and affluence, unrivalled militarily, economically and technologically, and confident that it could overcome any challenge.

The image of the last helicopter leaving the roof of the US Embassy in Saigon on 30 April 1975 remains a symbol of the shattering of that confidence in the defeat by peasant fighters from a Third World Communist country.

The decade-long conflict divided the country more than any since the Civil War.

The anti-war rallies built on the triumph of Martin Luther King's 1963 civil rights march on Washington, to draw more than a quarter of a million to The Mall. It would be wrong to blame Vietnam for Americans' current suspicion of government an instinct with roots as

5-9 19/11  
More than anything in Americans' recent history, the Vietnam years have shaped their current ambivalence about their presidents and their role in the world, says BRONWEN MADDOX



President Clinton addresses officials and MIA family members as workers look on on Saturday, at a Joint Task Force Full Accounting Excavation site near Tien Chau, Vietnam. — AP/PTI.

old as the country but spliced between the civil rights movement and Watergate, it played its part.

Outside the USA, it is easy to forget how much Americans still care about Vietnam. The steady flow of films is a clue, of course, from *The Deer Hunter* to *Apocalypse Now* and *Born on the Fourth of July*. There is, too, in Washington DC, the apparently endless file of people along The Wall, that extraordinary antithesis to usual war memorials, a black gash of stone cut down into the earth with the names of the 58,000 killed carved along it.

But the best recent reminder came this year in the primary season of the presidential election, with the sudden rush of adoration for the Vietnam veteran John McCain.

Where Mr Clinton and Mr Bush had dodged the draft, and Mr Gore had served only as a journalist, the Republican Senator from Arizona is still hunched and limping from the torture he had suffered in the

"Hanoi Hilton".

The old pictures of him, stooped and scrawny, in gleaming white uniform, receiving his medals, flooded the American media. His campaign for the presidential nomination may have lasted only weeks, but it showed the country's buried longing for a hero which neither Mr Gore nor Mr Bush has satisfied.

This year's campaign has shown other echoes of those years.

Even though the USA is, once again, unchallenged on the world stage, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, it is uncertain how active a role it wants.

Americans' tolerance for seeing their servicemen killed in overseas conflicts is now, in effect, zero. Somalia reflected that; so did the refusal to commit troops to a ground war in Kosovo.

Mr Bush played to this climate with his pledge to pull back the "overextended" military but worried many

Americans with his lack of expertise in foreign affairs.

Mr Clinton won two elections by understanding Americans' deep ambivalence about what they want from government, particularly the contradictions of his baby boomer generation. Coming from the south, which has never entirely bought into the "American" rhetoric of perpetual reinvention, he recognised how easily the USA is captivated by its past.

Vietnam is among the most persistent of those ghosts, and the country's current division at the polls reflects the conflicts of those years. Americans want to be all-powerful on the world stage without military deaths.

They mistrust Washington but still want presidents to be heroes who can unite the country's extraordinary diversity.

Mr Clinton's speech in Hanoi on Friday could easily be mocked, full of pleas for better "communication" and "understanding", a 1960s vocabulary of personal relationships. He has made this language a staple of his foreign speeches.

Sometimes it is inspiring, as in China and India, and sometimes, as in West Asia and Northern Ireland, simply crass, when applied to a history of bloodshed and hatred.

In Vietnam, it was something in between: too banal for the task, but all the same, the vocabulary of his generation, reflecting a 1960s idealism that the personal appeal can overcome entrenched conflict.

If Mr Gore or Mr Bush had been better at bridging those contradictions, either might have repeated Mr Clinton's success in reaching the White House by more than a few hundred votes.

— The Times, London.

THE STATESMAN

19 NOV 2000

# War is past, euphoria is present

Alex Perry  
Hanoi, November 17

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton received a rapturous welcome from thousands of Vietnamese on Friday and called for a new era of reconciliation after the "shared suffering" of the Vietnam War, in a live address to the nation.

In scenes never before seen in the communist capital, crowds mobbed Clinton, desperate to get a glimpse of the first American head of state to visit Vietnam since the war, which ended in 1975 with the first and only US military defeat.

Clinton later gave a key address at the national university at which he paid tribute to the millions who died on both sides of the conflict.

After enormous pressure from the White House, the communist authorities agreed to transmit Clinton's speech live on state television, another first for a visiting head of state.

As crowds swamped streets outside, the President said the scars of history could heal in a new era of shared prosperity and friendship.

But he also used his speech to raise human rights and religious tolerance in communist Vietnam.

"In our experience, guaranteeing the right to religious worship and the right to political dissent does not threaten the stability of a society," he said. "Instead it builds people's confidence in the fairness of our institutions."

Mindful of his hosts' strident opposition to imperialism in any form, he added: "Let me say emphatically, we do not seek to impose these ideals, nor could we. You have proved to the world that you make your own decisions."

Outside Mai Nguyet, a 23-year-old English stu-

dent, supported Clinton's statement.

"I want more freedom of information to lift our level of knowledge. I want a change in our education system, but I think that will take a lot more time."

Clinton also paid tribute to the 58,000 Americans who died in the Vietnam War and the "three million brave soldiers and civilians" who perished in both Vietnamese armies in a "staggering sacrifice."

The President, who is the first US head of state to visit Vietnamese soil since Richard Nixon travelled to the then southern capital of Saigon in 1969, also thanked the Vietnamese for their help in tracing remains of the 1,992 US soldiers still listed as missing in action.

For the second day, Vietnamese authorities appeared to have been unprepared for the spontaneous popular welcome accorded to Clinton on a

sightseeing walkabout in Hanoi, during which he visited a Confucian temple that escaped the US wartime bombs and ate lunch at a street cafe.

Bodyguards struggled to restrain the seething sea of hands reaching out to grasp him, as thousands of shrieking onlookers climbed trees, lamp-posts, walls and hung from balconies.

Tran Hoai Dung, 17, said the President "was very smiley, kind and friendly to us. He had a real ... gallantry about him," she sighed. "He's truly a king."

The scenes mirrored the reception given to Clinton as he arrived late Thursday when, defying an official information blackout, tens of thousands lined the streets causing traffic gridlock.

Before his walkabout on Friday, Clinton held talks with his Vietnamese counterpart Tran Duc Luong after a welcoming ceremony at the presidential palace whose rigid formality contrasted starkly with the street scenes.

(AFP)

## Clinton in Vietnam

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

18 NOV 2000

# Clinton holds talks with Vietnamese counterpart

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Following enormous pressure from the White House, the ever-cautious Communist authorities finally agreed to allow live transmission of Mr Clinton's address on state television. In the run-up to the visit, Vietnam's aging leaders did their utmost to limit public focus on the visit, as they strive to secure Washington's vital support in world economic fora to open up and develop the economy while maintaining tight political control.

But the silence imposed on the details of Mr Clinton's arrival by Vietnam's state-run press failed to prevent massed crowds of Hanoians from lining the streets to give

him a hero's reception on the first ever visit to the Communist capital by a U.S. head of state and the first to the country by an American head of state since the Vietnam War. As the President rode in from the airport in a stretch limousine bearing Washington DC licence plates, onlookers raised huge cheers, shouting "President, President."

One teenager was seen brandishing a large white sign with the scribbled mes-



Bill Clinton  
sage: "Hey, Bill, Stop here."

The police later dispersed the massive crowd which caused midnight traffic gridlock as they gathered around the Presidential party's central Hanoi hotel.

The U.S. President's visit was "an important event" for Vietnam, the authorities finally acknowledged in front-page official commentaries after days of insisting Mr Clinton's presence here was "nothing exceptional."

First Lady Hillary Clinton, who was mobbed by hundreds of Hanoians when she went on a walkabout in the capital during an evening shopping spree, was due to travel to the village of Yen Thanh outside the capital to meet peasants who formed the backbone of the Communists' wartime

army. Earlier, Mr Clinton said he was very moved by his welcome in Communist Vietnam and was looking forward to building a new future with America's former foe.

Asked at a welcoming ceremony at the Presidential Palace, how he felt about to be the first serving U.S. President to come to Vietnam since the war, Mr Clinton told reporters: "I am glad to be here and I'm looking forward to building a new future. This is very moving this morning, this welcoming ceremony."

Beneath a huge bust of America's Vietnam War nemesis Ho Chi Minh, Mr Clinton told his Vietnamese counterpart Tran Duc Luong he had been struck by the friendliness he had felt on the streets of Hanoi since he arrived late Thursday. "I think it's a good omen," he said. Mr Luong said he wished Mr Clinton the best for his visit and added: "I hope that this trip will be very interesting for both sides."

# Clinton in Vietnam to seal historic rapprochement

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
HANOI, NOV 16

US President Bill Clinton arrives in Communist Vietnam on Thursday determined to put his name in the history books by finally burying the hatchet on a war that threatened to tear America apart.

In what he hopes will be the grand finale of his presidency, Clinton will seek to expunge forever the humiliating image of America's embassy-roof exodus from Vietnam during the 1975 fall of Saigon, taking up the old mantra that Vietnam is "a country, not a war."

The size of Clinton's delegation, which is expected to number some 2,000 including the accompanying press, is an indication of how historic the moment is re-

garded in Washington.

But Vietnam's cautious communist authorities have done their utmost to play the visit down, even denying the US President the front-page photographs in official newspapers normally accorded to visiting heads of state. And when First Lady Hillary Clinton led the Presidential cavalcade into the Communist Capital in the early afternoon, a solitary Stars and Stripes was visible at the airport alongside nine-red and yellow star flags of Communist Vietnam. A single banner draped over the runway side of the main arrivals terminal

"warmly welcomes H E Mr William Jefferson Clinton, President of the US and spouse on an official visit to



**Vietnam is cautious about the Clinton visit and is doing its utmost to play down the visit**

the Socialist Republic of Vietnam." Clinton was due to arrive late in the evening.

A full quarter of a century after the conflict ended, most of Vietnam's young population now has no memory of the war. But even in a country that has no democracy, the millions who were maimed or bereaved are still a constituency whose views the government is forced to take into account. Vietnamese officials well understand the domestic constraints which make any explicit talk of reparations politically unthinkable for

Washington. But in recent weeks they have stepped up their pressure for a voluntary gesture from Clinton to provide some recompense to

the legions of war orphans and amputees.

"Due to the extremely serious consequences of war in Vietnam, the country has a very great demand for humanitarian assistance and needs a more positive and more urgent response from the United States," Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien said in an official interview last week. As he reaches the end of his two-term presidency, Clinton is perhaps uniquely equipped to pull off the delicate balancing act between Vietnamese expectations and domestic political constraints. But his lame duck status now that Americans have already voted to replace him but with the colour of the next administration still unknown, also leaves him with few weapons up his sleeve.

NDIAN EXPRESS

17 NOV 2000



# Chance to put behind legacy of war

By Amit Baruah

HANOI, NOV. 15. When Air Force One touches down in Hanoi on Thursday night, Mr. Bill Clinton will become the first-ever President to visit a reunified Vietnam. Mr. Clinton will have the opportunity to put behind the two countries the bitter legacy of the 1964-75 Vietnam war; and nudge the new relationship into a positive groove.

There is little doubt that Mr. Clinton's personality and approach have brought him to Vietnam. Since Vietnam is principally a domestic issue for the United States, the President's visit will be watched closely in his country.

Mr. Clinton will see a new, confident Vietnam. A Vietnam which wants to begin a new chapter in the relationship with the United States, but a Vietnam which remembers and has learnt from its history.

A little over 58,000 American soldiers were killed and 3,03,000 wounded in the Vietnam war. The U.S. spent \$200 billion in the war in which the Americans killed one million Vietnamese civilians.

Vietnam notched up the distinction of notching up a double — ensuring the exit of the French colonialists after the great battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954 and ensuring the pull-out of American soldiers after the Paris Agreement of January 27, 1973.

For those who stood for national liberation, dignity and independence, Vietnam was the symbol. It reflected the strength of a poor, Third World nation which had the



courage and gumption to take on the world's toughest power and bring it to its knees.

Asked recently about Vietnam's position on compensation for war damages caused by the U.S., the Foreign Ministry spokeswoman in Hanoi replied: "The pains and losses which have been suffered by the Vietnamese people in the aftermath of the American war of aggression are heavy and huge. Solving war legacy including the effects of Agent Orange is a humanitarian imperative. It is our view that the United States should fulfil its spiritual and moral duty, make real contributions to solving war legacy."

"Prompted by the tradition of humanitarianism and reconciliation, we, in our relations with the United States as well as those countries that used to have a hostile time with Vietnam, advocate continuing cooperation, deepening mutual understanding, promoting better Vietnam-American relations, thus resolving the

consequences of the past," the spokeswoman added.

Just as the U.S. is still concerned about American personnel said to be missing-in-action (the MIA issue), the Vietnamese have continuing concerns about live ordnance, the effect of an unprecedented bombing campaign and the devastation caused by Agent Orange, that innocently-titled deadly killer.

About 50 million litres of Agent Orange (a deadly cocktail of a herbicide) was sprayed on Vietnam by American forces from low-flying aircraft in the period 1962 to 1971. The spraying had twin objectives — to defoliate forest areas that might conceal Viet Cong and North Vietnamese fighters and destroy crops that might sustain the enemy.

Among the Vietnamese, Agent Orange is said to be responsible for an abnormally high rate of miscarriages, skin diseases, cancer, birth defects and often grotesque congenital malformations. According to estimates prepared by the United Nations and the U.S., there are some 3.5 million landmines in Vietnam. A 1999 Vietnamese Government report, quoted by the U.S. Department of State, said that as of May 1998, 28,248 persons had been killed and 64,064 wounded by landmines and unexploded ordnance.

"Sadly, mines and unexploded ordnance continue to claim Vietnamese victims. Vietnam suffers over 2,000 casualties a year from landmines and unexploded ordnance," the State Department statement said.

According to USAID's Leahy War Victims Fund, which has provided \$15 million in victims' assistance programmes since 1991, "Vietnam... has been left with perhaps the world's highest proportion of amputees."

Since the restoration of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Vietnam in 1995 and the opening of a mission in Hanoi, the relationship between the two countries has been gradually moving forward.

In a recent interview, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Mr. Nguyen Dy Nien, said that the U.S. Secretary of State had visited Vietnam three times, the U.S. Secretary of Defence had visited the country earlier this year and the Vietnamese President, Mr. Tran Duc Luong, had an official meeting with Mr. Clinton on the sidelines of the U.N.'s millennium summit.

"In 1987, both sides agreed to settle their humanitarian issues. The U.S. has time again acknowledged and highly appreciated Vietnam's efficient cooperation in the MIA issue... at present, Vietnamese scientists are cooperating with scientists in other countries, including... in the U.S., in studying the effect of Agent Orange," he said.

"Due to the extremely serious consequences of war in Vietnam, the country has a very great demand for humanitarian assistance and needs a more positive and urgent response from the U.S., apart from its own great efforts and contributions from a number of other countries," the Foreign Minister added.

THE HINDU

15 NOV 2000

# U.S.-Russia space politics

By P. S. Suryanarayana

IS OUTER space a new frontier in global politics? A theory in practical international affairs is that outer space exploration may be as much a determinant of the political power of the major states today as maritime prowess was in a bygone age. However, the high level of inter-state cooperation in the international space station (ISS) project can be seen as a contra-indication. This may call into question the centrality of outer space as the theatre for a possible competition among the big powers in building defences against the ballistic missiles of their adversaries.

Arguable, no less, is the case that a military competition oriented towards outer space is surely important to the major powers, if the U.S.-Russia standoff on the former's plans for a national missile defence (NMD) shield is a guide. Washington and Moscow are, of course the pioneers of the present mission aimed at establishing the ISS as a long-term scientific laboratory in orbit around the Earth. But the simple reality with a profound impact on international politics is that the U.S., which is willing to accept the present post-Soviet Russia as a partner for the scientific exploration of the outer space, is not inclined to let the Kremlin play space games for military purposes. It is a different question whether Russia is in a fit financial position now to try and match the U.S. if the next administration in Washington were to go ahead with building the NMD with or without more military applications than those originally intended by the outgoing American President, Mr. Bill Clinton. Yet, the recent showdown between the U.S. and Russia over Mr. Clinton's failed experiments, which impelled him to hold back his intended sanction for a possible NMD should serve as a proof of the combative diplomatic moods of the two countries. They try to keep outer space within their reach for 'defensive' as also 'offensive' military purposes.

Now, the outcome of the latest U.S. presidential election will not erase the big picture made up of the views expressed

by both Mr. George W. Bush and Mr. Al Gore) the two main contestants, on the NMD. Being categorical about the efficacy of the present technologies for a possible NMD programme, Mr. Bush outlined his plans in response to questions from *Arms Control Today*, a key American publication on sensitive military matters. Mr. Bush said: "America must build effective missile defences, based on the best available options, at the earliest possible date. Our missile defence

NMD that would be violative of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972. Mr. Bush said: "If elected president, I will offer Russia the necessary amendments to the ABM Treaty so as to make our (U.S.) deployment of effective missile defences consistent with the treaty... If Russia refuses the changes we propose, I will give prompt notice under the provisions of the treaty that the United States can no longer be a party to it". In Mr. Bush's view, Moscow should pay a price to gain the

**The U.S., which is willing to accept post-Soviet Russia as a partner for the scientific exploration of outer space, is not inclined to let it play space games for military purposes.**

must be designed to protect all 50 States — and our friends and allies (abroad) and (the U.S.) deployed forces overseas — from missile attacks by rogue nations, or accidental launches (of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction)". Pledging to extend a protective shield to Washington's external partners as well, Mr. Bush said that "a missile defence system should not only defend our country (but it should (also) defend our allies, with whom I will consult (if elected President) as we develop our plans".

As the U.S. Vice-President, Mr. Gore was more circumspect on this issue during the campaign. In contrast to Mr. Bush's enthusiasm for a missile defence shield on the basis of the "best available options", Mr. Gore indicated, in his responses to the same set of questions from *Arms Control Today*, that he wanted to wait until being "fully convinced that the technologies are ready". In Mr. Gore's scheme, the Clinton line about the NMD as a protector of only the U.S. and not also its external allies was adequate.

Of direct relevance to a possible diplomatic and technological response from Moscow to a future unilateral U.S. action were the answers by Mr. Bush and Mr. Gore to the query about the utility of an

the Soviet Union collapsed and its prime successor-state, Russia, was downgraded by the U.S. as its active military adversary, Washington suitably transformed the old 'superpower space race' into a new cooperative venture. The idea was that the undoubted Russian expertise in space technology should not run waste in the absence of funds with the post-Soviet Kremlin for scientific forays beyond the Earth. International cooperation in space research, first evident during the latter phases of the earlier U.S.-Soviet race in this sphere, also received a boost under the overall auspices of Washington, in the new post-Soviet milieu. This explains, in part, the large element of international cooperation in regard to the ISS, too.

Moscow's delay in funding certain aspects of the ISS is also a subtle commentary on Russia's inadequate stand-alone capacity to reach for outer space for military applications in a big way. This induced the Clinton administration to conceive of the NMD as a sequel to the 'Star War' strategic defence initiative (SDI), which was first envisioned in 1983 during the Reagan presidency "challenging the core assumptions of nuclear deterrence" that was based on "mutual assured destruction" (as pointed out by American security analysts such as Janine E. Nolan). It is debatable whether the

U.S.' move, inherent in the SDI, to raise the military stakes for a financially weakening Soviet Union had indeed marked the beginning of the end of that state. The likely financial costs now of such a frontal competition with the U.S. explain, partially though, why Russia wants to join Washington itself to develop an anti-missile shield on a limited scale. The Russian offer of cooperation with the U.S. is also designed to test its assertion that the NMD would be directed against rogue states and not Washington's present or prospective political competitors. Therefore, "the shape of the future" of "world politics" in the 21st century (Donald M. Snow's phrase) will at least in part be defined by how the U.S.-Russia standoff on missile defences is resolved.

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# Veterans back Clinton's Vietnam visit

Jim Mannion

Washington, November 14

AS HE prepares to become the first US President to visit Vietnam since the Communist triumph in 1975, President Bill Clinton is getting little argument — and much encouragement — from veterans who fought there over a quarter century ago.

Even Clinton's history of having avoided military service during the Vietnam War, a source of controversy in the past, has caused barely a ripple among veterans.

People can criticize Clinton for going to Vietnam, but he is going when no one else would," said George Duggins, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America.

Veterans groups say they support the President's visit because it will spotlight two causes near and dear to them — accounting for the nearly 2,000 US servicemen still missing from the Vietnam War and joint studies into the impact of wartime Agent Orange exposure.

What we want is the President of the United States to express our concerns about issues that still linger over from the Vietnam War," Duggins said.

To dramatize US commitment to a full accounting of the missing in action, Clinton, who arrives in Hanoi on Thursday, will visit US and Vietnamese teams searching a rice paddy for remains of a US pilot who crashed there during the war.

US and Vietnamese teams have accounted for 591 American dead since the end of the war in 1975. Action is being taken in hundreds of other MIA — missing in action — cases, said Larry Greer, a spokesman for the Pentagon's Office of POW-MIA Affairs.



Vietnamese workers walk past the crater left from the American plane that crashed 35 years ago at a site at Trung Vuong village, 100 km north of Hanoi, last week. Photo: AP

Some are under investigation; in others cases, remains are being excavated or in the process of being identified at a US Army forensic laboratory in Hawaii, he said.

Clinton this year certified to the US Congress that the United States has received "good" cooperation from Vietnam in the recovery efforts, which began in 1988. Some veterans groups, however, would like to see the Vietnam government show greater initiative in producing documents and other evidence that could help clear up the remaining MIA cases.

A lot of the recoveries have been a result of joint efforts," said

Steve Thomas, a spokesman for the American Legion. "The president has a unique opportunity to perhaps force the Vietnamese government to be more forthcoming on its own."

Still, the major veterans groups — the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion and the Vietnam Veterans of America — all call the presidential visit an excellent opportunity to advance the cause of the MIAs.

Every president since Richard Nixon has said this is one of America's highest priorities," said Duggins. "But none have ever said it in Hanoi. They've always said it from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. So this president has the opportu-

nity to say it from Hanoi."

Far from resisting a US reconciliation with Vietnam, aging veterans of the conflict have led the way with visits back to their old bases and the battlefields where they fought.

Duggins, who served two tours of duty in Vietnam with military intelligence outfits, will be returning for his second visit since the war as part of Clinton's entourage.

His group has forged ties with quasi-official veterans groups in Vietnam and won congressional funding for a joint US-Vietnamese study of health and environmental impact of the widespread US use of the herbicide Agent Orange. (AFP)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

15 NOV 2000

# Arafat-Clinton talks make no progress

Washington, November 11

PALESTINIAN LEADER Yasser Arafat met U.S. President Bill Clinton here complaining against the "deliberate" killing of one of

mit." National Security Council spokesman, said both Israel and the Palestinians still have steps to fulfill from pledges they made at Sharm el-Sheikh early October.



United Nations deputy secretary general Louise Frechette (L) talks with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, following a closed Security Council meeting on Friday at United Nations. Photo: AP

his top leaders, Hussein Obayyat, and said he was willing to attend another West Asia summit to bring peace back home, even as the violence continued in another day of rage.

Arafat also met the UN Security Council to press his case for an international force to protect Palestinian civilians. "I am not the one who initiated the violence. My tanks are not sieging Israeli towns," Arafat told reporters after meeting Clinton, adding "we have discussed all issues in great detail."

Denouncing Israel for the clashes, he said: "We are facing a very dangerous situation that is really injuring the peace process." Arafat said he told Clinton that he wanted to work towards peace but did not specify any particular steps. "I reiterated my full commitment to making peace... I would welcome any effort to convene another sum-

mit." National Security Council spokesman, said both Israel and the Palestinians still have steps to fulfill from pledges they made at Sharm el-Sheikh early October.

He said Clinton and Arafat discussed "how to move back to a political process".

Clinton is scheduled to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak on Sunday.

Meanwhile, reports from United Nations adds that Yasser Arafat has appealed in person to the Security Council to send a UN force to protect Palestinians, but the United States said it would oppose the move without Israeli support. The Israeli ambassador to the UN, Yehuda Lanery, met separately with the council, and told reporters he had "expressed very clearly our opposition to an international force."

Arafat, the president of the Palestinian authority, yesterday conferred in private with ambassadors of the 15 council member states for an hour and a half in the council chamber. (Agencies)

# Arafat, Clinton to meet on Thursday

FROM DEBORAH CHARLES

Little Rock (Arkansas), Nov. 5 (Reuters): President Bill Clinton will meet with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Thursday and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak next Sunday in a new West Asian peace effort, White House said.

"The goal is to assess the situation on the ground and begin to find the way back to the negotiating table," White House spokesman Jake Siewert told reporters travelling with Clinton on Sunday in Arkansas, his home state.

During the White House meetings, Clinton will evaluate implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh accord to end the latest outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence, Siewert said. At least 173 people, almost all of them Palestinians, have died in fighting that began on September 28.

Arafat and former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres agreed on Thursday to a new truce, which has helped reduce the level of violence. But on Sunday, Israeli troops shot dead two Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian hospital officials said. The White House meetings

will follow US elections on Tuesday, when voters will choose Clinton's successor. US analysts see little difference in the approaches to the West Asian conflict of the two main presidential candidates — Republican George W. Bush or Democrat Al Gore.

Clinton first floated the idea of separate White House meetings with Arafat and Barak in October, but aides said the President wanted to see a lull in the violence before bringing the leaders to Washington.

The Palestinians want international protection, understood to mean a UN peace force for the Palestinian territories, but the US is cool to the idea.

The UN Security Council has scheduled closed-door consultations for Wednesday on the Middle East, and is expected to discuss a possible protection force. Israeli foreign minister Shlomo Ben-Ami said last week the US had promised to veto any move in the Security Council to send in UN forces.

After meeting with Barak next Sunday, Clinton is due to leave Washington on a trip to southeast Asia.

Arafat's adviser Nabil Abu Rdainah confirmed the trip to

Washington, saying: "The visit is important because it is related to the peace process and to discussion of the continuation of Israeli attacks on Palestinians."

Danny Yatom, a senior adviser to Barak, said there were no plans for a three-way meeting but Arafat, Barak and Clinton would have to try even in separate meetings to stabilise the situation.

In Tel Aviv, tens of thousands of Israelis gathered on Saturday night to mark the fifth anniversary of the assassination of Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin by a right-wing Jew opposed to his swapping land for peace with Palestinians.

Barak told the rally he could go to Washington "as soon as next week" to try to bring "peace and calm" to the region.

Evoking the legacy of Rabin during the rally, Barak called publicly on Arafat to return to the search for a "peace of the brave" that the Palestinian leader agreed with Rabin in a handshake on the White House lawn in September 1993.

"You who shook the hand of Yitzhak Rabin... it is in your hands to stop the violence and end the bloodshed," Barak said.

Today, he told his Cabinet he hoped someday to see an emotion-

THE TELEGRAPH

6 NOV 2000

# North Korea talks hinge on U.S. poll

By F.J. Khergamwala

TOKYO, Nov. 2. Earlier this week in Beijing, Japan and North Korea held their third round of official-level talks this year but pending a U.S.-North Korea deal on missiles, both sides seemed to have decided to use the occasion to meet and to seek, rather than to negotiate.

In a connected development, by late Thursday night in east Asia (morning in Washington DC), the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright would have made a foreign affairs related speech to the press. She was expected to announce if Mr. Bill Clinton will indeed travel to Pyongyang, if negotiations reached finality on a missiles related agreement between the U.S. and North Korea. Officials of both sides have been meeting in Kuala Lumpur since Wednesday. Observers expect that by the time Ms. Albright fi-

nalises her speech, the negotiators would have had almost two full days in the Malaysian capital to build on talks in Pyongyang last week.

The extremely close U.S. Presidential election has had a major, though unstated impact on both the U.S.-North Korea and the Japan-North Korea talks. This is not only because the two principal candidates and parties hold different views on how to deal with North Korea but also because Japan expects North Korea to be treated differently if Mr. George W. Bush gets into the White House.

The U.S. and North Korean officials began a three-day negotiation on Wednesday in Kuala Lumpur on how to rein in the North Korean missiles development programme, exports of missile technology and parts as well as the possibility of North Korean "satellite" launches by another

country. Tied into those complex negotiations are definitional issues of what constitutes a missile and what is a satellite, as well as the North's demand for monetary compensation as well as verification procedures on the curbs agreed to by the North.

The Kuala Lumpur talks were planned immediately after the visit to Pyongyang last week by Ms. Albright and they gained a sense of urgency because the outcome is intimately linked to a decision on a historic visit to Pyongyang by the U.S. President. [Though there are several issues of contention, the one single issue that is of common concern to the U.S., Japan and South Korea is Pyongyang's missiles programme. Even here, each of them have different priorities.

The U.S. seems more concerned with the North's ability to hit parts of Alaska and Hawaii with the Taepodong-1 missile

launched on August 31, 1998. Therefore, it would want to stop the development of the Taepodong-1 of a longer range. Japan and the South feel the shorter range Nodong should also form part of the negotiations. North Korea, on its part, has clearly shown great urgency in seeking an opening to the U.S. before Mr. Clinton leaves office. Partly, this is out of concern that a Republican incumbent of the White House would be more difficult to deal with. But then, for the same reason, a big question is what would North Korea want to hold on to, in case Mr. Bush wins the election. Aird, would the Clinton negotiators allow the North to retain some heavy bargaining cards.

It is this and other uncertainties that overshadowed the 11th round of the Japan-North Korea talks. Japan merely explained, but did not specifically offer to the North, a war reparations that was

given to South Korea when Japan and the South normalised ties in 1965.

Though the implication is clear, Japan did not intend this to be a formal offer. The package is no longer referred to as "compensation," but as "settlement of the past."

That settlement includes money and words. Japan signalled to Pyongyang that it was ready to give the North Korean people, the same pointed apology for the suffering during the colonial rule of 1910-45, that the South received in 1998.

When they last met in August, the North's officials did not reject the idea of an aid package, but the fact they rejected such an idea now suggests that among other things, Pyongyang wants to re-view the situation in its entirety after the November 7 U.S. elec-

tion.

## PLAY IT AGAIN SAM

Reconciliation was a theme that marked the speech of the United States president, Mr Bill Clinton, to the millennium summit of the United Nations general assembly last September. And it is reconciliation that seems to be becoming the leitmotif of American foreign policy in the last months of the Clinton administration, as it attempts to mend relations with communist countries that have traditionally been the *bete noire* of Washington. During much of the Cold War, Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea were three states that policymakers in Washington were most hesitant to engage, and even the end of the US-Soviet rivalry did little to improve relations. But today, the Clinton administration seems willing to embark on a new course with an imaginative set of fresh policies.

Consider first the case of Vietnam. Later this month, after attending the Asia-Pacific economic cooperation summit in Brunei, Mr Clinton will visit Hanoi. This will make him the first US president to visit Vietnam since the war ended more than 25 years ago. The previous presidential visits had been during the war itself. Recall that President Lyndon Johnson had visited US troops in Vietnam in 1966 and 1967 and President Richard Nixon had met the South Vietnamese president, Nguyen Van Thieu, in Saigon in 1969. Mr Clinton, who many have accused of being a "draft dodger", has made reconciliation with Vietnam an important foreign policy priority. In 1994, the trade embargo against Vietnam was lifted and in 1995, diplomatic relations were restored. Earlier this year, US defence secretary, Mr William Cohen, visited Hanoi, and now comes the presidential visit. In addition, the US air force is currently involved in providing relief supplies to victims of the massive floods in the Mekong river basin. Even more startling is the possibility of Mr Clinton visiting Pyongyang after Hanoi. This is not speculation. The US secretary of state, Ms Madeline Albright, in her recent visit to North Korea, explored just this possibility. And although Mr Clinton's visit has not yet been firmed up, there is an outside chance that the North Korean leader, Mr Kim Jong Il, may just make enough concessions, especially on the nuclear and missile proliferation fronts, for Mr Clinton to make an unprecedented visit to a country regarded for long as the forbidden land by the mainstream of the American establishment. Finally, of course, there is Cuba; here too the US senate has ratified a bill that will ease trade sanctions on Cuba for the first time in 40 years. The legislation, which was approved overwhelmingly, allows the sale of food and medicine to Cuba. Havana will be allowed to purchase food and medicine from the US with the help of third-party financiers. Under certain humanitarian circumstances, Mr Clinton may even waive the ban on direct American financing. With the Middle East peace process in tatters, it is clear that Mr Clinton is now looking for other opportunities to go down in history as a peacemaker.

THE TELEGRAPH

1 NOV 2000



The US has dropped the term 'rogue state', but roguish conduct endures specially around India

# A little bit of semantics

BY BRAHMA CHELLANEY

**O**NE OF the unresolved issues in international relations has been how to deal with states that flagrantly defy global norms and rules of civised conduct. That such outlaw states often export violence, weapons, narcotics or religious extremism to terrorise targeted nations makes the problem they pose a serious one. However, since these states operate outside the realm of international law, the most effective counteraction cannot come from within the confines of international law and cooperation. In fact, unilateralism usually offers the best deterrent options against roguish conduct.

The United States, through its brute power and resort to unilateral action, has effectively tamed all those it regards as 'rogue states'. Libya, which initially bankrolled the Pakistani nuclear programme, has sued for peace with Washington, handing over for trial two suspects in the 1986 Pan Am bombing case. Iraq has been devastated by a decade of severe sanctions and intermittent bombing. Iran's containment has helped bring to power reformists eager for rapprochement with Washington. Cuba's Castro, without Soviet patronage, looks a pale resemblance of his former self.

Reclusive North Korea has frozen its nuclear programme, suspended missile tests and opened talks with Washington and Seoul. The recent inter-Korean summit meeting of the 'kissing Kims' resulted from Pyongyang's desire to come out of its long isolation. Even Sudan wants to come clean. Alleged roguish leaders are on the run from war crimes tribunals. President Milosevic of the ravaged rump of Yugoslavia finds himself pushed against the wall after his indictment by the International War Crimes Tribunal at The Hague.

With no 'rogue state' left to take on the US or even engage in activities inimical to American or Western interests, it is hardly a surprise that Washington has now officially dropped the term 'rogue states'. That term, as the State Department acknowledged last week, has 'outlived its usefulness'. US policy-makers will henceforth employ the term 'states of concern'.

While 'rogue states' have disappeared from America's official lexicon, roguish behaviour has not from the real world. Just look around India, which is wedged between two states that engage in covert actions (slightly and jointly) in breach of international law. The taming of 'rogue states' by

the West has been aided by the spread of democracy—a trend that predated the Soviet Union's collapse with the fall of many dictators, including Ceausescu, Duvalier, Homrucker, Marcos, Noriega, Ortega, Pinochet and Somoza. It is important to remember that only authoritarian or totalitarian states engage in roguish conduct.

While democracy has spread to other regions, India finds itself surrounded by an arc of undemocratic states stretching from Afghanistan in the west to the world's largest autocracy, China, to Myanmar in the east. The Afghan-Pak area has turned into a vast swamp breeding international terrorists and narcotics traffickers, mosquito-style. Myanmar could catch up in this sphere one day. China was seen as a rogue in US strategic literature until the Nixon administration helped transform its status. Potential new 'rogue states' for US policy can be found in this arc. If the now-banned term re-enters the State Department lexicon, it is likely to be because of the rogues in this arc.

The 'rogue states' have been tamed only in relation to Western interests. Unable to challenge US or European interests, the presumed rogues have turned their attention on others. North Korea now behaves responsibly towards the US but continues to act irresponsibly by exporting missile items to Pakistan. For India, if not for Washington, North Korea remains a 'rogue state'. The sanctions-hit Taliban regime in Kabul has pledged to Washington that it will keep a lid on Osama bin Laden's activities and ensure that elements within its control do not export violence to the West. But the Taliban openly works against India's interests.

It is only normal for Western policy-makers to secure their national interests, not those of others. But some in India have been expecting the US to

come to New Delhi's help, whether on China's continuing strategic transfers to Islamabad or Pakistan's terrorism export. China and Pakistan cooperate with Washington on matters of concern to US interest. For example, Pakistan has helped arrest and extradite a number of Pakistani suspects to the US, and China has cut off all missile assistance to Iran but made it loud and clear that 'Pakistan is our Israel'. Such cooperation, however limited, ensures Washington will not add Pakistan to its list of state sponsors of terrorism or invoke its sanctions laws against Beijing.



Jiang Zemin in Pakistan: Enemy's friend is an enemy

Technology Control Regime. Beijing pledged to adhere to the MTCR's original guidelines, but the commitment has fallen by the wayside in relation to Pakistan. To this day, Beijing continues to mock NPT's Article I through its nuclear transfers to Pakistan. Moreover, US officials have stated that China is not fully complying with its Biological Weapons Convention obligations. Such a sign-and-violate approach played a role in the US Senate's rejection of the CTBT. China ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention only after it quietly disposed of its stockpile, like surrogate Pakistan, instead of admitting (as India did) that it was holding some chemical-weapon stocks.

India and the US have not been threatened by the same international rogues, or to the same extent. There is a major disparity in the level of threat they face. Roguish forces hold India's security hostage, while the threat from them to the US has always been small and easily manageable. In fact, when the US ran out of enemies post-Cold War, it ingeniously employed the rogue-states doctrine to conjure up various kinds of lurking threats, to protect its defence spending from deep cuts, and to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. More recently, the same doctrine has come handy to justify theatre and national missile defences, although the objectives of such defences are larger and long term.

In contrast, India has been preoccupied dealing with roguish acts against its security mounted by neighbours armed with nuclear weapons. India is placed in a unique situation. To its western neighbour, nuclear weapons clearly are a shield for adventurism, as it showed in Kargil. To its northern neighbour, deception is a central (and natural) element of strategy, which precludes conventional or nuclear transparency. It is ironic that, instead of halting its western neighbour before the International Court of Justice for staging aggression and terrorism, India got dragged before the ICJ for an incident arising from the Kargil adventure, until the court ruled it had no jurisdiction in the matter.

Roguish conduct will continue to plague Indian security. China's closest regional allies are Pakistan and North Korea, both militaristic scallywag states that Beijing rogishly employs for strategic objectives, the former against India and the latter against Japan. The dangers of reckless adventurism are inherent in both the choices Pakistan faces today: To either keep sinking, or do something remarkable to reverse its international fortunes and re-ignite nationalism at home. No rogue will sink without attempting to take its rival down with it.

Instant retribution has put 'rogue states' out of business in the West, prompting them to turn to safer, softer targets elsewhere. Roguish state and non-state actors, including the mushrooming *jihadi* groups, are likely to try and bring India's security under further pressure. This demands that India demonstrate the will and means to tackle such forces, and treat them in policy and action as rogues instead of asking others to label them 'terrorist'.



# US, allies seek 'gains' from N Korea

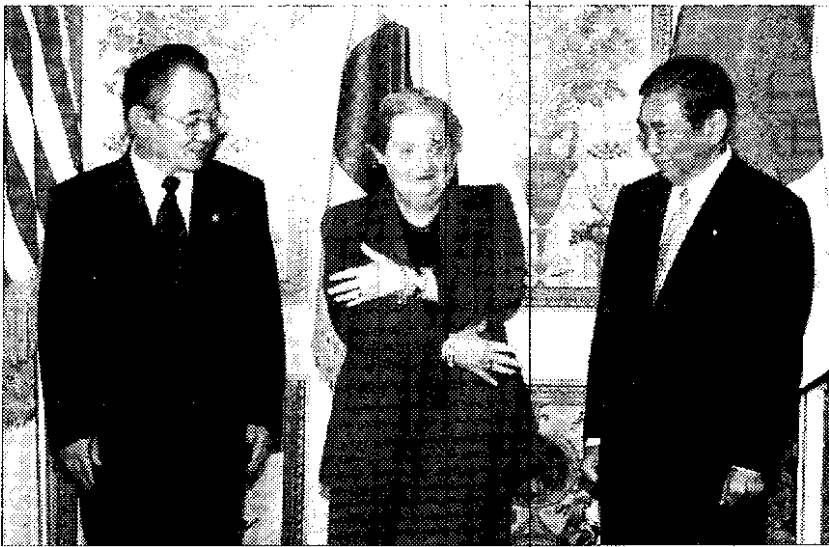
AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
SEOUL, OCT 25

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said on Wednesday that the United States, South Korea and Japan must stand firm in its dealings with North Korea to secure more concessions. Speaking after talks with the foreign ministers of South Korea and Japan, Lee Joung-Binn and Yohei Kono, Albright told a press conference: "Our unity is crucial until we make further gains."

No details were given of the talks, but Albright was to brief Washington's main Asian allies on details of her two days of talks this week in Pyongyang with North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il and other top officials. Albright said in Pyongyang that Kim Jong-Il had hinted the Stalinist country would curb its long-range missile launches.

A stadium extravaganza on Monday had featured an image of North Korea's Taepodong missile and Kim Jong-Il "immediately turned to me and quipped that this was the first satellite launch and would be the last," Albright said.

Part of the gala, which featured 1,00,000 performers, included a display of the August 1998



US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright (C) urges South Korean Foreign Minister Lee Joung-binn (L) and Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono to hold her hands at a Seoul hotel on Wednesday before a meeting to assess what she learned in Pyongyang and coordinate their policies about North Korea — AP/PTI

missile launch over Japan which North Korea insists was only a satellite launch. The South Korean foreign minister told the press conference: "We actively support the results of Albright's visit to North Korea, expecting it to make important progress in US-North Korea relations and also South-North relations and

relations will have a positive impact for Japan's normalisation talks," the Japanese foreign minister told the press conference.

Albright also briefly met South Korea's President Kim Dae-Jung after her arrival from Pyongyang on Wednesday morning. She was to hold a separate meeting with Kono later.

Japan-North Korea normalisation talks."

Japan is due to start new normalisation talks with North Korea in Beijing on October 30 but has lagged behind other nations so far. Kono, however, also stressed the need for close consultations between the three. "For the universal values of freedom, democracy and basic human rights in North Korea, we need to keep up our cooperation," he said. "We are convinced that the progress in US-North Korea

## Kim wanted to share Nobel with N Korea

REUTERS  
LONDON, OCT 25

SOUTH Korean President Kim Dae-jung said on Tuesday he would rather have shared his Nobel Peace Prize with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il.

He told the BBC in an interview that his drive for closer ties with Stalinist North Korea, culminating in June's historic summit in Pyongyang between the two nations, was a joint effort.

"I did think that it would have

been better had the chairman shared this prize with me, in particular since the main reason for my being given the award this year is the historic South-North Korean summit," Kim said.

"That summit was not just my own work, but the joint work with Chairman Kim," he added. Sixty-four-year-old Kim aims to bind the 70 million people of the two Koreas through business and social exchange.

The South Korean President's drive for democracy in Asia has

laid the groundwork for bringing North Korea in from the cold — though the two Korean states still remain technically at war, with more than a million soldiers stationed on the world's most heavily fortified border.

U S Secretary of State Madeleine Albright this week spent two days in the North Korean capital, Pyongyang. She is expected to recommend for or against a trip there by President Bill Clinton upon her return to Washington.

### A hotline for e-mail

**PYONGYANG:** North Korean leader Kim Jong-il showed he is no slouch in the new economy when he asked US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright for her E-mail address. Albright had told the North Korean leader at the end of a dinner on Tuesday to mark her landmark visit: "Pick up the phone anytime."

INDIAN EXPRESS

INDIAN EXPRESS

26 OCT 2000

U.S.-N.KOREA TIES / ALBRIGHT VISIT OPENS NEW CHAPTER

## Kim hints at missile curbs

18/10  
40-221  
PYONGYANG (NORTH KOREA), OCT. 24. The U.S. Secretary of State, Ms Madeleine Albright, and North Korean leader, Mr. Kim Jong-il, moved a little closer on Tuesday toward easing concerns over missiles and other irritants in a relationship marked by 50 years of enmity. "We made important progress and much work remains to be done", Ms Albright said in summing up six hours of historic talks over two days in a luxurious North Korean guest house.

U.S. officials said Mr. Kim seemed agreeable to working out restraints on long-range missiles. Ms Albright said she would report back to the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and he would decide whether the time was right for him to visit North Korea. Toasting Mr. Kim in the palatial Magnolia Hall where she was host for a parting dinner, Ms Albright was struck by the improbability of it all — a cordial visit to a communist land that the U.S., until recently, called a rogue state.

"I never expected to play the role of host for such a gathering as this", she said. An aide to Mr. Kim said in his toast that North Korea looked forward to more steps toward a reconciliation. The officials dined in a six-sided room in a vast hall glowing with brilliant light — all this in a State where many North Koreans, even near the capital, use candles and oil lamps in the face of an electricity shortage and poverty.

Ms Albright said Mr. Kim had raised the missile issue on Monday night while they attended a gymnastics performance. An image of a Taepo Dong I missile was flashed before the audience. "He quipped that this was the first satellite launched and it would be the last," she said. Asked if she interpreted that as a pledge for a permanent moratorium on missile launches, Ms Albright said, "I take what he said as serious as to his desire to move forward to resolve various questions." She did not elaborate, but said lower-level technical talks on the missile question would be held next week.

A State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Mr. Kim "accepted the idea of working out ways to achieve



The U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, addressing newsmen in Pyongyang on Tuesday. — Reuters

serious restraint on all long-range missiles."

Before opening the talks on Tuesday, Mr. Kim told Ms Albright, the first U.S. official he had ever met, "I don't think the three hours of discussions we had yesterday were enough to break the silence of 50 years." Ms Albright said they also discussed security issues, terrorism, human rights, missile for concrete steps to on the Korean peninsula that we work to overcome past and focus on a peoples." Ms Albright

Before returning he ruled a stop in Seoul South Korean and Jap meetings with Mr. Kim Albright ventured out a lunch hosted by a rural guest house. —

THE HINDU

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# If elected, Bush will withdraw U.S. from NATO peacekeeping missions

NEW YORK: Signalling a new division of labour in the western alliance, White House hopeful George W. Bush plans to withdraw the US from NATO peacekeeping missions, if elected president, his top advisor said.

The Republican presidential candidate's senior security advisor Condoleezza Rice said the United States in contrast would focus on deterring and fighting wars in the Persian Gulf, Asia and other distant trouble spots.

The remarks from the Bush campaign, reflect a possible future shift in the US approach to European adventures as the Texas governor has repeatedly stated in his speeches that peacekeeping in Bosnia and Kosovo would become a European responsibility, as could peacekeeping in other conflicts.

"When it comes to nation-building or civilian administration or indefinite peacekeeping, we do need for the Europeans to step up to their responsibilities," Mr Rice told *The New York Times* newspaper on Saturday.

In outlining his approach to redivision of NATO's responsibilities,

Mr Rice said Mr Bush would not immediately withdraw from the Balkans but would inform NATO that his goal was to turn over the entire responsibility of stationing peacekeeping troops to its European allies.

The United States would continue to provide intelligence, help with



Al Gore

George Bush

communications, transport and do other logistical work after withdrawing its peacekeeping troops from the troubled state.

Mr Bush's plan drew harsh fire from Democratic presidential candidate Al Gore and secretary of state Madeleine Albright.

With 17 days to go before the November 7 election polls showed Mr Bush with a modest lead over the vice president.

Mr Gore said Mr Bush's plan "could reflect a major and fundamental misunderstanding of the US role in the world" and warned it would lead to the end of NATO and could undermine peace in Europe. "I can't believe anyone who understands the importance of NATO could make such a proposal," Mr Gore added.

Mr Gore called Mr Bush's plan "indefensible," adding: "this would be an extremely serious mistake for the United States of America that would have grave repercussions on our leadership in the world and on the NATO alliance."

The United States sent 25,000 troops to help police the Balkans in 1995 after the war in Bosnia. Today the size of the U.S. force in Bosnia and Kosovo is down to 11,400 troops, less than one-fifth of the 65,000-member NATO peacekeeping force in the region and a fraction of the 120,000-member American military presence in Europe.

In a telephone conference call with reporters Ms Albright said that ending the U.S. role in Balkan peacekeeping would send a "very dangerous signal". (Agencies)

## PA, UNP reach pact to preserve stability of new Lankan govt.

COLOMBO: The ruling Peoples Alliance and the main opposition United National Party have reached an agreement to preserve the stability of the new PA government, which was formed this week, media reports said here on Sunday.

Both official and private media here carried reports quoting PA and UNP sources saying that Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickramanayake, who formed a coalition government after obtaining a three-seat majority had reached a working arrangement with UNP leaders to run his government without any problems for the next two years. According to the accord, the UNP which has 89 MPs in the 225-member Parliament would not confront the government and adopt a positive approach to enable it to function smoothly.

On its part, the government has agreed to appoint three independent commissions to conduct elections, administer police and other public services, which was a long-standing demand of the UNP. The government also agreed to bring in media reforms by removing criminal defamation, the official *Sunday Times* reported on Sunday. (PT)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

23 NOV 2000

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# Albright visit may break new ground

By F. J. Khergamvala

**TOKYO, OCT. 22.** The U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright's visit to Pyongyang from Monday is a reciprocation of the trip made to Washington by Vice-Marshall Jo Myong-rok a fortnight ago, and may result in an announcement to open a U.S. liaison office in the North Korean capital.

Heading a party of 40, Ms Albright will certainly meet the North Korean leader, Mr Kim Jong-Il, becoming the first U.S. Cabinet official to do so, publicly. In fact, one of the conditions for Mr Clinton receiving the number three North Korean official, Vice-Marshall Jo Myong-rok in the White House was that Ms Albright would make a return visit to Pyongyang, on the condition that Mr Kim Jong-Il receive her. Last year, the U.S. special coordinator for North Korea, Dr William Perry, went to North Korea but could not meet Mr Kim Jong-Il. Nearly 50 journalists too will fly to Pyongyang on a chartered plane.

Though there has been much speculation on this score, it is not yet certain that Ms Albright will open the door to a visit by Mr Bill Clinton. It is though significant that not a single U.S. or North Korean official has denied that a presidential visit is possible. In all likelihood, in a face-saving way, the North might have to bend considerably on missile testing and exports as well as again renounce terrorism in all its forms, before the U.S. agrees to announce a presidential visit.

Should Mr Clinton's visit be an-



**LOOKING AHEAD:** The U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, looks over the North Korean side during her visit to the guard post at the border village of Panmunjom, north of Seoul, in this Feb. 22, 1997 file photo.

nounced as one outcome of Ms Albright's mission, it is almost certain that the North would have conceded on the ongoing missile development programme and missile parts exports to West Asia and Pakistan which fetch Pyongyang an estimated \$ 500 millions each year. What is in all this for North Korea? Right now, the visit itself by a top U.S. official is a gain.

Though she will later be debriefed in Seoul by her South Korean and Japanese counterparts as well as meet the South Korean President, Mr Kim Dae Jung, Ms Albright's visit is as much meant to seize the initiative on North Korea as it is to make it appear as an

endorsement of the engagement policies pursued by Mr Kim Dae Jung. Even if Mr Clinton's visit does not materialise, the visit of the Secretary of State is a real plum for a regime that is dubbed a "state of concern", or a "rogue state" in earlier American parlance. The North is in a hurry to seek an endorsement from the highest levels of the only super-power before political changes occur in Washington DC. Notably, the two countries have compressed the planning for the Albright mission into just 10 days.

An announcement about opening a U.S. liaison office would not be a great surprise even if it is the

event that grabs TV headlines. The measure is provided in a step by step time table in the 1994 Agreed Framework and now that the North and South held a summit, there is little reason why such a semi-embassy should not be set up.

Pyongyang has stuck to the 1994 deal. It has recently stockpiled all the spent fuel rods from its old graphite moderated reactors. This safeguard against producing plutonium was an essential step before the U.S.-led consortium called Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO) agreed on replacing existing nuclear reactors with the two 1,000 MW light water reactors, at an approximate \$ 5.5 billions.

Some countries that are reluctant to build immediate bridges with the North because of domestic opposition on account of Pyongyang's record on missiles proliferation and the type of Government, may use the high-level U.S.-North Korea contacts to advance towards setting up diplomatic ties.

East Asia watchers have found South Korea, Japan and the European nations quite divided and uncertain on the question of establishing ties with the North. France is reluctant. Britain, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain did make favourable noises at the recently concluded Asia-Europe summit in Seoul, perhaps out of politeness to the host leader. Italy, Austria, Sweden, Finland, Portugal and Denmark already have diplomatic relations with Pyongyang.

## Destabilising forces on the rise: China

By Amit Baruah

**SINGAPORE, OCT. 22.** China believes that "destabilising factors" have increased in the Asia-Pacific region — with power politics and the Cold War mentality, which run counter to the trend of the times — remaining active.

In its contribution to the first-ever ASEAN Regional Forum Annual Security Outlook 2000, the Chinese have referred to the fallacies of "new interventionism" based on "human rights overriding sovereign rights" and "humanitarian intervention".

These, in Beijing's view, were "threatening to undermine equality of sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and other basic norms governing international relations."

Individual contributions from different ARF member States form part of the Security Outlook and have been compiled in a booklet without editing.

Beijing felt that during 1999, the Asia-Pacific region was by and large "relaxed", but destabilising factors were on the increase. "Developments in the region showed that peace and development remain the two major tasks for mankind in the 21st century."

In the Chinese view, there have been "some readjustments and changes in the relations among major powers" against the backdrop of the complex and changing international situation.

"Despite ups and downs, their (major powers) relations are still characterised by seeking compromise amidst struggle, promoting cooperation while competing with each other, identifying common interests and averting full-scale confrontation," the Chinese input in the Security Outlook stated.

On India, the report contained one sentence: "There have been continued improvement and some development in China-India relations, including the launching of bilateral security dialogue." In the case of Pakistan, which is not an ARF member, the formulation was even shorter: "Friendly ties between China and Pakistan continued to develop."

The Chinese have argued that the old security concept based on military alliances and achieved through the build-up of military strength, did not guarantee international security, let alone building lasting peace.

"As a permanent member of th

Security Council and a big country in Asia-Pacific, China attaches great importance to and is committed to regional peace, stability and development," the Security Outlook said.

"Stability and prosperity in China itself is the biggest contribution to regional peace and development. Over the past year, reform and opening up in China continued to deepen and various reforms went on smoothly. Efforts to expand domestic demand have been successful. China enjoys social and political stability, a sustained economic growth and booming development in all fields," the report said.

It said that a stable, developed and unified China was a positive factor for peace and development in the Asia-Pacific region.

"There is only one China in the world, and Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory... we are firmly opposed to any splittist activities of supporting or conniving at the Taiwan authorities..." the report stated.

On the crucial issue of the South China Sea, it claimed that China had maintained a highly restrained, responsible and constructive attitude in the area, adhering to friendly consultations in resolving disputes with the countries

## Clinton brokers fragile peace, ends W. Asia face-off

SHARM EL-SHEIKH: U.S. President Bill Clinton announced on Tuesday that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat had agreed to end 20 days of spiralling violence and resume the faltering peace process.

Spelling out the achievements of the make-or-break summit, he said, "They have agreed to take immediate concrete measures to end the current confrontation, ensure an end to violence and incitement, maintain calm and prevent (the) recurrence of recent events."

Both sides would act to return the situation to what it was before the crisis, Mr Clinton added, eliminating points of friction including ending Israel's closure of the Palestinian territories and the opening of Gaza airport.

The U.S. and the United Nations would set up fact-finding committees on the events of recent weeks, he said. "There must be a pathway back to negotiations and a resumption of efforts" to achieve a permanent status accord, Mr Clinton said. Washington would consult with the parties concerned over the next two weeks on how to move forward.

Mr Barak and Mr Arafat signed no cease-fire agreement and made no statement themselves at the end of the two days of talks brokered by Mr Clinton, with UN secretary-general Kofi Annan and other leaders. There were no smiles or handshakes for the cameras, but officials said the two men did shake hands. Their attitude towards each other was described as "chilly". There were flashes of anger visible at a foreign ministers' meeting on another floor.

U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright, in a CNN interview, said she expected an immediate ceasefire as a result of the agreement.

Mr Clinton said Mr Barak and Mr Arafat had agreed to call publicly for an end to the violence that has killed more than 100 people in two weeks. "We made important commitments here today against a backdrop of tragedy and crisis," he said. But, Mr Clinton added, "We should have no illusions about the difficulties that await us."

Mr Barak said the test of the agreement would be in its implementation. "The coming days will tell (us) whether we still have a partner," he said, referring to the Israeli-Palestinian

partnership' in seeking peace.

"If we do find the violence declining, that will be an excellent thing. If it doesn't, then we will know what to do," Mr Barak said.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who opened the summit, pointedly blamed Israel for the recent violence and said the outcome "may not meet the expectations of our people". However, it was a step towards resuming permanent peace efforts "after the region is stabilised", he said.

Mr Annan said Mr Barak and Mr Arafat had stepped back from the abyss and renewed their commitment to resolve their differences by peaceful means. He said the summit had achieved significant agreement on security and on renewing the peace process and fact-finding. "It has not been easy. Feelings run high on both sides. Mutual mistrust is deep," he said, cautioning both sides against the further use of violent language.

The closing session came against the backdrop of more violence in Gaza, as hundreds of Palestinian settlers threw stones and firebombs at an Israeli border crossing, drawing a return of fire that injured ten demonstrators. (Agencies)

Reuters

indiatimes.com P011



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, walks through the Rose Garden at the White House with the Bangladesh Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, as they head to the Oval Office for a brief meeting on Thursday. — AP

## U.S., Dhaka to sign treaty

WASHINGTON, OCT. 20. United States and Bangladesh will expedite the signing of an extradition treaty to facilitate deportation of three former senior Bangladesh military officers, wanted in the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, who have taken refuge in the U.S.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, rounded off her four-day stay in Washington with a 30-minute meeting with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, at the White House yesterday where both leaders expressed satisfaction over the progress made in the negotiations to facilitate signing of the treaty. Ms Hasina, who had taken up with Mr. Clinton the issue of extradition of the three former military officers when he visited Dhaka last March, also had a meeting with the Attorney General, Ms Janet Reno, where the issue was discussed threadbare.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting between Mr. Clinton and Ms Hasina, the White House spokesperson, Mr. Jake Siewart, said the U.S. had asked the Bangladesh Government to provide certain information in this regard and that had reached the U.S. Justice Department recently. He, however, did not disclose the nature of information sought by the Justice Department. — UNI

THE HINDU

21 OCT 2000

# Bin Laden not behind US ship blast: Taliban

Kabul, Oct. 17: Afghanistan's Taliban on Monday said Saudi dissident Osama Bin Laden was not behind the blast that ripped through a US destroyer at Aden, killing 17 sailors last week.

Information minister Qadratullah Jamal said Bin Laden was living under surveillance in Afghanistan and would not have been able to conduct such an operation from such a distance.

Mr Jamal was reacting to media reports, with some newspapers predicting the US might launch a strike against Afghanistan, which has harboured America's number one enemy since 1996.

"This is not true that there is the hand of Osama in the Yemen explosion. The world knows where Osama is. His operations are banned," Mr Jamal told journalists.

Mr Jamal said the militia's guest could

not travel abroad nor did he have access to communication facilities.

Stressing that the US had no right to attack Afghanistan, he said the Taliban had not noticed any signs that Washington would do so. He added it was still early to say how the Taliban religious regime would react if attacked by Washington.

The minister reaffirmed Afghanistan would not hand over Laden for trial as the alleged mastermind in the 1998 US embassy bombings in East Africa that killed over 200 people.

Meanwhile suspected terrorist Osama Bin Laden on Tuesday issued a terse warning to the "enemies of Islam," an apparent reference to the United States, Israel and the Saudi royal family.

In a statement published in Pakistan's Urdu-language newspaper, the *Jang*, Bin

Laden warned the United States not to attack Afghanistan, where he is living, in an attempt to target him.

Since the suicide bombing last week that destroyed a US Navy vessel and killed 17 Americans off the coast of Yemen, newspapers here have carried almost daily stories about a possible retaliatory strike against Afghanistan by the United States.

While there has been no credible claim of responsibility for the attack on the USS *Cole*, which was waiting to refuel in Yemen, immediate suspicion fell on Bin Laden and his organisation, Al Qaida.

"The dream to kill me will never be completed," Bin Laden was quoted as saying. The newspaper referred to him as an Arab freedom fighter. "I am not afraid of the American threats against me," he said. "As long as I am alive there will be no rest for the enemies of Islam. I will con-

tinue my mission against them." The statement was apparently issued from Kandahar in southern Afghanistan, the headquarters of the country's ruling Taliban.

Even the Taliban, who have denied Bin Laden's involvement in the Yemen attack, seemed concerned about a possible US strike.

In Afghanistan the Taliban spokesman and information minister Qadratullah Jamal warned the United States against attacking.

"There is no reason for the United States to hurt the innocent people of Afghanistan," Mr Jamal said on Monday in the Afghan capital. "After 20 years of war we want only to have an Islamic system for our people. We should not be the target of the United States," he said. (AP/AF/)

## Chechen rebels to fight Israelis

By Vladimir Radyuhin

**MOSCOW, OCT. 15.** A Chechen rebel commander is planning to send militants to West Asia to help Palestinians fight Israel, Russian security sources said.

Russian news agencies quoted sources in the Federal Security Service as confirming reports that the notorious Chechen warlord, Shamil Bassayev, is getting ready 150 militants for taking part in an "Islamic jihad to liberate Jerusalem."

A Chechen rebel Internet site announced on Friday plans to send 150 militants to Palestine "to the aid of Hamas and Islamic jihad" which are fighting Israel's security forces. In a separate report from Washington, the Far-East news agency quoted a Congress expert as saying Chechen rebels were building up a force of 153 fighters who had undergone training in Jordan, Turkey, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The fighters included both Chechens and mercenaries from a

number of countries, which made it easier for them to enter Israel on foreign passports in order to stage terrorist attacks. A Kremlin spokesman for Chechnya dismissed the reports as "a Chechen propaganda trick and a public relations move." Mr. Sergei Yastirzhembsky told the Interfax news agency that the Chechen rebels who confronted overwhelmed Russian forces were hardly in a position to send dozens of fighters to West Asia on the threshold of winter.

"Bassayev's statement was prompted by dwindling interest towards Chechen terrorists on the part of their Arab sponsors," Mr. Yastirzhembsky said. "By voicing solidarity with Arabs, Chechen commanders just want to remind of themselves."

However, on Saturday, Russian security sources confirmed Chechen plans to dispatch militants to West Asia. They said the decision was taken at a meeting of Chechen rebel commanders a few days ago.

## Clinton to attend summit

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

**Washington, OCT. 15.** The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, will attend the emergency West Asia summit in Egypt that is primarily aimed at ending the violence that has claimed at least 100 lives so far.

Welcoming the summit, Mr. Clinton said, "Now, we should be under no illusions. The good news is the parties have agreed to meet and the situation appears to be calmer."

Before leaving for Denver, Mr. Clinton also said that the path ahead was difficult and that after the "terrible" events of the last few days, the situation was still quite tense. "But President Mubarak and I are convinced that we must make every effort to break the cycle of violence."

The Secretary of State, Mrs. Madeleine Albright, and the West Asia negotiator, Mr. Dennis Ross, will accompany him.

No one in the administration is looking beyond the stopping of the present cycle of violence; and the clear impression is that the summit has its hands full on this issue itself.

One of the top items on the agenda is in the agreement of a "fact finding mechanism". It is being pointed out that the environment between the two sides is poisoned and vicious and quite similar to the days of the 1967 war.

From Mr. Clinton's point of view, it is with a note of disappointment that he is witnessing the serious efforts for peace thus far starting to unravel.

At one time, there was the hope that a last West Asia accord between the Israelis and the Palestinians could be initiated before Mr. Clinton leaves office on January 20, 2001. Now this is no longer a subject that is talked about in any great interest.

The President, after his speaking and fundraising engagements in the West Coast, returns to Washington on Sunday. He will leave for Egypt later in the day.

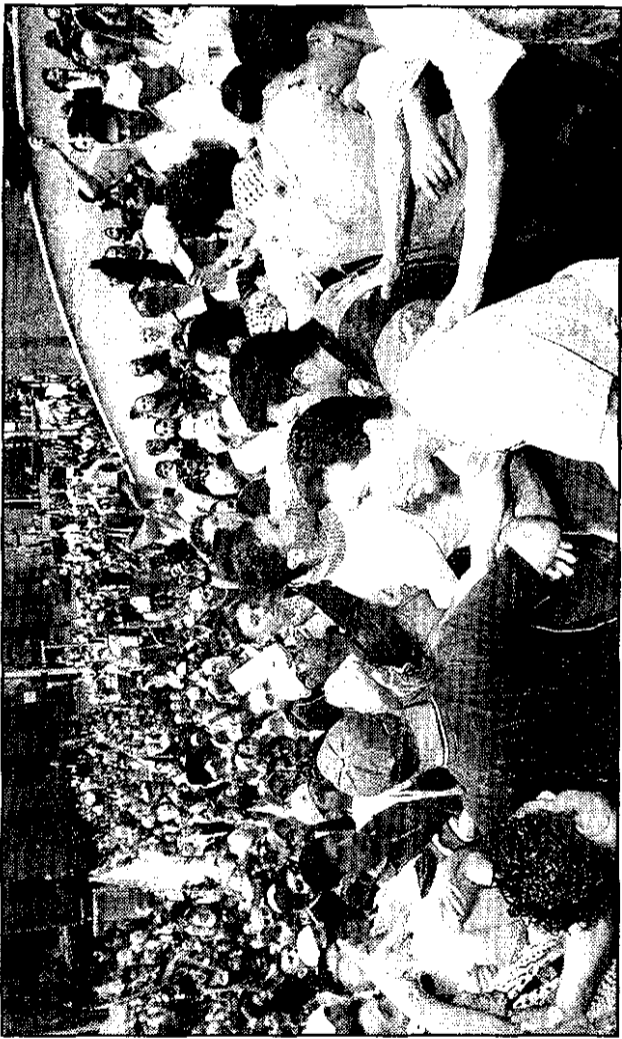
After the summit, he is expected to return home by Wednesday in time for the memorial service for those who died in the attack on the warship the USS Cole.

THE HINDU

15 OCT 2000



# Palestinians attempt to storm US consulate in Sydney



Palestinian protest organisers attempt to hold a group of radical protesters trying to storm the US consulate in Sydney on Sunday. Photo AFP

Sydney, October 15

**P**ALESTINIAN ANGER spilled onto the streets of Sydney as pre-Palestinian demonstrators burned US and Israeli flags, accusing Israel of fomenting the latest outbreak of violence in the West Asia. A group of some 20 men later broke from a 2,500-strong crowd of protesters and tried to storm the United States consulate. But New South Wales police, who formed a cordon around the consulate managed to force them back.

The protest was organised by an umbrella group of local Palestinian, Arab and Muslim organisations in response to continued violence in the Middle East. Sections of the crowd chanted "Allahu Akbar" (God is Greatest) and "Dawa with Arab jihad, or holy war, to push the Israelis out of disputed lands."

Muslim clerics at the demonstration called for regaining control of the site of the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, to which Jews also lay claim as the temple mount. One demonstra-

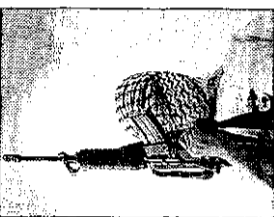
tor said the Palestinians were in the same situation as the Jewish diaspora was in the past. Another protesters brandished a burning poster of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak. Some children carried placards of Barak caricatured as a pig with blood dripping from his mouth.

The crowd included many people from Sydney's Palestinian and Lebanese origin communities. There were no reports of injuries or arrests.

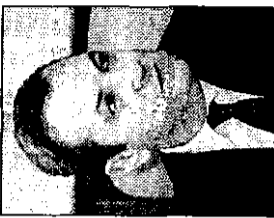
Meanwhile, preparations were under way in Cairo for an emergency West Asia crisis summit set for tomorrow between Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak aimed at securing a ceasefire and restarting the peace process.

Israeli and Palestinians negotiators also both expressed only modest hopes for the session's outcome.

The Israeli PM Ehud Barak has said that the tripartite middle east summit is aimed at putting an end to violence and terrorist activities and not just a work towards resumption of peace talks.



A masked Palestinian gunman stands guard on a rooftop during a rally in Hebron on Saturday and (right) Israeli PM Barak at a Cabinet meeting discussing strategy for the summit.



# Clinton scales down expectations from Middle East summit talks

S. Rajagopalan

Washington, October 15

They already have three Israeli soldiers in their grasp. Even before this twist, Mr Clinton, in sharp contrast to his optimistic disposition until recently, cautioned against "illusions" of a major breakthrough. Reflecting on the "heart-breaking" violence of the past fortnight, he said: "I have seen so much progress in the last seven and a half years, so it has been a very difficult and painful experience."

While the good news is that the parties have agreed to meet, the path ahead is difficult, Mr Clinton said. According to him, the central objective now should be to end the violence and get the parties to agree on a fact-finding mechanism

to see how the current disturbances began and how a recurrence could be prevented.

It is generally recognised here that resumption of negotiations for a peace settlement will have to wait until after a cooling off period. In July, Mr Clinton was closeted for a good fortnight with Mr Arafat and Mr Barak at Camp David but the marathon exercise failed to produce results.

Tomorrow's summit is being viewed as one of larger significance for another reason. It will be a more broad-based exercise. Apart from Mr Clinton, Palestine



leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, the participants include UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Mr Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah.

Ahead of the summit, the Palestinians and Israelis have set their terms for talks of a larger nature. Mr Arafat is firm on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the entrances of Palestinian cities and an international commission to go into Israel's "excess use of force". Mr Barak insists on an end to the Palestinian street violence if the talks are to proceed.

Meanwhile, on the domestic plane, Mr Clinton was wrestling with the aftermath of the bomb attack on the naval destroyer, USS Cole, as the number of American sailors killed in the incident rose to 17 as 11 of those listed missing earlier are now presumed dead.

As the body bags were about to arrive home, the chilling thought here was that this was the worst attack on the US armed forces since the 1996 bombing of an Air Force barracks in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 Americans. Mr Clinton is set to return home from Egypt in time for a memorial service at the US naval headquarters on Wednesday.

There was no official word yet from the State Department or the Pentagon on the attackers, but FBI investigators seemed to focus on Islamic radical groups owing allegiance to Saudi terrorist Osama bin Laden as also a group reportedly sympathetic to Iraq.

EMBASSY IN PAKISTAN SHUT INDEFINITELY

# U.S. orders closure of 37 missions worldwide

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 14. The Clinton administration has not said much officially on the status of the ongoing investigations into the blast in the USS Cole at Aden that left 17 sailors dead. But against the backdrop of the attack and the ongoing unrest in the West Bank and the Gaza, the State Department has ordered the closure of at least 37 Embassies and Consulates for the weekend.

"Obviously in the light of the history of attacks you have to be concerned of additional attacks. We have also sent messages to embassies worldwide to be careful, to be vigilant, and... to keep in very close touch with the American communities," the State Department spokesman, Mr. Richard Boucher, said. The closure of some diplomatic premises did not mean Washington was withdrawing in the face of terrorism, he added.

Several U.S. posts in West Asia, the Persian Gulf area and North Africa have been closed for business until Monday. Diplomatic missions in Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, Senegal, Mauritania, Djibouti, South Africa and Sierra Leone have also been affected.

The administration may not be harping on the words terrorism and terrorists, but there is little doubt about what caused the blast in the American destroyer that killed so many sailors and seriously injured several others. Western diplomats in Aden were quoted reports as saying that the explosion seemed to be the work of a well-organised group with good connections in the Port of Aden where the USS Cole stopped for re-fuelling.

Bomb experts, in the view of Admiral Vernon Clark, Chief of

Naval Operations, determined that the blast was triggered from outside. This is being emphasised to discount one theory that the weapons being carried by the ship may have caused the explosion. Two suicide bombers are said to have carried out the attack, the worst since the 1996 bombing of U.S. military barracks in Saudi Arabia that left 19 dead.

According to a report in *The New York Times*, the U.S. received a "general" warning of a possible attack on a warship last month, but as this lacked specificity "it got put on the shelf". The focus of investigation is an Yemeni contractor in charge of refuelling U.S. warships in Aden and two Islamic outfits claiming responsibility for the attack.

In the initial phases of the investigation and amidst many claims of responsibility for the incident, the U.S. has not taken Osama bin Laden off its list of suspects.

## Pak. condemns Israeli action

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, OCT. 14. The United States Embassy here has been

## Barak, Arafat to attend summit

By Kesava Menon

MANAMA (Bahrain), OCT. 14. The Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak, and the Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, have agreed to attend a summit to be hosted by the Egyptian President, Mr. Hosni Mubarak, in Sharm-el Sheikh on Monday.

The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, is also expected to attend although he is awaiting confirmation that the Israeli and Palestinian leaders are clear in their minds as to what the summit is to achieve. Although both sides continue to make demands on what they feel the summit should achieve, it would appear that the limited objective of firming up a ceasefire is being sought at present.

## Saudi plane hijacked, lands in Baghdad

DAMASCUS, OCT. 14. A hijacker today seized a Saudi civilian plane, Flight 115, carrying 111 people and ordered it to fly to Syria and then Iraq. The plane first landed in Damascus after initially having been refused permission to do so, Damascus airport officials said.

Later, Syrian State television announced that the plane had taken off for the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, after being stationed at the tarmac here for about one hour.

A Baghdad report said the plane, hijacked en route from Jeddah to London, landed at 4.45 p.m. (GMT) at the Baghdad airport, where security forces surrounded it. The lone hijacker talking through the pilot said he had explosives on-board.

Royal member aboard

A Saudi official said a member of the Saudi royal family was among 95 passengers on-board. Prince Fahd bin Abdullah Al-Saud, Assistant Minister of Defence and Aviation, did not identify the royal family member.

He confirmed reports that the aircraft was heading to Baghdad and said most of the passengers were Britons. Prince Fahd said the plane was also carrying 16 crew when it was commandeered, apparently by a lone hijacker.

The United States is trying to determine if any Americans were on-board, a White House spokesperson, Mr. Jake Siewert, said. The President, Mr. Bill Clinton, was briefed and Washington was "checking" if any of the passengers were U.S. citizens. — Reuters, AP

THE HINDU

15 OCT 2000

# U.S. closes down embassies in Pak, 21 other nations

WASHINGTON: The United States has decided to close down its embassies and consulates in 22 nations temporarily, apprehending threats from terrorists and anti-American mobs agitated by the developments in West Asia. It includes those in Pakistan, which has been witness to a series of anti-U.S. demonstrations.



Bill Clinton

The State department spokesman Richard Boucher said 31 embassies and consulates in Africa, West Asia and South Asia were ordered to be closed down temporarily on Friday. In South Asia, Pakistan is the only country where American officials are being perceived to be in danger. Bangladesh, and Indonesia, the other two Muslim-majority nations, have not been affected by the "religious fanaticism" that has

gripped the West Asian countries and Pakistan, officials said. Political and religious leaders have joined forces around Pakistan to condemn the "atrocities" committed by Israeli forces over the last two weeks. Clerics have urged Muslim countries, especially those in the Arab world, to settle their differences and formulate a united policy to counter "Israeli aggression".

"Jehad is a must against Israel," said Mufti Jamil, a leader of the fundamentalist Jamiat Ulema-Islam party. Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has expressed her solidarity with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. In Karachi, about 100 activists of the radical National Islamic Front torched an effigy of U.S. President Bill Clinton at a rally on Saturday and protested against the Israeli gunship attacks on Palestinians. "Mr Clinton is responsible for the murder of Palestinian people," said NIF leader Usman Siddiqui. (Agence)

## Barak, Arafat agree to talks sans conditions

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat agreed on Saturday to attend a West Asia peace summit in Egypt, without preconditions, within the next 48 hours, paving the way for an end to the violence of the past two weeks.

Apart from Mr Arafat and Mr Barak, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and King Abdullah of Jordan are likely to attend the summit.



Arafat



Barak

Mr Mubarak said United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan, King Abdullah, Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov and European Union foreign affairs and security chief Javier Solana, as well as officials from France, Spain, had expressed their willingness to take part in the meet.

Mr Annan said no preconditions had been lodged by either the Palestinians or the Israelis, although he added that there had been "suggestions" for "certain demands".

## Saudi airliner hijacked

CAIRO: A Saudi airliner on way from Jeddah to London was commandeered by a lone hijacker to Baghdad on Saturday. It was initially flown to Damascus before being diverted to Baghdad, where it landed at 4.45 p.m. GMT.

A Saudi Arabian official said a member of the Saudi royal family was among the mostly British passengers on board. The plane has a 16- or 17-member crew. Some reports said the plane was carrying 111 passengers.

The crew of the Boeing 777-200 had called the control tower of Cairo airport at 2.55 p.m. (6.25 p.m. IST) to inform it of the hijack. They did not give any details.

The Cairo office of Saudi Arabian Airlines had no immediate comment on the news. Egyptian officials said Cairo has informed the Saudi civil aviation authorities of the incident. (Agence)

15 OCT 2000

AD-18

# Clinton not to attend summit

14/10

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, OCT. 13. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has said that he will not attend any emergency summit in West Asia unless the Israelis and the Palestinians publicly committed themselves to ending the latest cycle of violence. Egypt, which initially was reluctant to host a summit prior to a meeting of Arab leaders next week, is now said to be willing to host such a meeting that will include the U.S.

On Thursday, the administration had to grapple with not only the terrorist attack on its naval ship stationed in Yemen but the Israeli retaliation on the West Bank and the Gaza following the lynching of two soldiers by Palestinians. Mr. Clinton has other plans for the rest of the week which included speaking and fund-raising activities. He has cancelled visits to Missouri and Arkansas and the White House has said a decision about his trip to the West Coast would be made later. The administration, which has been taken aback by the scale of violence in West Asia, is now trying to persuade the Israelis and the Palestinians to pick up the pieces of the peace process.

Mr. Clinton had hoped that a peace accord between the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak and the Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat would be the pinnacle of his eight-year foreign policy. That, even administration officials concede, is now a distant dream with efforts to control and stop the violence taking precedence. Washington is now keen to see the

lines of communication between the Palestinians and the Israelis opened once more. "To think that we can go from where we are right back into peace-making isn't realistic. The wounds that exist on both sides is quite deep," a senior administration official said.

On Thursday, Mr. Clinton spoke repeatedly with Mr. Arafat, Mr. Barak, the Egyptian President, the King of Jordan, the British Prime Minister and the U.N. Secretary-General. "All the leaders share the President's concern that we have to bring down the violence," a spokesman of the National Security Council said.

UPI reports from UN:

At the U.N., the Security Council has decided against formally acting on the fast deteriorating situation after the U.S. signalled that it would take a tough stand and veto any new resolution.

The Council's decision yesterday to wait-and-watch the situation for the time being came even as diplomats and officials expressed fears that the violence could intensify.

The 15-member Council, which twice briefly considered the situation behind closed doors yesterday, rejected the request for an immediate meeting by the U.N. Palestinian observer, Mr. Nasser al-Kidwa, who threatened to take the issue to the 188-member General Assembly if the Council failed to act.

The U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Richard Holbrooke, opposed any further involvement of the Council, saying "I want to make it absolutely clear that if there is a resolution, we will veto."

THE HINDU

13 OCT 2000

# Attack on U.S. warship kills 17

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, Oct. 13. The U.S. administration today warned that it would not remain a silent spectator after a powerful explosion ripped a hole in a U.S. Navy Destroyer in the Yemeni port of Aden, killing at least 17 sailors on Thursday.

According to an AFP report from London, a radical Muslim group, Mohammed's Army, today claimed responsibility for the attack. In his initial reaction, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, said, "If, as it now appears, this was an act of terrorism, it was a despicable and cowardly act. We will find out who was responsible and hold them accountable." The President's words were echoed by senior officials of the State Department and the Pentagon.

The USS Cole, carrying about 350 sailors, was refuelling in Aden, 300 km south of the capital

Sanaa, at the time of the attack. American military planes evacuated 22 of the injured from Yemen to Germany for medical treatment. Soon after, the British Embassy in Sanaa was extensively damaged by an explosion overnight, but no one was hurt.

The Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, said the incident did not mean that the U.S. would "retreat from our responsibilities" in the region. "We are operating in a world that is filled with a variety of threats. But that does not mean that we can crawl into an ostrich-like mode. We are eagles," Ms. Albright said.

She also asked the people not to jump to conclusions; that she had talked to the President of Yemen and that he had pledged all cooperation. Mr. Ali Abdullah Saleh told American television that his country did not harbour terrorist elements and that he did not

think the attack was a terrorist one. "No one should assume they can attack us with impunity. If, as it appears, it was the act of terrorists, then we will do everything in our power to track them down and hold them accountable," the Defence Secretary, Mr. William Cohen, said at a press briefing.

Officials said a small boat helping the USS Cole with mooring lines might have been involved in what is being seen as suicide bombing. Two men on the small boat are said to have stood at attention just before the blast.

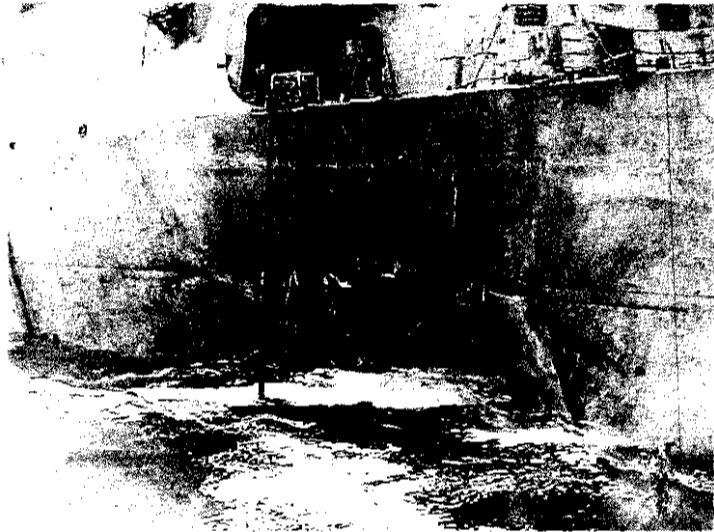
The Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Mr. John Warner, said that a terrorist group possibly linked to Osama bin Laden, claimed to have carried out the attack on the USS Cole. "A known terrorist group in Yemen is now trying to claim it is responsible."

Navy officials also said explosives experts who examined the damaged hull concluded that the blast came from an external source, adding to evidence that the explosion was deliberate.

## Seven embassies closed

NAIROBI, Oct. 13. The U.S. today ordered its diplomatic missions in South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal and Djibouti to temporarily close as a result of the escalating West Asia crisis, a U.S. official told AFP here.

The State Department ordered the closures in telegrams sent to the various embassies, said the official, who asked not to be named. Mr. Tom Hart, Nairobi Embassy spokesman, said the order had taken effect at about 10 a.m. in Nairobi. "Everybody was told to go home," he said.



A U.S. Navy-released picture shows the damage sustained on the port side of the guided missile destroyer, USS Cole, in a bomb attack in the port of Aden, Yemen, on Thursday. — AP

THE HINDU

14 OCT 2000

## Clinton wants to reduce chances of Indo-Pak N-war

Washington, October 11

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton has said that one of the goals of his presidency has been avoiding a nuclear flare-up between India and Pakistan. HF-13 (A) 10

"I wanted to try to minimise the turbulence, the possibility of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan, which is something that was not right for my involvement until rather late in my term", the President said during an interview with author Joe Klein in New York, the transcript of which has been released by the White House.

Speaking at a different forum, the signing ceremony at the White House of the Bill to establish permanent normal trading relations with China, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright listed "the opening of a new chapter in our relations with India" as one of Clinton's accomplishments during his presidency.

Clinton said he regretted the botched US military operation in Somalia that he approved but insisted he would have ordered a more massive offensive

against Somali warlord Mohammad Farah comparable to US action in the gulf or the cruise missile action against international terrorist Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan.

"When we lost our soldiers in Somalia, it was a very sad thing. But that happened, and I hope that Congress will never decline to put people in peacekeeping operations because of it, because basically our guys did a terrific job there." Clinton recalled the then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen (Colin) Powell as telling him that the Somali warlord should be arrested. "We've got a 50 per cent chance of getting him, and a 25 per cent chance of getting him alive. And so, he said, 'I think you ought to do it.' And I said, 'okay'," the President told the interviewer.

Clinton said such US operations do not preclude America's involvement in peacekeeping efforts. "But it means if you go beyond the normal parameters that you decide on the front end, then the United States has to operate in a very different way."

(PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

12 OCT 2000

# Bill seals US trade relations with China

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Adam Entous

WASHINGTON 11 OCTOBER

WSU 17/10  
PRESIDENT BILL Clinton signed into law on Tuesday a historic Bill granting permanent normal trade relations to China and despatched his top trade negotiator for urgent talks with Premier Zhu Rongji in hopes of settling disputes that threaten Beijing's application to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Approved by the Congress over stiff opposition from labour and human rights groups, the legislation ends a 20-year annual ritual of reviewing China's trade status and guarantees Chinese goods the same low-tariff access to the US market as products from nearly every other nation.

"This is a good economic deal for America," Clinton said at a ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House. "It will increase our exports and over the long run will strengthen our economic position in the world. But I think by far the most important reason to ratify this agreement is the potential it gives us to build a safer, more integrated world."

In exchange for permanent US trade benefits, China agreed to open a wide range of markets — from agriculture to telecommunications

— under the terms of a landmark agreement that the White House hoped will usher Beijing into the Geneva-based WTO later this year.

Clinton has made China's accession to the organisation, which sets global trading rules, one of his last foreign policy objectives, arguing that opening the vast Chinese marketplace will benefit both the US economy and national security.

But US and European trade officials said China's bid to enter the WTO before the year-end may be in peril after talks in Geneva stalled over how Beijing will implement WTO rules on intellectual property and meet other obligations. Diplomats said the stalemate could delay China's entry until well into 2001, after Clinton's term ends.

Tuesday's signing was a major victory for U.S. companies like Microsoft Corp and Boeing Co, as well as US farmers' groups, which hoped the deal will result in billions of dollars in new sales in the Chinese marketplace, potentially the world's largest, with 1.3 billion consumers.

It was a defeat for labour unions and other critics of Beijing, who argued that granting permanent normal trade relations would strengthen a communist regime that abuses its workers, threatens Taiwan, spreads weapons of mass

destruction and allegedly stole US nuclear secrets.

But enactment of permanent normal trade relations with China does not mean Beijing can immediately enter the WTO.

Clinton's top negotiator trade representative Charlene Barshefsky, conceded last week that Beijing might not join the WTO this year because of the slow progress of talks in Geneva.

But she hopes to spur negotiations when she meets with Zhu on Thursday in Beijing. Key US lawmakers warned the White House against making special concessions to secure China's entry before Clinton left office in January.

**Turning point in relations:** Granting permanent normal trade relations to China marks a turning point in relations between the world's richest nation and its most populous. Comparisons have been drawn with President Richard Nixon's milestone 1972 visit to China and the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1979.

Under the pact, Beijing promised to give US businesses unprecedented access to its markets. Tariffs on computers and other information technology products will be eliminated by 2005.

— Reuters

The Economic Times

12 OCT 2000

## U.S.-Indonesia tensions mount

By Amit Baruah

SINGAPORE, OCT. 30. The Indonesian police today questioned some Muslim leaders for visiting hotels in the city of Solo and asking hotel managements to tell American guests to quit their country.

The development came amid an exchange of words between senior Indonesian leaders and the American Embassy in Jakarta with Mr. Robert Gelbard, Ambassador, personally under fire.

With the President, Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, and the Foreign Minister, Mr. Alwi Shihab, rejecting demands from a Parliamentary Committee that Mr. Gelbard be declared *persona non grata*, tensions between the Indonesian establishment and the U.S. continue to mount.

It all started with the Indonesian Defence Minister, Mr. Mohammad Mahfud, accusing Mr. Gelbard of trying to influence the appointment of the new Army Chief.

The response from the U.S. has been quick

-- all consular services stand suspended amid sullen responses from the American embassy.

"The United States embassy is deeply disappointed by the actions of senior Indonesian Government officials who seem determined to create a rift in an otherwise historically strong relationship," the U.S. embassy has said in a statement. Biting out at Mr. Mahfud, the statement said: "The Embassy laments that the Defence Minister's repeatedly false accusatory statements, along with those of other Cabinet level officials are contributing to a disinformation campaign that is creating a rapidly deteriorating environment hostile to U.S. interests in Indonesia, including investment and tourism."

Clearly, there is nothing "diplomatic" about the statements emanating from the Indonesian Government representatives and Mr. Gelbard and his embassy.

The situation has also been complicated by protests in Indonesia against the perceived pro-Israeli tilt in the West Asian crisis, with the Palestinians being left to fend for themselves.

THE HINDU

10 OCT 2000



# Space quest

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## FROM LAURA KING

**Thurmont (Maryland), July 19**  
(AP): Sending the Camp David  
summit in to overtime, President  
Bill Clinton delayed his departure  
for Japan by a day to give West  
Asian negotiators a last chance to  
break their deadlock.

The White House brushed  
aside rumblings of an Israeli pull-  
out from the talks today, and Clin-  
ton said through a spokesman  
that the parties "know what they  
have to do."

Clinton met Palestinian leader  
Yasser Arafat — their second talk  
in 12 hours. The Israeli govern-  
ment in Jerusalem said "it seems"  
that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud  
Barak had decided to stop the  
talks and return home. But the  
White House said it had not been  
informed about anyone planning  
to leave.

"There is a lot of stuff that flies  
around the air that's not worth a  
lot...but just has no reflection of  
what's going on," presidential  
spokesman Joe Lockhart said at  
the midpoint of the talks' ninth  
day.

Explaining Clinton's decision  
to delay his trip, Lockhart said,  
"It's a judgment that the President  
made that it was useful and in the  
interests of the peace process to do  
that, but it's not an open-ended  
commitment." He said the Presi-  
dent planned to get on Air Force  
One sometime overnight and fly  
to Asia. "The parties know what  
they have to do," the spokesman  
said.

Clinton met Barak around 10  
pm local time yesterday and then  
talked with Arafat. The President  
finished work about 1 am and re-  
turned to work today eight hours  
later, meeting first with members

of the US negotiating team and  
then again with Arafat.

Asked if it had been worth-  
while for Clinton to remain at the  
talks, Lockhart said: "I think that  
the fact that he's sitting in at a bi-  
lateral (meeting) with chairman  
Arafat as we speak indicates that  
we think it's worth it."

The Israeli statement, issued  
by telephone by the Prime Minis-  
ter's office in response to a re-  
porter's question and attributed  
to senior sources, did not specify  
when the Israeli team planned to  
leave.

"It seems that Barak has decid-  
ed to stop the talks and return to  
Israel," it said, adding that the  
Palestinians were unprepared to  
take the steps necessary to bring  
about an accord.

Later, Israel's deputy defence  
minister, Ephraim Sneh, told re-  
porters the picture at Camp David

was "quite gloomy." But he added  
that "as long as he (Barak), the  
host and the other party is there,  
there is maybe a glimmer of  
hope."

The White House had an-  
nounced after midnight that Clin-  
ton was putting off his departure  
for a summit of industrial powers  
"in the best interests of the West  
Asian peace process." He had  
been scheduled to depart this  
morning.

"Clearly, the President is  
doing this so he can continue to  
work with the leaders through  
today," White House spokesman  
P.J. O'Leary said then.

Even before the flap erupted  
over whether anyone was leaving,  
indications were that the going  
was extremely difficult at Camp  
David.

Off-Pines, an Israeli lawmaker  
er and chairman of Barak's gov-

erning coalition, said he did not  
believe the two sides could reach  
an accord.

"The Palestinian Authority is  
not prepared, simply is not pre-  
pared to reach a peace agreement with  
Israel," he said on Israel Radio  
today.

The Palestinians, though,  
blamed Israel for the impasse.

"There can be no agreement  
without total Palestinian sover-  
eignty over east Jerusalem," said  
Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Wash-  
ington envoy of Arafat's Palestine  
Liberation Organisation. "This is  
a basic condition for achieving  
peace."

In the West Bank, about Pales-  
tinians rallied in the town of Ra-  
mallah, waving banners, Palestin-  
ian flags and keys made out of  
cardboard, to symbolise lost  
homes inside Israel.

"No peace without  
Jerusalem!" some shouted. "Re-  
turn of the refugees!"

Since the summit began July  
11, Clinton has been shuttling be-  
tween the two sides, trying to  
shepherd them to ward an accord  
on the most painful and divisive  
issues: the boundaries of a future  
Palestinian state, the fate of sever-  
al million Palestinian refugees  
and — most explosive of all — the  
status of Jerusalem, which both  
sides claim as their capital.

If Clinton leaves tomorrow  
morning as now scheduled, he  
would still arrive in time for the  
Friday to Sunday meeting in  
Japan's southernmost province,  
Okinawa, skipping preliminary  
talks in Tokyo.

In Tokyo, Prime Minister  
Yoshiro Mori's spokesman said:  
"We understand the Circum-  
stances."

# US brushes aside Barak pullout threat

THE TELEGRAPH

20 JUL 2000

# Clinton may back North Korea's space quest

REUTERS  
OKINAWA, JULY 22

US President Bill Clinton said Saturday he did not fully understand North Korea's offer to end its ballistic missile programme in return for help on space exploration, but wanted to pursue the idea.

"It's not clear to me what the offer is and what is being requested in return for it," Clinton told reporters after a meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori. "I think it is something that needs

to be explored."

In landmark talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Pyongyang earlier this week, North Korea's enigmatic leader Kim Jong-il offered to end Pyongyang's missile programme if given help in its quest to explore space.

North Korea's ballistic missile programme has been of acute concern to the West since 1998, when it test-fired a missile over Japan. Pyongyang said the rocket was a space shot to put a satellite in orbit but the claim was widely dismissed abroad. North Korea has since de-

clared a moratorium on such tests but, despite this, Western officials worry that it may continue to develop its missile systems.

US intelligence estimates suggest Pyongyang may be able to strike US territory by 2005, prompting a US proposal to develop a missile defence shield that is strongly opposed by Russia, China and others who fear it will spark an arms race. Clinton, who held talks with Putin on Friday night, ahead of the annual Group of Eight (G8) summit, said the Russian leader had provided enough information

about the Pyongyang offer that he felt it should be looked into further. "I think we heard enough so that there should be an attempt to determine what the facts are here, but I can't say that I'm clear enough on what the offer was to make a final judgment," Clinton said. "We need to see exactly what the specifics are."

Kim's meeting with Putin was one of the latest in a string of efforts by North Korea, including the landmark June 13-15 summit between the leaders of the two Ko-

reans in Pyongyang, to end the self-imposed isolation of his famine-stricken, totalitarian regime. In the newest development, South Korea said on Saturday that the North had accepted a Seoul proposal for high level talks in a follow-up to last month's summit and wants to have them by the end of July. US officials planned to meet Russian officials on Saturday on the sidelines of the summit of leading industrial nations and Russia on this southern Japanese island to get a better grasp of just what North Korea may have had in mind in the missile proposal to Putin.

INDIAN EXPRESS

23 JUL 2000

# HQ-16 A working summit: U.S. 1397

**THURMONT, JULY 12.** The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, wrapped up the first day of Camp David negotiations for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement in a bilateral meeting with the PLO chief, Mr. Yasser Arafat, a White House spokesman said.

"It's over for today," Mr. P.J. Crowley, spokesman, told reporters at a press centre in the nearby town of Thurmont, about 100 km northwest of Washington.

Mr. Clinton held a series of separate meetings with Mr. Arafat and the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak, after urging both men to seek a "principle compromise" to end five decades of conflict.

"It's a working summit, they are going to talk about substance in a relaxed atmosphere," Mr. Crowley explained.

The three men were due to have dinner together as, in another room, were the U.S., Israeli and Palestinians at the mountain retreat before retiring to the 20 chalets of the wooded estate.

Amid a strict media blackout, U.S. officials have not given any details about the second day of negotiations today. A week has been set aside to try to strike a deal.

## Prayers, protests

Meanwhile, supporters and opponents of Mr. Barak's policies held counter-rallies near the venue trumpeting their hopes for and fears of the summit's outcome.

Several dozen American Jewish schoolchildren and left-leaning Israelis sang songs of peace before the world's television cameras gathered to cover the summit.



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak (left), and the Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, walk on the grounds of Camp David, on Tuesday, during a West Asia summit. — AP

"We had five wars. I fought in three," said Naftali Raz, an Israeli from the town of Mevasseret west of Jerusalem.

"We came so far to be here at Camp David because there is no way this convention will end without peace," he said.

However, supporters of the Israeli right-wing denounced Mr.

Barak as a 'traitor' for his willingness to cede Biblical West Bank lands to the Palestinians.

"We want peace for peace, not land for peace. We do not believe this false peace process will bring us peace," said Levy Huebner, a member of the orthodox Habad movement from Brooklyn, New York. — AFP, Reuters

THE HINDU

13 JUL 2000

# USA, N Korea to resume defence talks

REUTERS

KUALA LUMPUR, July 9. — USA and North Korea resume talks tomorrow on curbing Pyongyang's missile programme in their first meeting on the issue since Washington eased economic sanctions against the reclusive state after almost 50 years.

The three-day talks, to be held behind closed doors at the US embassy in the Malaysian capital, will address the development, deployment, testing and export of North Korean missiles, one of which Pyongyang test-fired over Japan into the Pacific Ocean in August 1998.

The US team will be led by the Assistant Secretary of State for Non-Proliferation, Mr Robert Einhorn, with the North Korean group headed by Mr Jang Chang

Chon, director general for US affairs at the foreign ministry.

The two sides whose last round of missile talks was in Pyongyang in 1999, are to begin talks at around 10:30 a.m. Few details were likely to emerge, with no statements or media events scheduled. The last meeting, the fourth since April 1996, had failed to yield anything concrete on the issue.

The talks come just three weeks after USA eased economic sanctions against North Korea after almost five decades. This further lowers the barriers between the Stalinist state and the international community.

The move, following a moratorium by Pyongyang on its missile-testing programme, was aimed at improving relations between the two countries while encour-

aging North Korea to refrain from testing long-range missiles.

Although it has reined in Pyongyang's nuclear programme, Washington remains concerned about its missile development, estimating that it could build a rocket capable of delivering a bomb over an US city by 2005.

This has driven a US campaign to develop a missile shield defence system which is opposed by Russia, China and USA's Nato allies who fear it would undermine existing arms control agreements.

An attempt by USA to intercept and destroy a target warhead in space failed yesterday.

Washington also wants North Korea to stop delivering missiles and missile parts to other countries, including Pakistan and West Asian countries

which has been a major source of hard currency for Pyongyang.

But earlier talks on the issue had stalled as North Korea demanded at least \$1 billion annually to suspend its missile exports while USA refused to offer concessions.

THE STATESMAN

10 JUL 2000

## Scientists renew criticism as U.S. missile test fails

WASHINGTON: U.S. scientists renewed their calls for the White House not to authorise the deployment of a proposed missile defence system, following the failure of a missile interception test over the Pacific Ocean.

American physical society spokesman Robert Park said the failure of the Pentagon's 100-million-dollar test might lead President Bill Clinton to postpone a decision on deployment.

"I just don't see how, after a test like this, (Clinton) can declare that now it's going to be able to work, and call for deployment," said Mr Park, who was formerly a researcher at the US government nuclear defence laboratory in Sandia, New Mexico.

Mr Park noted that even if a missile shield could be made effective, it would do nothing to prevent less sophisticated methods of delivering nuclear or biological weapons, such as driving a truck across the U.S. border.

However, he said, U.S. aircraft manufacturer Boeing, the principal contractor for the project, has a strong financial interest in seeing deployment go ahead.

The missile test that failed on Saturday had been intended to demonstrate that a missile-borne "kill vehicle" would not be confused by a decoy and would suc-

cessfully seek out and destroy an incoming missile.

The test's failure raises pressure on Clinton, who leaves office in January, to defer to the next administration a decision on whether to order deployment.

George Bunn, a physics professor at Stanford University's Centre for International Security and Cooperation, said the test's failure "certainly means there will be no decision to go full-blown ahead between now and the end of Clinton's term."

Mr Bunn, who is a former official of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and Nuclear Regulatory Commission and opposes deployment of the system, noted that under an April 1999 policy statute, the government may only proceed with the missile shield system if it is first demonstrated to be technologically feasible.

Sydney Drell, a Stanford University physicist who has served as an advisor to the White House on national security matters, said on Saturday that any decision on deployment should not be hurried.

"There's a terrible danger in setting a schedule because someone says there's an immediate threat out there," he said.

"It's a difficult decision. One has to decide whether the threat is so real that one has to go ahead in spite of failure (in the test) on an accelerated course, or take some more conservative course" in which the results of successive tests set the pace.

If the United States went ahead with premature deployment in the face of opposition from Russia, China and also from European allies, it could prove counterproductive, he said.

"I am concerned at how we make a decision, and what political framework we preserve when we make a decision," Mr Drell said.

Moreover, recent positive developments in North Korea, a country which the U.S. has regarded as posing a threat, should be taken into account, he said. (AFP)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# Missile interceptor misses target

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, JULY 8. The Missile Defence Test over the Pacific in the early hours of Saturday, a key phase in the U.S. National Missile Defence programme, failed, the Pentagon said. The missile interceptor not only missed the target but did not even try to hit it.

According to officials, the "kill vehicle" which was to guide itself in the path of a dummy warhead did not separate from the booster to activate the sensors. The failure is attributed to its not receiving the necessary signals. The interceptor passed the target "harmlessly".

The \$100 million test is the third in the series and second to fail. "We have more engineering work to do," said Lt. Gen. Ronald Kadish, Director of the Defence Department's Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation.

Analysts said the failure could mean a delay in the overall National Missile Defence programme, whose target date is 2005. More tests are scheduled before the target date. The next one is planned for this Fall.

Saturday's test was delayed by more than two hours. A modified Minuteman Intercontinental Ballistic Missile with a dummy warhead was fired from the Vandenberg Air Force Base in California and several minutes later, the interceptor was fired from the Kwajalein Atoll in the Pacific. The intended 25,600 km-an-hour collision was set 225 km above the earth.

## Political elements

More than its technical nature, the third test had all political elements. The



In this five second-exposure, a missile rises into the sky from the Vandenberg Air Force base as seen from Simi Valley, California. The Pentagon launched the target missile on Friday, but the missile defence system test has failed. —AP

National Missile Defence system will be a major foreign policy issue in the coming presidential elections. The President, Mr. Bill Clinton, is due to take a decision on the programme which has evoked serious objections not only within the country but from Russia and China as well. Mr. Clinton will take a decision by the Fall.

He favours a modest missile defence programme and will be getting a recommendation from the Defence Secretary, Mr. William Cohen, in the next few weeks. Hardline Conservatives on Capitol Hill and the likely Republican nominee, Mr. George W Bush are pushing for a more comprehensive programme which will protect not only

the 50 States but U.S. allies as well.

Even before the test got under way, it was maintained that the outcome would have little bearing on Mr. Clinton's decision, which was in the direction of moving towards building a missile defence system. Critics have been saying this is not feasible but that the testing methods are flawed. Politically it was argued that a move in the direction of a national missile would set in motion a new nuclear arms race.

Moscow has maintained that the tests are the first step toward global "nuclear instability" and China sees a Taiwan angle. Allies of the U.S. have also expressed reservations.

CAMP DAVID / BROAD AGREEMENT LIKELY

## Clinton delays Japan trip

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

SAN FRANCISCO, JULY 19. In a bid to inject more momentum and urgency to the West Asia peace process, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, has delayed his departure to Japan by a day for the Summit of the Group of Eight nations. The President was to have left Washington this morning but will stay behind until Thursday. "The President believes this is in the best interests of the Middle East peace process", a White House spokesman said.

Against the backdrop of a news blackout, very little is coming out of Camp David on the status of the negotiations between the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Ehud Barak, and the Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, at times in the presence of Mr. Clinton and senior officials of the administration. What little is trickling out of the talks is being attributed to "sources" either at the venue or from other areas of West Asia.

Several stories are doing the rounds, especially one that Mr. Barak and Mr. Arafat may come to some kind of a broad agreement now, leaving the details to be thrashed out at another summit which is likely to be convened soon. According to an agency report, Mr. Barak has apparently told Mr. Arafat that Israel would not recognise a Palestinian state unless the Palestinians accepted undivided Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem.

Mr. Arafat, who has threatened to unilaterally declare a Palestinian state by September 13, is said to be willing to give up the Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall in the Old City. Media reports also say that the Palestinian leader has taken the position that he would initial no formal accord unless he first visited Saudi Arabia and Egypt.



The White House spokesman, Mr. Joe Lockhart, pictured reacting to three different questions at a news conference on Tuesday in Thurmont where the West Asia talks are going on. — AP

One perception is that an agreement could be reached on a demilitarised Palestinian state based on United Nations Resolution 242 with talks later to determine the final status of the borders and the issue of settlements. Israel is reportedly willing to go no further than expressing "sadness" for the outcome of the 1948 war and is said to be agreeable to admitting upto 100,000 Palestinian refugees on a one time basis on a "humanitarian family reunification" plan.

Even prior to the start of the Camp David talks, few in the Clinton administration were under any illusion of the enormous complexity of the negotiations. The talks had become even more complex and difficult due to the sudden political developments in Israel. What the leaders of West Asia had to agree upon, among other things, were the borders of a Pal-

estinian state; the status of Jerusalem; the fate of the Palestinian refugees; and the Jewish settlers in the West Bank.

Mr. Clinton has referred to the ongoing efforts as the "hardest ever" talks he had been involved in the last seven years of his Presidency. The other tough negotiations Mr. Clinton had been involved in include earlier West Asia talks; the Northern Ireland peace package and the Dayton Accords over Bosnia in 1995.

By postponing his trip to Japan by a day, Washington is driving home both the seriousness and importance of the talks. Aside from the meeting of the Group of Eight in Okinawa, Mr. Clinton will have a summit meeting with his Russian counterpart, Mr. Vladimir Putin, at which the proposed American National Missile Defence system is likely to figure prominently.

THE HINDU

20 JUL 2000

# British probe team barred from visiting China

THE STRAITS TIMES  
ASIA NEWS NETWORK

LONDON, July 17. — In a serious deterioration in bilateral ties, China has banned British detectives from entering the country to investigate the deaths of 58 Chinese illegal immigrants in Dover.

The investigators were slated to visit China yesterday.

The Chinese embassy in London refused to issue visas to four senior police officers and a forensic scientist, on the orders of top Chinese foreign ministry officials.

This follows the British foreign office's refusal to allow Chinese government officials to question the two Chinese refugees who survived the ordeal. The ministers argued the two had suffered enough trauma to be questioned.

The ministers were aware that China would consider them as traitors for fleeing the country. Also, if the identities of the survivors were known to Chinese officials, relatives in their home province of Fujian could be persecuted on the grounds that they helped in the escape.

The two survivors are being kept in a safe house under armed guard, in case those who organised the ill-fated journey tried to kill them. The British detectives were to carry out DNA tests to help identify the 58 victims. About 48 of the immigrants have been identified tentatively from photographs and other information sent by relatives in Fujian to Kent Police who are handling the investigation.

The team wanted to collect human-tissue samples from the relatives for the DNA tests which would have provided positive identification. The detectives would also have investigated the illegal immigrant smuggling racket, centred in Fujian.

After the Dover tragedy, China had said it would welcome the investigators. China's refusal to allow the British investigators to go to Fujian is seen by observers as a "classic Chinese tit-for-tat".

But sources close to Prime Minister, Mr Tony Blair, said the move has far deeper meanings and underlines a deepening deterioration of relations between the two countries.

London angered Beijing last month when it issued a visa to Taiwan's former President, Mr Lee Teng-hui, to address a gathering at Manchester University. Chinese leaders have denounced Mr Lee as "a troublemaker always trying to organise separatist activities".



# I am optimistic about Middle East peace efforts, says Clinton

WSM. W. Agri  
H-14

Thurmont (MD), July 17 1997

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton has said there had been "some progress" at Middle East peace talks but that success was not certain.

"I'm more optimistic than I was when they got here...We might make it," he said yesterday in an interview with the New York daily news released by the White House. But said the negotiations are more difficult than any he's dealt with in his Presidency.

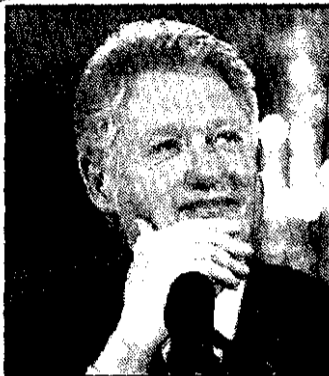
"God, it's hard," Clinton said yesterday. "It's like nothing I've ever dealt with. All the negotiations with the Irish, all the stuff I've done with the Palestinians before this and with the Israelis, the Balkans at Dayton."

But he said he was hopeful that Israelis and Palestinians could agree on the contentious issues that still divide them.

Asked if he would leave for an economic summit in Japan as planned on Wednesday, he replied, "I hope so. I'm gonna do my best to finish here. There's been some progress, but I can't say I know we'll succeed," he said.

The Israelis and Palestinians have met at the Camp David Presidential retreat since Tuesday to try to resolve the most vexing issues in their 52-year dispute: the borders of a Palestinian state, the status of Jerusalem, and the fate of Palestinian refugees and Jewish settlers in the West Bank.

Meanwhile reports from Washington said, with the Barak-Arafat talks at Camp David report-



edly leading to an agreement for the creation of a Palestinian state, the administration here has discreetly told Congressional leaders that peace involves a massive cost.

"The new state will have to be built up and refugees settled or compensated. Israel will have to build new installations to replace those that will have to be moved," it said. The US has said it is prepared to pay a hefty sum for it, but not all and the rest of it will have to be provided by the European Union and rich Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, which will benefit from peace.

But there are members willing to pay almost any "price" for peace. Democratic Member Nancy Palosi said, "Whatever it takes (to obtain peace in the Middle East) will be astronomical, but worth it."

One House aide said permanent peace in the Middle East will be the equivalent to security provided to the US by five aircraft carriers in the region. (Agencies)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

18 JUL 2000

## MISSILE:

Continued from page 1)

test failure in January this year, was launched from Kwajalein at 10.10 a.m. IST. It was supposed to intercept and smash into the warhead about 10 minutes later in space at a speed of 24,100 kph.

The failure was a disappointment for the Boeing Co, which is coordinating the intricate NMD system of weapons radars and communications and for Raytheon Corp., which builds the prototype 121-pound (55 kg) "hit-to-kill" projectile.

While the failure has its own set of technological implications, of probably greater significance is the possibility that Mr Clinton would decline to immediately give the go-ahead to the NMD, something which he would have been pressured to do had the test proved good.

Most analysts maintain that in an election year, the test was rushed through on political considerations, for they were adequate pointers to the technology not being in place so far. The Republicans have floated fears of "rogue" nuclear states (North Korea, Iraq and Iran) threatening the US and accused the Clinton administration of putting the US at risk by going slow on NMD.

It was against this background that the test was said to have been rushed through. Scientific critics have argued that the test-parameters had been heavily diluted only to get the show on the road. Even if today's test had clicked, it would not have constituted a firm pointer to what it would obtain in actual war conditions, they argued.

The technology to shoot down a ballistic missile during its re-entry stage, the scientists said, was so immature that it would be a folly to launch the building of a system that could cost from \$30 billion to \$60 billion. Though the test result will affect Mr Clinton's decision whether to begin building a base in Alaska next year, it was not a life-or-death event for the NMD. Another 16 "hit-to-kill" tests are slated for the next 5 years, each more demanding on the high-tech equipment than the previous one.

# Failed US missile shield test may stall arms race

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE & AGENCIES

NEW DELHI, July 8. — The US attempt to bring Star Wars down to earth has failed. The unsuccessful bid to shoot down a missile in the sky creates some breathing space for the rest of the world — India included — and might stall revival of the arms race that fizzled out with the end of the Cold War.

There was no official Indian reaction. But the external affairs minister had said earlier that "we believe that the NMD, in fact, moves towards militarisation of space, against which we have always stood" and would destabilise the strategic stability achieved in two decades.

While there is no indication yet that the second skewed effort to prove that an anti-ballistic missile system was feasible would deter the USA from making further attempts in that direction, defence analysts here feel the setback to efforts to get it in place by 2005 could help defuse, albeit temporarily,

## US ANTI-MISSILE TEST FAILS

A crucial test of the US missile defence system failed when an interceptor missile failed to destroy a dummy warhead over the Pacific. Indications are that there was a problem with the separation of the "kill vehicle" that was supposed to guide itself into the path of dummy warhead in space.



the tensions the proposed national missile defence system (NMD) has generated.

Reporting from Washington, Reuters said the USA today failed to hit and destroy a target warhead in space with an anti-missile weapon in a \$100 million test.

"We did not intercept the warhead tonight. We are disappointed," Air Force Lt Gen Ronald Kadish, director of the missile defence effort, told reporters at Pentagon.

Kadish said a "hit-to-kill" weapon fired from Kwajalein

atoll in the Central Pacific did not separate from the second stage of its lift-off rocket and did not get a chance to intercept a warhead launched about 20 minutes earlier from Vandenberg air force base, California, 7,000 km away.

"It tells me we have more engineering work to do" he said. "We had good confidence in this ... This is rocket science ... things do happen," he added.

The weapon, with a successful intercept last October and a

■ See MISSILE: page 10

THE STATESMAN

- 9 JUL 2000

U.S. MOVE ON WEST ASIA / ISRAELI MINISTER QUILTS

## Both camps sceptical on summit

JERUSALEM, JULY 6. The announcement of an Israel-Palestinian summit in the United States next week was greeted with widespread scepticism in both camps and provoked the swift resignation of an Israeli Cabinet Minister.

A leading Palestinian said it had little or no chance of success, Israel's Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak, said he would not sign anything contrary to its interests, while Jewish settlers slammed the whole idea as an attempted sell-out.

The Interior Minister, Mr. Nathan Sharansky, resigned in protest, saying he wanted to be with the "majority" opposed to Mr. Barak.

The Transport Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Levy, head of the national religious party, also wanted out, public radio reported, while the pow-

erful ultra-orthodox Shas Party was keeping its options open.

The Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, yesterday accepted the invitation to attend the summit, through his adviser, Mr. Nabil Abu Rudeina. "We hope that this summit will result in a success," Mr. Rudeina said.

Mr. Arafat's close aide was speaking at the end of a meeting of Palestinian negotiators in the West Bank town of Ramallah, presided over by Mr. Arafat, and called to debate the U.S. invitation to a summit with Israel.

There had been little doubt that Mr. Arafat would go to Camp David to meet Mr. Barak, but the Ramallah meeting allowed some to express their unhappiness over the holding of a summit so soon in view of the considerable

gaps between the positions of the two sides.

Earlier, one aide hinted that Mr. Arafat's presence at the summit was not a foregone conclusion.

One of the negotiators, the Palestinian Parliament Speaker, Mr. Ahmed Qorei, earlier said the summit has little or no chance of success.

"It is a summit which has not been prepared properly. Its chances of success are therefore very limited, if not non-existent," Mr. Qorei said.

The Palestinian International Cooperation Minister, Mr. Nabil Shaath, was less pessimistic, saying, "we promised Madeleine Albright that we would go if Mr. Clinton invited us." Mr. Barak said on Israel's public radio from Paris he would go to Camp David "with a sense of heavy responsibility for the future of all citizens of the State (of Israel). I will sign no agreement which does not take into account our security needs."

The Foreign Minister, Mr. David Levy, who recently openly accused Mr. Barak of mishandling the peace negotiations, was also sceptical. "The gaps have not been closed, the Palestinians still refuse to compromise," the radio quoted him as saying.

Meanwhile, Mr. Levy said he would put his resignation in Parliament next week. The Likud deputy, Mr. Danny Naveh, accused Mr. Barak of behaving like a dictator who did not understand democracy.

The U.N. Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, applauded the decision to hold the summit and called for a "peace of the brave" in the region.

A statement released yesterday said Mr. Annan warmly welcomed the move. Mr. Annan "attaches great importance to this meeting and wishes to express his full support for the Camp David process," the statement said.

The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, who convened the summit outside Washington for next week admitted his high-stakes gamble could fail.

Mr. Clinton, with barely 50 months of his presidency remaining, conceded there was "clearly no guarantee of success" at the summit. — P.H. AP

THE HINEL

7 JUL 2003

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# Clinton, Barak discuss peace prospects

U.S. IN W. ASIA  
317  
FD-16

WASHINGTON, JULY 2. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, talked by telephone with the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak, for 45 minutes yesterday, discussing options in the West Asia peace process including possible summit, White House and diplomatic officials said.

"It was a serious conversation on the issues in the West Asia peace process," said a White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity. The official would not say whether their talk included a White House effort to bring together Mr. Barak and the Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, to work toward an overall settlement in the area.

"No decisions have been made," the official said.

A diplomatic official who also required anonymity said the Barak-Clinton conversation covered various approaches to peacemaking, including the possibility of a summit.

After a recent round of shuttle diplomacy by the U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, Palestinians and Israelis were reported as remaining far apart on crucial issues, including whether Israel would withdraw from all territory it took in the 1967 six-day war.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Barak also discussed the prison sentences imposed on 10 Iranian Jews convicted in an Iranian court of spying for Israel, the White House official said. Details of the con-

versation were not made available.

Earlier on Saturday, Mr. Clinton denounced the verdicts in the case against a total of 13 Iranian citizens of Jewish descent. He called Iran's criminal justice system flawed and unfair.

## Living conditions

Meanwhile in Gaza, the PLO representative to the U.N., Mr. Nasser al Qedwa, has said that the Palestinian people might face difficult living conditions following the declaration of a Palestinian state on September 13.

Mr. Al Qedwa, also member of the Palestinian central council that is convening in Gaza today for two days, told reporters at a press conference in Gaza yesterday that "these difficulties are part of the price that the Palestinians have to pay in order to get their rights." Mr. Al Qedwa was referring to Israeli reactions that could be expected once the Palestinian state was unilaterally declared such as closures of the Palestinian territories that could lead to economic difficulties.

He said the Palestinian authority had to work hard on two levels.

"Internally, we have to work in a republican system, build the Palestinian state institutions and fulfill the legal vacuum. Externally, we have to work hard on getting full membership of a state in the United Nations," Mr. Al Qedwa said.— AP, DPA

THE HINE

3 JUL 2000

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CLINTON IN EUROPE / 'LAST OFFICIAL TRIP' PD 16 1/6

## Trade to dominate Lisbon summit

By Batuk Gathani

**BRUSSELS, MAY 31.** Mr. Bill Clinton today held his 14th and last summit meeting as U.S. President with the leaders of the European Commission in Lisbon. Mr. Clinton met Mr. Romano Prodi, president of the European Commission and Mr. Antonio Guterres, Prime Minister of Portugal, which holds the six-monthly rotating presidency of the European Union and other senior European officials.

Mr. Clinton first visited Europe in 1994. Today, after some 14 Euro-American summits, the trans-Atlantic relations have changed greatly with emphasis on enlargement of trade, investments and commonality of Euro-American options in defence and foreign matters. The one-week Presidential visit to Europe will conclude this weekend in Moscow, where Mr. Clinton will for the first time meet his Russian counterpart, Mr. Vladimir Putin. Mr. Clinton's itinerary includes Portugal, Germany, Russia and Ukraine.

As Mr. Clinton's term ends this November, his tour of the European capitals has "a retrospective" air about it. Although dubbed as his "last official visit" to Western Europe, there is speculation in some quarters that he may visit Britain and Northern Ireland later this year given the recent developments in Ulster. The U.S. President is credited with a major role in making the Northern Ireland peace process work.

The Euro-American talks in Lisbon and Berlin will highlight the strength of their relations, which



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, turns to face the cameras with the Secretary of State, Ms Madeleine Albright, and the U.S. Ambassador to the European Union, Mr. Richard Morningstar (left) inside the Queluz Palace in Lisbon on Wednesday. In the background are the European Commission President, Mr. Romano Prodi (left), and the Portuguese Prime Minister, Mr. Antonio Guterres. — AP

were at a low ebb during the late Eighties and early Nineties following trade disputes. The tenor of the talks changed with the emergence of the European Union as a global economic power. The advent of a common European currency, the euro, could pose a challenge for the dollar as an international trading currency in the near future. Despite the display of bonhomie, it is hard to ignore the wide chasm on the trade front. For example, the E.U. is planning to launch a complaint

with the World Trade Organisation if the U.S. does not drop plans to impose sanctions on new European products in two recent trade disputes.

At the summit, the U.S. and the European Commission may try to smooth over problems such as U.S. tax breaks for American exporters, which give U.S. exporters an edge over their European competitors. On the other hand, the Americans resent European restrictive policies on the import of

bananas from Central America where U.S. companies have a major stake in production.

The Americans also resent the European ban on the import of hormone-treated beef from the U.S.

These contentious issues are likely to be addressed at the summit. Trade between the U.S. and the E.U. is around \$ 450 billion. Hence, economic ties will continue to dominate the Euro-American dialogue.

THE HINDU

- 1 JUN 2000

# US apex court allows Elian to return home

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, June 28. — The US supreme court today cleared the decks for Elian Gonzalez to return to Cuba, a crushing defeat for his Miami relatives in the international custody fight over the child.

The High Court rejected without any comment or dissent an emergency last-ditch request by the relatives seeking to keep Elian in the USA, and also turned down their appeal for a political asylum hearing for him.

The court's action, which came on the last day of its term, brought to an end the long legal battle over the boy's fate in the politically-charged case that has pitted Cuban exiles in Miami against Cuban President Fidel Castro.

With the High Court siding

57-9 23/6  
with the US justice department and Elian's Cuban father, an earlier order by a US appeals court in Atlanta requiring that Elian stay in the USA will expire at 4 p.m. EDT on Wednesday (1.30 a.m. India time Thursday). Elian then will be free to go back to Cuba.

Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez, Elian's father, said he was happy the international custody battle over his son was finally over and that they planned to return to Cuba immediately. The justice department said Elian's father had a plane at his disposal ready to leave. Reporters, TV crews and photographers gathered at Washington's Dulles International Airport in preparation for the departure.

In a statement released by his lawyer, Mr Gregory Craig, Mr

Gonzalez said his family was gratified by the supreme court's announcement. "Juan Miguel is happy that his family is together, safe and now free to go home. The legal battle is over," the statement said. "The family will now make immediate arrangements to return to their home." Federal marshals were ready to escort the Gonzalez family from the plush Washington estate where Elian has been staying with his father, stepmother, half-brother and several Cuban schoolmates.

Dozens of reporters gathered outside the home and a couple of protesters carrying placards against President Castro were led away from the area by police. Several children carrying balloons entered the property to say goodbye to the Gonzalez family.



Elian with his father on Tuesday.  
— AP/PTI

THE STATESMAN

29 JUN 2000

# Clinton likely to give 'limited nod'

RF-10  
29/6/00

Washington, June 28

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON is likely to give a "limited green light" for a national missile defence system if a crucial flight test goes well next week, *The Washington Post* reported today.

Citing administration officials, the Post said the United States would argue that such a decision does not violate the anti-ballistic missile treaty, while leaving the

toughest decisions to Clinton's successor. "That's the direction we're heading in," said a senior Pentagon official involved in discussions of the presidential decision, scheduled to be made by late October. The Post said he characterised the most likely outcome as "a handoff of this option to the succeeding administration."

"We are not irrevocably committing the country to either going ahead or not," another senior administration official was quoted as saying. "All we're talking about is some very long-lead construc-

tion work. The issue will be open for the next President to decide either way."

The White House last week said Mr Clinton remains committed to making a decision on whether to implement a national missile defence system despite reports saying he would like to leave it up to the next President, the White House said on Wednesday.

The New York Times reported on June 21 that the Clinton admin-

## New Missile System

istration was quietly manoeuvring to sidestep a decision on whether to build the missile defence system, which would be intended to protect the United States from missiles launched by such unpredictable nations as North Korea, Iran or Iraq.

The Post quoted national security adviser Sandy Berger as saying it was premature to predict what Mr Clinton will decide, because much will depend on next week's test and continuing consultations with Russia, China and US allies in Europe. (Reuters)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 JUN 2000

# Albright to push for West Asia summit

By Kesava Menon

MANAMA (BAHRAIN), JUNE 27. The U.S. Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright is arriving in the Israel/Palestine area today in what is widely expected to be a bid to get the Palestinian Authority President, Mr. Yasser Arafat and the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak to agree to a summit with the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton.

Ms. Albright is expected to not just probe the prospect for the summit but actively try and persuade them to attend.

At this minute, this basically means that she is coming to persuade Mr. Arafat since Mr. Barak appears more than ready to go to Washington.

There has been no indication that agreement on any of the issues that could figure in the summit has been clinched.

All the permanent status issues — Palestinian sovereignty, borders, refugees, Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Jerusalem — remain on the table.

Even the question of Palestinian sovereignty, which Israel looks very likely to accept, is not settled since the terms or limitations on this sovereignty have not been set down in signed documents.

As regards other issues, the rhetoric from the Palestinian side suggests that the two sides remained as far apart as they ever were while the Israelis profess a more positive assessment.

The public postures taken by the two sides need not be taken with complete seriousness.

After all, the crunch time is fast approaching and both sides know that if an agreement is not clinched before Mr. Clinton leaves the White House, the negotiations will suffer a setback.

All the issues have been discussed by officials on the two sides for months in fine detail and *ad nauseam*. Various possible compromises on specific issues, some of them quite creative, have also been mentioned from time to time.

Either side also probably knows that it will not get everything it wants. But it suits the Israelis to put a positive spin since the U.S. mediators are likely to be impressed by a more accommodative approach.

It suits the Palestinians to act obdurate since they would like to show their public and the Arab world that whatever compromises they eventually agree to were arrived at under U.S. pressure.

Mr. Arafat, at least according to

the Israeli media, apparently has another problem as well.

While Mr. Barak is reportedly willing to thrash out the final details directly with Mr. Clinton and Mr. Arafat, the Palestinian leader is said to be reluctant to decide issues with only the other two leaders present.

U.S. officials are reported to be working on a format whereby the details will be finalised by officials of the three sides with the three leaders coming together after that to sign their approval on a done deal.

But this will all take place at one venue, and probably after continuous sessions, so as to have some sort of an equivalence with the Camp David talks which created the peace between Israel and Egypt.

A report in *Yehodiot Aharonot* to the effect that the U.S. had already drawn up a working paper that can be used as the draft summit document has been denied by Israel and the Palestinians.

The denials need not be taken as of much value since similar documents have been reported on earlier occasions (as for example, a working document of the talks between Syria and Israel at the turn of this year), their existence officially denied only for it to be later revealed that something like the document had indeed existed.

Israel has also followed an interesting pattern over the past few months. This pattern appears to be one of first shocking the Israeli public with leaked news of an imminent concession, allowing the opposition to the move to be aired and dissipated, letting the people adjust to the idea and then finally carrying through the move when the people have been prepared.

If this pattern is being followed in respect to the *Yehodiot* draft then the Israeli Government is actually thinking along lines that were taboo till a few months ago.

The draft mentions that Israel is willing to hand over 95 per cent of the West Bank, a significant advance on the 80-90 per cent being mentioned till recently.

It also talks of the Israeli Government's willingness to vacate the Jordan valley, something that they have never contemplated till now. The *Yehodiot* draft also talks of transferring Arab neighbourhoods of east Jerusalem to Palestinian civilian control.

These concessions are basic to a just agreement and the fact that they are now being openly spoken about is a positive sign.

YEM

28 JUN 7



# Los Alamos nuke lab reports two more security breaches

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
LOS ALAMOS, JUNE 25

**A**n inventory of all classified data at Los Alamos National Laboratory, taken in response to criticism over the disappearance of two top-secret hard drives, has found two more possible security breaches, a lab official said. The possible security breaches were reported yesterday by lab spokesman Jim Danneskiold.

Two 10-year-old floppy disks containing classified information were reported missing on Wednesday at the nuclear weapons lab. However, they were found a day later, attached to a paper report in a nearby, secured area. And apparently no classified information was compromised, Danneskiold said. This and the second case, involving an unlocked door, aren't as serious as the missing computer hard drives, but Danneskiold said the disappearance of the floppy disks will be investigated

by the Dept of Energy which oversees the lab. The disks "are obsolete. Very few, if any, computers are around that can read them," he said. The disks had last been recorded in an inventory conducted two years ago. Danneskiold said he didn't know how the disks got misplaced and would not disclose what type of information they contained. In the second incident, Danneskiold said a computer repair person left an equipment closet unlocked inside a secure room. The room door was locked, however. Danneskiold said the lab is itemizing all classified data in response to the uproar over the disappearance of the hard drives last month. "We've instituted a number of additional security measures beyond what's required," he said.

A grand jury has been convened to look into the two-month disappearance of the two computer hard drives from the lab's top-secret X division. The drives resurfaced mysteriously behind a copy machine near the vault where they were first

discovered missing on May 7.

The drives held information that would be needed to locate and dismantle foreign nuclear devices that might be used in a terrorist attack.

Meanwhile, *The Washington Post* reported on its website last night that a General Accounting Office report to be released this week has identified more than 75 incidents of foreign spies targeting US nuclear scientists traveling abroad and recommends that such travel be approved by counter-intelligence officials at the Energy Department's National laboratories. The report, requested by US representatives Timony Romer and Benjamin Gilman, says the scientists have been subjected to having their hotel rooms bugged, their personal belongings rifled through and being offered sexual favours. Edward J Curran, the Energy Department's counter-intelligence chief, called the GAO study "fair and objective" and said his staff is working to implement its recommendations.

INDIAN EXPRESS

26 JUN 2000

# U.S. eases curbs on North Korea

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, JUNE 20. Close on the heels of the historic summit between the leaders of South and North Korea, the Clinton administration has eased sanctions on North Korea in an attempt to improve relations between the two countries.

The U.S. still has North Korea on the list of nations sponsoring terrorism but under the current scheme of things, trade of most goods will be allowed between the two countries. So too financial transactions between individuals and commercial firms. Persons wishing to do business with North Korea will still need a licence from the Treasury Department but the processing will be easier.

"These measures are supported by our close allies in the region and are a part of the process of close co-ordination between the United States, Japan and South Korea recommended by the former Secretary of Defence William Perry," the President, Mr. Bill Clinton said in a statement. "We will continue to build on these efforts and on the recent North-South summit to achieve additional progress in addressing our common proliferation concerns," the President added.

Although the initial response of the Clinton administration to the summit has been positive, it will be an exaggeration to say that Washington is ready to erase the perceptions of the last five decades. The U.S. is still quite wary of a number of things concerning North Korea, particularly its potential to produce weapons of mass destruction.

The U.S. has been especially worried about nuclear technology — however crude — and missiles hardware from North Korea getting into the hands of politically volatile States in West Asia and elsewhere. Washington is keen on limiting Pyongyang's "reach" with States like Iraq, Iran and Pakistan and at the same time has not taken too kindly to the test-firing of missiles over Japan. "It is our understanding and expectation that North Korea will continue to refrain from testing any long-range missiles for the duration of our negotiations that are

aimed at improving our relations," a State Department spokesman, Mr. Richard Boucher said.

However, in spite of the first steps to rapprochement taken by the leaders of North and South Korea, the U.S. has no plans at this time to withdraw its troops from the Korean peninsula. The administration maintains that the 37,000 troops posted in South Korea will be there as long as that country feels that they are necessary for its defence. "That situation hasn't really changed at this stage," Mr. Boucher said.

## Goodwill gesture

AFP reports from Seoul:

South Korea today cancelled a major parade by thousands of Korean war veterans for Sunday's 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the conflict in a gesture of goodwill to the north.

Korean and foreign veterans normally take part in the annual parade in Seoul. Military officials said this year's event had been called off to boost reconciliation after the leaders of the North and South met. "This year's parade was cancelled for the first time since the war in an effort to boost the inter-Korean peace mood," a South Korean Defence Ministry spokesman told AFP. South Korean officials have said North Korea will also scale down its war commemoration events, including a massive military parade in Pyongyang.

THE HINDU

21 JUN 2000

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# Lawyers back first stage of US anti-missile plan

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, June 15. — Lawyers have advised Mr Bill Clinton that he could begin the first stage of a missile defence system without violating a 1972 arms control treaty with Russia, a report said today.

The classified assessments, drafted by administration lawyers at the request of the White House, are likely to be rejected by Russia, and the US President has not decided on them, the *New York Times* said, quoting senior officials.

But the paper said they offer Mr Clinton a way to announce that the USA would proceed with the project while letting the next President decide whether to break the antiballistic missile treaty. They also give USA more time to test the system and negotiate with Russia.

The prospect of withdrawing from the accord has threatened to harm ties with Russia, as

well as with European allies who view the treaty as a foundation of nuclear arms control.

"...the administration is working hard to free up as much wiggle room as it can before it has to make a decision," one administration official told the *Times*. There's still a long way to go to come to an arrangement with Russia."

The advice, according to the report, would overturn a legal understanding dating from the Reagan administration that even the smallest steps to construct a missile defence system — laying concrete, for example — would breach the treaty.

Mr Clinton plans to decide this fall whether to break ground in Alaska next spring on a missile defence system to protect against a limited missile attack from countries the USA considers rogue states: Iran, Iraq and North Korea.

The first option — said the lawyers from the state depart-

ment, Pentagon and the National Security Council — would allow contractors to pour a concrete pad without violating the treaty, the paper reported. Two other options allow even more construction, with the third and final interpretation permitting a concrete structure with metal tracks to hold a radar component.

"There are several points where you could reach a violation of the treaty," said Capt. Stephen R Pietropaoli, a joint chiefs of staff spokesman. "The lawyers have produced points along a continuum and the legal analysis to back each up."

The US Intelligence estimates North Korea could have the capability to hit the USA with nuclear or chemical-tipped ballistic missiles by 2005.

To build an anti-missile system that meets that deadline, officials have said, construction must begin at the Alaska site by next summer.

THE STATESMAN

16 JUN 2000

# Clinton meets Wahid to discuss economic reforms

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, June 13. — The US President, Mr Bill Clinton, met the Indonesian President, Mr Abdurrahman Wahid, during a short visit to discuss the country's troubles.

The White House spokesman, Mr Mike Hammer, said Mr Clinton went over Mr Wahid's economic and military reform programmes, as well as Indonesia's political situation during a brief meeting yesterday.

"Mr Clinton encouraged him to strengthen Indonesia's democracy," Mr Hammer said, adding that they "no doubt" discussed the East Timor situation.

Mr Clinton's national security adviser, Mr Sandy Berger, was also present at the half-hour meeting.

Mr Wahid is in the USA primarily for medical reasons. Indonesia is dealing with a

myriad of crises, including reported human rights abuses by the military, a crippled economy and, most recently, a major earthquake and resulting aftershocks in

Sumatra that killed over 100 people, injured 1,900 and left many more homeless.

After three decades of authoritarian rule, Indonesia is facing repeated challenges to national unity.

Two regions wishing independence erupted into violence after Jakarta refused, and just last week Mr Wahid's government turned down ano-

ther area looking for autonomy.

East Timor is currently being run by the UN as it prepares for independence.

## BRUNEI DONATION

JAKARTA, June 13. — Legislators and observers yesterday censured Mr Abdurrahman Wahid's acceptance of millions of dollars as personal donation from Brunei, saying it may not be unlawful but is ethically questionable.

The President has said he accepted a \$2-million humanitarian aid for Aceh from Brunei's Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah as a personal donation.

The Indonesian Corruption Watch said Mr Wahid's acceptance of the donation "is unethical as it is a financial gift to a public official and paves the way for potential corruption".

It "shows the lack of understanding Mr Wahid and the Indonesian government have of the principles of public finance and public accountability", the ICW said.

Mr Wahid must clarify in what capacity he accepted the donation, the ICW said. If the donation was accepted as President then the funds must be included in the state budget but if it was accepted as an individual, he will have to pay taxes on it. — ANN

13 JUN 2000

# Clinton seeks to allay Russian fears

*WJW  
HO-16  
G/b*

**MOSCOW, JUNE 5.** The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, sought to allay Russian fears about U.S. plans to build a missile defence shield, in an historic address to Russian lawmakers here today.

In a wide-ranging 43-minute speech, Mr. Clinton said he wanted to see a strong and prosperous Russia, urged it to join the World Trade Organisation and touched on Chechnya, terrorism, the economy and social issues.

Only President Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus has previously been accorded the honour of addressing both Houses of Parliament.

Lawmakers from the State Duma and the Federation Council, the lower and upper houses of parliament, listened in silence to Mr. Clinton and offered polite but brief applause at the end of his address.

In his comments, Mr. Clinton urged an honest and open debate on the impact of the \$60-billion defence shield on which he is due to take a decision this summer, and insisted it would not hurt Russia's nuclear deterrence.

Nuclear Missile Defence (NMD) had become necessary because of the growing threat that weapons of mass destruction could fall "into hands that will threaten us both — rogue states, terrorists, organised criminal groups," Mr. Clinton said.

The U.S. leader said he wanted the response to boost "the strategic stability and arms control regimes" between Russia and the United States, adding: "The system we are contemplating will not undermine Russia's deterrence, or the principles of mutually assured destruction and strategic stability."

Mr. Clinton fielded curious Russians' ques-

tions about how he made his first dollar — and would he mind being "First Mister" if Mrs Hillary Clinton ever became President? Mr. Clinton appeared to relax and enjoy himself in the informal setting of a 25-minute call-in show in the studio of Moscow Radio yesterday which followed his formal talks at the Kremlin.

Mr. Clinton gave patient, easy answers to questions such as how he earned his first dollar (cutting lawns) and whether he was satisfied with his daughter Chelsea's progress in college. — AFP, Reuters, AP

## Chernobyl plant to be closed soon

**KIEV, JUNE 5.** The Chernobyl nuclear power plant, scene of the world's worst nuclear accident, will close forever on December 15, the Ukrainian President, Mr. Leonid Kuchma, told the United States President, Mr. Bill Clinton, today. Mr. Clinton, who praised Mr. Kuchma's decision, announced the release of more U.S. assistance.

*Business  
HO-16  
G/b*

"I am very proud and moved to be here today ... For this historic announcement ... That the final Reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant will be shut down and the entire plant closed forever on December 15," Mr. Clinton said, noting that today was the World Environment Day.

The United States would provide \$ 78 million to further protect the Chernobyl facility and \$ 2 million for safety measures at other nuclear power plants in Ukraine. — AP

THE HINDU

• 6 JUN 2000

# USA, N Korea talks on war victims

REUTERS

KUALA LUMPUR, June 7. — North Korea and the USA have begun secret talks on recovering the remains of thousands of US soldiers, missing in action in the Korean War. The US had suffered heavy casualties in that war.

A US embassy spokesman confirmed that the talks — delayed by a day because the chief US negotiator did not arrive here on time — started this morning.

But the location of the meeting was kept secret and USA

did not disclose the names of its negotiators, saying only that the head of its delegation was a civilian from the defence department.

The talks are the latest in a series focusing on recovering the remains of more than 8,100 soldiers.

The three-year Korean war ended with an armistice that divided the Korean peninsula into two countries, technically still at war.

The defence department released a statement today saying US teams had conducted 12 joint recovery operations

inside North Korea from 1996 to 1999, and recovered 42 sets of remains believed to be those of American soldiers.

"The army's central identification laboratory in Hawaii has positively identified three of the 42, with about 10 others in the forensic identification process," it said.

**Ties with New Zealand:** North Korea said it has formally proposed the establishment of diplomatic ties with New Zealand after the Prime Minister, Ms Helen Clark, recently said that she welcomed the idea, adds AP.

THE STATESMAN

- 8 JUN 2000

President's 45-minute speech to Russian parliament wins polite rather than deafening applause

# Clinton flourish ends low-key summit

FROM DEBORAH CHARLES

Moscow, June 5 (Reuters): US President Bill Clinton told Russians today on Monday their country's journey to democracy and the free market was probably the most important the world would see in his lifetime.

In the first address by a major Western leader to the state Duma or lower house of parliament, Clinton said entrepreneurs were flourishing and Russia's economy was growing but it needed to diversify away from raw materials and attract investment.

Clinton, approaching the last six months of his presidency, later had a final round of talks with President Vladimir Putin and visited Putin's predecessor Boris Yeltsin. The Kremlin said the two Presidents were pleased with their summit talks.

Clinton later departed for Kiev on the final stop of a week-long European tour that also took in Germany and Portugal. Putin was headed to Italy for talks.

In a 45-minute speech that won polite rather than deafening applause, Clinton told the Duma Russia should join the World Trade Organisation and that differences with Moscow on missile defence were mainly technical and could eventually be resolved.

Members of the Federation Council upper house were also in the Duma for Clinton's wide-ranging speech, a rhetorically rich flourish at the end of a summit that failed to bridge the gap on Russian opposition to US plans for an anti-missile shield.

"Russia's future is very important to others because it is among the most important journeys the world will witness in my lifetime," said Clinton, who held summit talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday.

"A great deal of the 21st century will be strongly influenced by the success of the Russian people in building a modern, strong, democratic nation that is part of the life of the rest of the world," Clinton said.

He also covered freedom of speech, defended Nato's air war over Kosovo and said his criticism of Russia's Chechnya military campaign was out of concern for civilian casualties.

He focused on his desire to see a strong Russia as part of Europe. As the speech was televised nationwide, it gave him direct access to many Russians beyond the Duma less than 24 hours after he also took part in a radio phone-in.

Clinton and Putin agreed at their summit there was an emerging ballistic missile threat from so-called rogue states but still differed on how to tackle it. Clinton said in his speech the differences were ultimately surmountable. "I believe that we ought to be able to reach an agreement about how we should proceed at each step along the way here in a way that preserves mutual deterrence, preserves strategic stability and preserves the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty," he said. "That is my goal."

The US wants to amend the 1972 ABM treaty to deploy a national anti-missile defence shield to intercept incoming rogue rockets. Putin would rather place defences close to risky states to shoot down missiles as they are launched.

On the economy, Clinton said the US would support Russia's bid to join the World Trade Organisation.

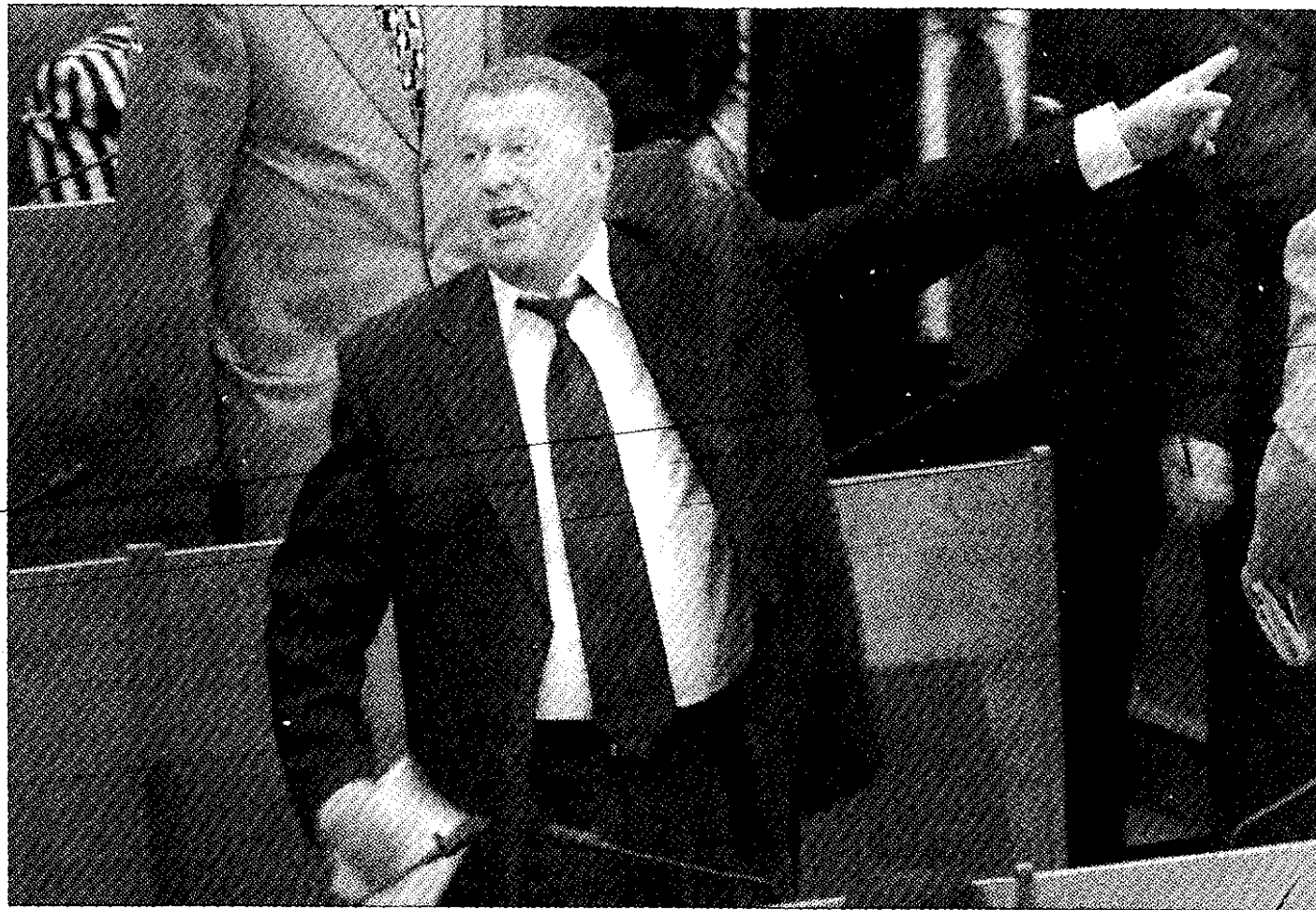
"Russia should not be the only major industrialised country standing outside this global trading system," he said.

"We will support you, but you must know the decision to join the WTO requires difficult choices that only you can make."

Russia, which applied in 1993 to enter the WTO, recently said it was ready to intensify efforts to join the organisation.

Clinton said yesterday he would back Russian efforts to unblock loans from the International Monetary Fund. He also said Russia should capitalise on high oil prices to build for the future.

"Russia has entered a phase where what it needs most is out-



**FIRE AND BRIMSTONE:** Russia's ultranationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy yells as US President Bill Clinton addressed a joint session of the Russian parliament in the Duma on Monday. Zhirinovskiy was complaining that members of parliament were applauding Clinton more than they do their own President. (Reuters)

side investment, not aid," he said. "I hope Russia will create a more diversified economy."

Clinton said the US wanted a strong Russia that was part of Europe, although the two countries' interests were not identical and they would have differences.

About 50 demonstrators protesting against US influence in Europe greeted his motorcade as he pulled up at the Duma, just across the street from Red Square and the Kremlin.

"We heard instructions (from Clinton) on how to further destroy

the country," ultranationalist deputy Vladimir Zhirinovskiy told reporters.

At a joint news conference yesterday evening, Clinton said that despite the differences on anti-missile defences, he was impressed with Putin and his economic team. "I think President Putin has an enormous opportunity and a great challenge," Clinton said.

Russian newspapers were muted in their comments. "The problems have not been resolved, the next round in tackling them

has merely been set," *Vremya Novostey* said in a front-page article entitled "Zero Option".

## Chernobyl end

The Chernobyl nuclear power plant, scene of the world's worst nuclear accident, will close forever on December 15, Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma announced today.

US President Bill Clinton, standing beside Kuchma as he made the Chernobyl announcement, offered increased US assis-

tance, and both leaders toasted the nuclear plant shutdown with champagne.

"I am very proud and moved to be here today for this historic announcement that the final reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant will be shut down and the entire plant closed forever on December 15," Clinton said, noting that today was World Environment Day.

Earlier, Clinton was greeted by a guard of honour girls in national dress with bread and salt, a traditional sign of welcome.

## Yeltsin in good spirits

Aboard Air Force One, June 5 (Reuters): President Bill Clinton said after visiting Boris Yeltsin at his residence today that the former Russian President looked well, was in good spirits and they got on "just like old times."

"Yeltsin looked good today. He was in good spirits, happy," Clinton told reporters aboard Air Force One. "He's got a beautiful place. We all just had a nice visit, just like old times."

"He's in good shape," Clinton said.

During the 40-minute meeting at Yeltsin's dacha about 20 minutes outside Moscow, the two leaders discussed international issues, including the US plan to build a missile defence system that the Russians oppose, according to the Interfax news service.

Most of their time together was spent recalling the past, drinking tea and eating cakes baked by Yeltsin's wife, Interfax said.

After the planned visit Clinton continued to the airport and boarded Air Force One for his trip to Ukraine.

Yeltsin, 69, stepped down as President at the end of last year. He is now easing into the role of an elder statesman.

The two men had a warm personal friendship, marked by jovial backslapping in public and what aides say was a frank rapport in private.

Tajik police found a large shipment of heroin on a train bound for Moscow - the latest discovery on a key drug route leading from Afghanistan to Russia and further into western Europe, officials said today.

Police seized 9 kg of heroin yesterday in a dining car and a service compartment of a passenger train at the Dushanbe train station, said a spokesman for the Tajik interior ministry who requested anonymity. Two people were detained on suspicion of transporting the drugs.

# Putin, Clinton talks may focus on alternative to U.S. missile defence plan

By Deborah Charles  
MOSCOW: U.S. President Bill Clinton and Vladimir Putin have "talked over supper at the start of a summit may focus on the Russian President's proposed alternative to a U.S. missile defence plan".



Bill Clinton

A senior U.S. administration official told reporters on Saturday that the first meeting between the two since Mr Putin became president lasted two and three-quarter hours and covered international security, arms control, the Balkans and the Caucasus.

"There was some personal and social conversation. And then they got very much down to business," the U.S. official said. "This set of conversations that will continue through the weekend."

He characterised the atmosphere as businesslike and congenial and the nature of their conversations easy going.

Interfax news agency quoted Mr Sergei Prikhodko, a deputy Kremlin administration chief who was at the dinner, as saying the presidents discussed arms control, the Balkans and the Caucasus in an open atmosphere with goodwill on both sides.

Both sides seemed anxious to make clear the two men got on. Mr Clinton had a warm

backslapping relationship with Mr Putin's predecessor Boris Yeltsin. Mr Putin is anything but backslapping.

After a dinner of wild boar, goose, trout and "bliny" pancakes, Mr Putin showed Mr Clinton his study, chapel and workout room before they returned to the table for Russian ice cream.

They later attended a jazz concert. A saxophone was kept at the ready in case Mr Clinton, a keen fan and player, wanted to join in. It was not immediately clear whether he did.

"It was quite broad ranging," the U.S. official said of the talks. "It was international security, very much including arms control and the strategic nuclear relationship."

He said it also included "the issue of various threats to international security" aside from arms control, including the Balkans and the Caucasus.

Har-las news agency quoted Mr Prikhodko as saying the leaders agreed to meet for unscheduled extra talks on Sunday morning. The original schedule has Mr Clinton and Mr Putin meeting at 14.30 IST.

But White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said the timeframe for the talks today remained the same although the format had been changed so the presidents initially met alone. Arms control is expected to dominate the agenda, although the Russian economy, Chechnya and regional problems will figure.

They may agree a deal on an early warning centre and on destroying some weapons-

grade plutonium from stockpiles. It seems less likely they will agree on U.S. plans and a Russian alternative proposal for an anti-missile defence shield. The summit talks are expected to be dominated by the U.S. plan to amend a 1972 treaty banning anti-missile defences to allow the deployment of a missile defence shield in Alaska.

Mr Putin added spice to the summit run-up by saying in a NBC Television interview on Thursday that Moscow would offer an alternative to the U.S. System, which Russia adamantly opposes. "We're looking forward to hearing in the conversations tomorrow about security and what he has in mind," Mr Lockhart said. "I'm not going to try to prejudge it."

It was Mr Clinton's fifth and probably last presidential visit here but his first meeting with Mr Putin since the former KGB spy took office last month after winning a March election.

Mr Clinton's motorcade drove into the Kremlin about two hours after he arrived in Russia on the penultimate leg of a week-long tour of Europe that has so far taken in Portugal and Germany. He will also visit Ukraine.

Mr Clinton leaves here on Monday after addressing Parliament, the first U.S. president to do so. He may visit a new Russian Orthodox Cathedral on Sunday morning, Kia news agency said.

He is scheduled to make a stopover in Kiev before returning to Washington.

Mr Clinton heard European concerns

about the U.S. anti-missile plan and sought to allay them by offering to share technology.

Kremlin officials said Mr Putin would propose a system that would shoot down the missiles with interceptors shortly after they were fired rather than high in their trajectory.

U.S. officials have been cool to the idea, but have said they are willing to listen to the Russian proposals.

"What's new is that Mr Putin is signalling that he is open to discuss it, that he is ready for talks," U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright told Germany's Phoenix TV.

The United States says it needs a shield to protect it from what it calls "rogue states", such as Iran and North Korea, that may soon develop long-range missiles. Arms control will not be the only potentially troublesome issue. U.S. national security adviser Sandy Berger said last week Mr Clinton would raise human rights and press freedom.

Mr Putin, the initiator of Moscow's offensive in Chechnya, has drawn a chorus of criticism from the west for alleged human rights abuses and indiscriminate use of force by Russian troops during the campaign, which has lasted more than eight months.

Mr Putin may also come under fire over an armed tax raid on the headquarters of a key media group, media-most, which is often critical of the Kremlin. Mr Clinton is

scheduled to be interviewed by Ekho Moskvy Radio station, owned by media-most, on Sunday. (Reuters)



# Schroeder cautions Clinton on missile defence

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**AACHEN (GERMANY), JUNE 2.** The German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder, honouring the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton's contribution to European peace, today warned him against upsetting the global arms balance with a new missile system.

In a speech prepared for delivery in Aachen before awarding Mr. Clinton the annual Charlemagne prize for peace, Mr. Schroeder told his guest that the U.S. plans for a national missile defence should be debated within the Atlantic alliance.

"Of course, it is the sovereign right of our American allies to take those decisions they consider appropriate to ensure their security," Mr. Schroeder said of the NMD, a system Washington says would shoot down rockets fired by rogue nuclear states.

"As this issue could have effects well beyond the USA, it is in the sense of the alliance that it be treated in a spirit of partnership," Mr. Schroeder said, welcoming assurances from Mr. Clinton to take account of the effect of the NMD on disarmament treaties.

Russia, where Mr. Clinton holds talks this weekend, has warned that the NMD could wreck existing arms control pacts. Mr. Schroeder, who said the system could affect 'other important states', cautioned Mr. Clinton yesterday against triggering a 'new arms race'.

## Support for Putin

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Schroeder have pledged support for the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, as Mr. Clinton visited Berlin before his first summit with the Kremlin leader.

"We have both agreed that America and Germany have a great interest in a stable partnership with Russia," Mr. Schroeder told a brief news conference which followed some two hours of talks yesterday after Mr. Clinton flew in from Lisbon.

"Both of us want to support Russia's political and economic stabilisation and so make President Putin's job easier," Mr. Clinton's National Security Adviser, Mr. Sandy Berger, told journalists later that both leaders



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, talks with the German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder, in Aachen, Germany on Friday. — AP

believed Mr. Putin was committed to modernising the Russian economy and, if he succeeded, would help entrench democracy there.

On the missile defence system, Mr. Schroeder said: "The President proceeded in a very frank way to present his views on the national missile defence programme and I have stated my concerns. We have to be very careful that such a project does not retrigger a renewed arms race."

Mr. Berger said Mr. Clinton explained to Mr. Schroeder he was concerned about how Europe viewed the

missile plan, and was taking into account any impact on the arms control regime, but stressed he had to make a decision in terms of national security.

Mr. Clinton praised Germany, Washington's biggest European ally and long its front line in the cold war, as a loyal partner.

"The relationship of the United States with Germany has been profoundly important for the last 50 years," he said. "But I think it may well be more important for the next 50." — Reuters

ABM / TREATY VOID, SAY REPUBLICANS

## Helms warns against renegotiations

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 27. The Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Jesse Helms, has warned the administration that any attempt by the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, who is in his last months in office, to renegotiate the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty with the Russians would be "dead on arrival" in his Committee which has to approve treaties.

In a blunt message to the White House, the Conservative Republican from North Carolina, said anything short of a National Missile Defence was not acceptable; and that this administration should have no business renegotiating the 1972 ABM Treaty. Any amendments to the treaty would limit the U.S. ability to deploy a wider missile defence, he said.

"The President is attempting to lock this nation into a system that cannot defend the American people. And the President is trying to resurrect the U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty which would make it impossible for future enhancements to U.S. national missile defence in general", Mr. Helms said in the Senate.

What the powerful Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee is saying is that his Committee may be willing to consider changes to the ABM Treaty, but not anything done by this administration. "Mr. Clinton wants an agreement, a signing ceremony, a final photo-op. He wants a picture shaking hands with the Russian President, broad smiles on their faces, largely ornate bound treaties under their arms as the cameras click perhaps for the last time — a final curtain call", Mr. Helms said.

The Conservatives, not just Mr. Helms, are up in arms against the Clinton administration's perceived attempts to negotiate with the Russians that would be binding on the next President and others down the road. It is in

this context that the prospective Republican nominee for this November election, Mr. George W. Bush, has said that he would oppose any last-minute deal with the Russians; and has argued that if the Russians feel that they could not make changes to the ABM Treaty, it could be scrapped. In fact, some in the GOP are making the point that legally the United States is not bound by the treaty as the other party — the Soviet Union — does not exist.

In Washington on Wednesday for a mega fund raiser that netted the Republican Party some \$ 21.3 millions, Mr. Bush also had a meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov. Top foreign policy aides to the Texas Governor like Ms Condoleezza Rice and Mr. Paul Wolfowitz were present at the meeting which is said to have covered a number of issues including the missile defence system and Chechnya.

"I explained to him my position as to why we need to develop a system to protect ourselves and our allies against a rogue missile launch, against any missile launch. It's part of re-defining a post Cold War era", Mr. Bush remarked later. He also made the point that during the course of the meeting the subject of Chechnya did come up; while Mr. Ivanov defended his country's position, Mr. Bush had argued that it was "troubling" to see the use of force on innocent civilians.

One perception has been that Moscow is formally protesting any national missile defence proposals by the U.S.; but at the same time is open to negotiations. The argument has also been that the Russians may not be too eager to strike a deal with Mr. Clinton who has barely eight months left to go. But the other part of the argument has been that Moscow would be keen on an accord now, as the political course that will be adopted by the next occupant of the White House is not certain.

THE HINDU

28 MAY 2003

# US House unshackles trade with China

FROM ERIC SCHMITT

Washington, May 25: In a stunning victory for the Clinton Administration and corporate America, the House yesterday swept aside economic restrictions on China that were part of anti-Communist policy for over a quarter century.

By a surprisingly wide margin of 237-197, lawmakers granted Beijing permanent normal trading privileges after months of fierce lobbying that pitted business against organised labour. A larger-than-expected Republican majority delivered President Clinton's top remaining legislative priority: three out of four Republicans voted in favour, while two out of three Democrats voted against.

Yesterday's vote virtually as-

surves the end of the annual review of China's trade status, a ritual for 20 years that Beijing considers humiliating but opponents say maintains leverage over improving human rights. Congress has approved the trade status every year. The Senate is expected to endorse the permanent measure as early as next month, but may question some of the amendments the House added to the Bill.

In his waning days in office, Clinton threw the powers of the presidency behind passing what he considers a crowning foreign policy triumph. He met more than 100 lawmakers face-to-face or in groups, sometimes on Air Force One, telephoned scores more and travelled to congressional districts to rally support.

"The House of Representatives has taken an historic step towards

continued prosperity in America, reform in China and peace in the world," Clinton said.

Gov. George W. Bush of Texas, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee who has many times voiced support for the legislation, also hailed yesterday's House action. "Passage of this legislation will mean a stronger American economy, as well as more opportunity for liberty and freedom in China," Bush said.

Vice-President Al Gore, who has walked a political tightrope between his labour allies and Clinton, also voiced support yesterday for the Bill, but qualified it by saying that more had to be done to guarantee workers' rights. "We must continue our efforts to assure that workers will succeed in a global economy," he said.

American companies and

telecommunications companies. The agreement paved the way for China to enter the WTO, the 135-member trade group that sets the rules for global commerce.

Regardless of yesterday's vote, China will enter the international trade club. But without the blessing of Congress, Beijing could withhold some trade benefits from the US that it extends to

other WTO members.

Labour unions, religious groups, environmentalists and veterans organisations waged a furious campaign to deny Beijing this trade plum, arguing it wrongly rewarded a Communist government that threatens its neighbours, represses its citizens and thumbs its nose at the rule of law.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

THE NEW YORK TIMES

26 MAY 2000

# US Democrats split over China trade

INDIA ABROAD NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON, May 22. -- Mr Bill Clinton's Democratic Party appears divided down the middle over his proposal to establish permanent trade relations with China, with the party's labour wing going all out to defeat the measure.

The administration is unsure of its Congressional approval and is banking on the opposition Republican Party to see the measure through. The 435-member House of Representatives is expected to vote on the measure on Wednesday.

The Bill needs 218 votes to pass. According to reports, only about 70 of the House's 211 Democrats are expected to support the legislation, joining about 140 of the 222 Republican members.

PNTR is Mr Clinton's top legislative priority for his final year in the government.

"We don't have the 218 to pass it and the Opposition does not have 218 at this point to stop it," commerce secretary, Mr William Daley, said in a Sunday television talk show.

In another talk show, House Republican Whip, Mr Tom DeLay said: "We're doing really well. We're moving towards that magic number of 218 votes and, I think, in the end we'll be able to pass it."

The situation in the Democratic Party is precarious with every two out of its three House members expected to vote against the measure. "China is a brutal, authoritarian police state," said senior House Democratic leader, Mr

David Bonior, who is a leading opponent to PNTR.

Labour unions, a Democratic constituency, launched a weekend offensive, lobbying undecided party lawmakers in their constituencies against PNTR. Their argument is that the measure, if passed, would set back human rights in China and cost hundreds of thousands of American workers their jobs.

The Bill enjoys full backing of the American businesses out to cash in on the virgin Chinese markets. Mr Clinton, who abruptly called off a planned broadcast to the nation on the trade Bill, spoke to centrist Democrats in New York yesterday. The trade Bill would benefit the US economy and unleash forces that might hasten the demise of China's one-party state, he said.

Besides Mr Daley, the secretary of state, Mrs Madeleine Albright, also took to the air to argue in favour of the Bill.

To win support for the Bill, Republican leaders had announced last week that PNTR would include provisions for setting up a commission that would monitor Chinese human rights and could recommend sanctions against Beijing consistent with World Trade Organisation rules.

The Bill authorises Mr Clinton to exempt China from Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974, which applies to communist countries with non-market economies and requires Congress to vote every year on whether to allow normal trade relations with China.

THE STATESMAN

23 MAY 2000

## Iraq, US reach compromise on review of nuclear talks

United Nations, May 21

IRAQ AND the United States have reached a compromise on the single remaining obstacle to completion of the review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, it was announced today.

Chief Canadian delegate Christopher Westdal, who headed efforts to mediate between the two, told the conference "the last piece of the puzzle is complete".

The deadlock was broken after almost 24 hours of intense bargaining, which saw diplomats shuttling between conference rooms in the vast basement area of the United Nations headquarters.

In the end, several diplomats said Iraq and the United States were wrangling over a single word.

Disagreement centred on the US insistence that the conference encourage Iraq to comply with the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The five nuclear weapon states have adopted a historic agreement giving, for the first time, an "unequivocal" commitment to

eliminate their atomic weapons, that rekindled hopes of freeing the world of nuclear danger and also infused a fresh lease of life to the aging Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The consensus document, adopted at the end of the month-long intense deliberations to review the 30-year-old NPT, also deplored underground nuclear tests carried out by India and Pakistan in May, 1998, and asked the two countries to join the regime as "non-nuclear weapon states."

India, Pakistan, Israel and Cuba have not signed the Treaty, which has been ratified by 187 countries. India says it is committed to nuclear disarmament, but considers the Treaty discriminatory as it allows nuclear weapons states to keep their atomic arsenals.

The agreement was reached after all-night deliberations and intense pressure on Iraq and the US to settle a dispute over Baghdad's nuclear compliant, a major stumbling block in the approval of a final document. However, the gruelling negotiations ended in a final

agreement to encourage Iraq to comply with the international safeguards, delegates said.

**Significant step, says Annan:** Minutes after the cheering delegates adopted the agreement, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan described the historic consensus reached at the NPT conference as "a significant step forward" in humanity's pursuit of a more peaceful world.

One of the highlights of the conference was emergence of the "new agenda coalition" comprising moderate nations which played a major role in achieving the consensus. It comprises South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Egypt, New Zealand, Sweden and Ireland.

Banging down his gavel, conference chairman Abdallah Baili of Algeria said: "Today is a great day for the cause of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament."

"I declare this conference closed, thank God, for five years," he said.

With decisions taken by consensus, any one of the 187 signatories to the Treaty can cast a veto.

(Agencies)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

22 MAY 2000

West Bank simmers on day after bloody battles

# US resumes West Asia talks

FROM SAMAR ASSAD

**Ramallah (West Bank), May 16 (AP):** A US envoy resumed mediation in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks today, a day after deadly gun battles in the West Bank and Gaza Strip brought the two sides to the brink of a full-scale conflict.

Three Palestinians were killed yesterday and at least 320 Palestinians and 15 Israeli soldiers were hurt in the worst flare-up of violence in two years. Palestinian officials initially reported four dead, but today lowered the count.

The day began with marches by thousands of Palestinians marking the anniversary of "Al Naqba," the Arabic word for catastrophe that the Palestinians use to describe Israel's founding and the beginning of their displacement 52 years ago.

The PLO Executive Committee today expressed "its great pride in the great popular awakening that swept all areas of our nation and refugee camps on the occasion of the Naqba."

The commander of Israeli forces in the West Bank, Maj. Gen. Moshe Yaalon, said the Palestinian Authority organised the protests, but eventually lost control.

"The Palestinian Authority intended to cause a relatively con-

rolled flare-up, but in some places it got out of hand," Yaalon told reporters today.

Yaalon said that in one incident late yesterday, hundreds of Palestinians, some of them shooting live rounds, surrounded Joseph's Tomb, a tiny Israeli enclave in the West Bank town of Nablus. The gate of the compound was forced open and two Palestinians burst in, wounding an Israeli border policeman in the leg.

Other border policemen returned fire, killing one of the intruders, and closed the gate, Yaalon said. As a precaution, the Israeli army moved armoured personnel carriers to the outskirts of the city, but did not enter Palestinian-run areas.

Eventually, Palestinian policemen dispersed the crowd. Palestinian officials denied that they had organised the protests, saying the clashes were a result of growing frustration over slow-moving peace talks and Israel's refusal to release more Palestinians held in prison for violence against Israelis.

Despite the violence, Israelis and Palestinians continued negotiations on a blueprint for a full peace treaty.

Secret talks were held this week in the Swedish capital of Stockholm, in the presence of US

mediator Dennis Ross, Palestinian officials said.

Ross arrived in Jerusalem last evening and was to meet Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in the West Bank town of Ramallah. It was not immediately clear when Ross would meet with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

Israeli public security minister Shlomo Ben-Ami, who participated in the Stockholm talks, said negotiators had little time left to formulate the blueprint of a peace treaty. A full agreement on borders, Jerusalem, Palestinian refugees and Jewish settlements is due in September.

"The timetable of this agreement is the timetable of the effectiveness of (US President Bill) Clinton's government," Ben-Ami told Israel army radio. "Everyone understands that this is more or less two months."

The negotiator said the fate of Jerusalem was not discussed in the most recent round. The Palestinians want to establish a future capital in east Jerusalem, the sector captured from Israel in the 1967 West Asia war. Israel says it will not give up control over all the city.

Yesterday, Israel's Cabinet and Parliament approved plans by Prime Minister Ehud Barak to transfer three West Bank villages

near the city to Palestinian rule in a good-will gesture. One of the suburbs — Abu Dis — has been cited as a possible future Palestinian capital, though the Palestinians have rejected the proposal.

Barak told Arafat yesterday that the transfer of the villages would take place only after the violence abates.

## Hamas fugitive

A Palestinian bombmaker who topped Israel's most wanted list was arrested when Palestinian agents stormed his Gaza City safehouse after evening prayers, a leader of the Islamic militant group Hamas said today, for the first time revealing details of the capture.

The arrest of Mohammed Deif, the top Hamas fugitive for the past four years, has been shrouded in mystery, with neither Israeli nor the Palestinian security officials willing to talk about it.

Ismail Abu Shanab, a Hamas leader, said Deif was seized last Thursday at a safehouse in Gaza City's Sabra neighbourhood where Hamas' spiritual leader, Sheik Ahmed Yassin, also resides.

Deif had just completed Muslim evening prayers when agents, dressed in civilian clothes, stormed the house, Abu Shanab said.

THE TELEGRAPH

17 MAY 2000

# US poised to reunite Elian, father, visa okayed

CUBAN castaway Elian Gonzalez looked set to be reunited with his father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, as soon as this week after US officials announced on Monday they were negotiating how to turn the boy over.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) announced that as soon as Gonzalez arrives in the US, which could be as soon as Tuesday, it would transfer legal responsibility for the care of Elian to him, ending months of deadlock. "As soon as the father arrives he will have legal authority to care for Elian," INS spokeswoman Maria Cardona said.

"We will start giving instructions on how to transfer the boy at that point," she added. Visas for Gonzalez, his wife, their infant son and a young cousin, were approved late on Monday, the US State Department said. Elian's pediatrician and kinder-

garten teacher have also been given permission to come to the United States, but the State Department is still reviewing visa applications submitted by 22 other people. "The interest section is submitting a list of questions to the Cuban government to determine the merits of those individual cases," State Department spokesman James Rubin said.

Gonzalez will be required to remain with Elian in the United States while his Miami relatives pursue their legal appeal, the INS said. However, the move does not mean "that the child will be immediately removed from the home of his great-uncle", it cautioned in a statement. "Instead, it is our intention to begin a smooth and orderly process that will create as little disruption as possible for Elian."

The development came on the third day of talks between immigration officials and Elian's Miami rel-

atives. The discussions had been deadlocked by the family's refusal to sign an agreement to surrender

the boy to the INS should they lose their legal appeal. The family is appealing against an earlier court de-

cision upholding the INS's January ruling that the boy should be returned to his father in Cuba. The relatives' aim is to win asylum for Elian, but INS has declined to hear their petitions on the boy's behalf. Lawyers for Elian's great uncle Lazaro Gonzalez spoke only briefly after Monday's session concluded.

"We continue to be first and foremost concerned about the mental and psychological well being of this six-year-old," family attorney Manny Diaz told reporters. "We will be back tomorrow to continue our conversations," he added. But the INS reminded the family of earlier promises to welcome their Cuban family member. "The Miami relatives have long said that they wanted the father to come here. The father should be encouraged and supported in his desire to be here with his son."

—Agence France Presse



Elian plays at his Miami home on Monday with Donato Dalrymple, one of the fishermen who found him off Florida coast in November — AFP

# India ignored early warnings on Sri Lankan crisis

By Nirupama Subramanian

IF there is one thing that the rapidly unfolding events in Sri Lanka have demonstrated, it is the total absence of foresight and the gross underestimation of the LTTE that has characterised India's policy towards its southern neighbour in the last six years.

The LTTE's moves to recapture Jaffna peninsula are neither surprising nor sudden. Right from November 1999, when the Tigers forced the Sri Lankan troops out of their camps in the Vanni mainland, it was obvious that their leader, Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, was eyeing Jaffna.

In fact, the first shot for the recapture of Jaffna was fired as far back as September 1998, when the LTTE recaptured Killinochchi, killing hundreds of soldiers in two days of fighting and forcing the military to redraw its defence perimeters in the Vanni. It was evident then, as much as it was a year later, that the morale of the armed forces had dropped.

Even before that, the Tigers had begun a slow but deadly campaign to destabilise the Government's fragile control over the peninsula, beginning with the May 1998 assassination of Sarojini Yogeswaran, who had been elected the Mayor of Jaffna, in January that year. Four months later, her successor, Pon Sivapalan, met the same fate.

There were other killings, including those of Army and police officers and members of Tamil parties, which showed that despite the sunshine stories being put out by the Sri Lankan Government, it was not in total control of

what was happening in the peninsula. Today, with the Sri Lankan Government as good as throwing in the towel, India's dilemma is embarrassingly visible — to intervene on behalf of the Government is to run the risk of fanning ethnic flames back home; to not intervene is to perhaps allow the formation of an Eelam headed by a malevolent force.

But it need not have been so had India read the warnings early. Ideally, after the Army's capture of Jaffna peninsula, the Indian Government should have nudged, perhaps even pushed, the Sri Lankan political establishment

to an early implementation of the President, Ms. Chandrika Kumaratunga's devolution proposals, which in their original 1995 form, were the most far-reaching concessions to the aspirations of the Tamil community. Their worth was all the more because the concessions were offered unilaterally.

At the same time, it could have pushed the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, Mr. Vaiko and other Eelamists to use their influence to convince the LTTE to settle with the Sri Lankan Government when the group was militarily at its weakest and its popularity amongst the Tamil community at its lowest in the months after the capture of Jaffna. However, India merely watched as matters drifted from bad to worse. The oft-repeated "hands off" policy was apparently also "we don't want to hear" policy to what was happening in the

island — the political stalemate over the devolution proposals on the one hand and the military stalemate on the other, the increasing firepower of the LTTE and the corresponding decrease in the morale of the Army.

Today, there is a sudden awakening as the Tigers knock rudely on Jaffna's doors and by extension, the gates of Tamil Nadu. But for India now, it is like the proverbial rat that got stuck in the snake's throat, and could neither be swallowed nor be spat out.

India's offer to mediate in the crisis now is a little late in the day. If Mr. Prabhakaran succeeds in grabbing back Jaffna peninsula, it is once again back to the pre-1995 situation when the LTTE ran a de facto Eelam out of the peninsula and parts of the mainland. In such a scenario, what can negotiations offer Mr. Prabhakaran that he already would not have, except a negotiated international boundary line? It can be argued that if Mr. Prabhakaran had really wanted to declare independence, he would have done so in those five years he ruled Jaffna, but the fact that he did not do so is evidence that he may be willing to settle for something short of Eelam. Wrong.

Mr. Prabhakaran has never once said he will settle for less than Eelam and has at least once annually, on the LTTE's 'Martyrs Day' in November, reiterated his commitment to an independent Tamil nation. What he was waiting for between 1990 to 1995, and will be prepared to wait for again, is for world opinion to turn in his favour, or at least, for the international

community to learn to live with him at the head of an independent Eelam.

That is unacceptable for India. It would be like having a Taliban on the southern border. For that reason, if it decides to help the Sri Lankan Government crush the LTTE directly or indirectly, there is yet another aspect to India's dilemma that may not be too obvious from Delhi, but that has to be recorded — after six years of Ms. Kumaratunga's "war for peace", the Tamil community that supported her in the early days as a messenger of peace is now totally alienated from her.

It is the sad and unpalatable truth that a majority of Tamils are today either vocal or silent supporters of the LTTE. Most believe that if the LTTE were to be defeated militarily, the Sinhala political establishment would close the chapter on the "Tamil problem" and bury their political aspirations forever.

So, even if New Delhi were to decide to bail out the Sri Lankan Government at this late hour, the first step has to be, in keeping with India's own commitment to the ideal of a multi-ethnic, pluralistic and democratic society, a guarantee from the Sinhala political establishment that it will not succumb to pressure from the extreme nationalist elements, present both in the Government and the Opposition today, that it is ready to put in place a polity and society that genuinely, in letter and spirit, addresses the aspirations of its minority communities. If need be, India should even underwrite this guarantee for its own long-term interests.

NEWS ANALYSIS

15 MAY 2000



## U.S. defends 'soft' approach to Pak.

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

NEW YORK, MAY 2. The Clinton administration has clearly said that while Pakistan definitely needed to improve efforts on the issue of terrorism, it did not merit being designated a "state sponsor" of terrorism.

"I don't believe Pakistan merits being designated as a 'state sponsor'. Pakistan is a friendly country. They cooperate with us on numerous terrorist issues...They have raised some issues that have been discussed at the highest levels by the President himself when he was in Islamabad, by the Secretary (of State) and others. We continue to work with them. But they definitely need to improve their efforts on this issue," said Mr. Michael Sheehan, top official for Counter-Terrorism at the State Department.

He was commenting on the Terrorism Report of 1999, which was formally released today. The report said the Government in Islamabad had tolerated terrorists living and moving freely in the country. Further, the Government "has supported groups that engage in violence in Kashmir and it has provided indirect support for

terrorists in Afghanistan.

In her formal statement on the report, the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, did not even refer to Pakistan or its role in international terrorism. Talking about the shift in the patterns of terrorism — structure, sponsorship and geography — Ms. Albright only said, "and we are seeing an eastward shift in terrorism's centre of gravity, from West Asia to South Asia, particularly Afghanistan."

Mr. Sheehan, answering questions on Pakistan at every opportunity, defended why it was not included in the list of nations sponsoring terrorism. For instance, he was asked what the administration meant when it said Pakistan continues sending mixed messages. "They have a mixed record on it. On the one hand, they'll cooperate with extradition. They provide good security for our embassies. We have a good relationship on a broad range of security issues. But, on the other hand, they have relationships both with Kashmiri groups and with the Taliban in Afghanistan that are troubling...they need to improve the record on that score," he said.

On why Pakistan was not included in the list when there was a link with foreign terrorist organisations, he noted, "when we look at the designation of a state sponsor, we look at the entirety of the country's record on counter-terrorism. And in the case of Pakistan, although we have some problems and issues with them, they were not designated a state sponsor. They do have problems, and we're pressing them to move forward on that."

Asked about the call for a "jehad" to free Kashmir by religious leaders in Pakistan and the implications of the emergence of fundamentalist groups, Mr. Sheehan said this was not an issue of terrorism. "... we concern ourselves with terrorist acts, criminal acts."

On whether attacks on Indian soldiers by groups of the so-called freedom fighters would amount to terrorism, he said, "our definition of terrorism, by the legislation, is very explicit. But in general terms, in a war, if military forces are attacking each other, it's not terrorism. But if an armed terrorist organisation attacks civilian targets, that's terrorism."

India sees little hope: Page 13

THE HINDU

MAY 7 2000

# US missile defence worries EU

BY DAVID STOREY

Washington, May 2: US attempts to build a nationwide defence system capable of knocking out incoming enemy missiles could prompt fears in Europe that Washington is "decoupling" from its Nato allies, a senior European Union official said on Monday.

Mr Javier Solana, the EU's coordinator for foreign and defence policy, made clear Europe was following warily Washington's discussions with a reluctant Moscow over US plans to set up a national missile defence system. "If we feel we are not defended it may risk the beginning of decoupling," Mr Solana said during a visit which included talks with secretary of state Madeleine Albright and US President Bill Clinton's national

security adviser Sandy Berger.

His visit followed a week of intensive discussions between Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov and US leaders here at which Mr Ivanov showed no sign Russia was budging from its determined opposition to such a US system. Some European countries, notably France, have strongly opposed the US proposals, partly because they would create significantly different security arrangements for one Nato member, leaving European allies unprotected.

Most believe the principle of deterrence, that has helped avert a major East-West war for 50 years, should be maintained. Others have been less vocal, although even states most loyal to the United States, including Britain, believe there should be no undermining of

existing treaties or any action taken that would prompt a crisis with Moscow.

Hungarian foreign minister Janos Martonyi accepted on Monday US arguments for a defence against missiles fired by "rogue states" but said it should be possible to develop such a system without confrontation with Russia. "You decide whether you go ahead or not. This concern is legitimate and the decision will be that of the United States," Mr Martonyi said at a joint news conference with Albright, underscoring the need for consultation and discussion, especially with Russia. "Confrontation does not help anyone, and it's in our basic interest in central Europe that confrontation with Russia in the future can be avoided," he said. To go ahead with the system

Washington would have to either substantially modify or abandon the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which bans the sort of anti-missile missile system Washington is considering. "If it takes place, we would like to see it done in such a manner that it does not strain the transatlantic link," Mr Solana said. "And we would like to see it done in such a manner that the basic agreements, like the ABM, are not disturbed to the effect that we have a crisis with Russia," he added.

But he said if Russian agreement could be won to change the ABM treaty, he believed it would be possible to construct a system that would not damage US-European ties in Nato. "I think it's possible, it should be possible. We have to try to make it possible," he said. (Reuters)

THE ASIAN AGE

3 MAY 2003

## European nations wary of U.S. missile defence plans

375  
11-16

WASHINGTON: The U.S. attempts to build a nationwide defence system capable of knocking out incoming enemy missiles could prompt fears in Europe that Washington is "decoupling" from its NATO allies, a senior European Union official said.

EU's coordinator for foreign and defence policy Javier Solana, made clear Europe was following warily Washington's discussions with a reluctant Moscow over U.S. plans to set up a National Missile Defence (NMD) system. "If we feel we are not defended it may risk the beginning of decoupling," Mr Solana said during a visit which included talks with secretary of state Madeleine Albright and President Bill Clinton's national security adviser Sandy Berger.

His visit followed a week of intensive discussions between Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov and U.S. leaders here at which Ivanov showed no sign Russia was budging from its determined opposition to such a U.S. system. Some European countries, notably France, have strongly opposed the U.S. proposals, partly because they would create significantly different security arrangements for one NATO member, leaving European allies unprotected.

Most believe the principle of deterrence, that has helped avert a major East-West war for 50 years, should be maintained. Others have been less vocal, although even states most loyal to the U.S., including Britain, believe there should be no undermining of existing treaties or any action taken that would prompt a crisis with Moscow. To go ahead with the system Washington would have to either substantially modify or abandon the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty.

"If it takes place (the building of an NMD system), we would like to see it done in such a manner that it does not strain the trans-Atlantic link," Solana said.

"And we would like to see it done in such a manner that the basic agreements, like the ABM, are not disturbed to the effect that we have a crisis with Russia," he added. But he said if Russian agreement could be won to change the ABM treaty, he believed it would be possible to construct a system that would not damage U.S.-European ties in NATO. "I think it's possible; it should be possible. We have to try to make it possible," he said, stressing that the argument was hypothetical as Mr Clinton has yet to formally decide to go ahead with the multi-billion dollar programme. (Reuters)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

NOV 16 2000

# U.S. seeks effective monitoring of sanctions on Iraq

By Jal Taraporevala

U.S. secretary of defence William Cohen has called for tougher measures to counter the violation of Security Council sanctions by Iraq. This assertion must be interpreted in terms of the growing irritation of the Bill Clinton administration at the continuing refusal of the leadership in Baghdad to accept the revised U.N. formula for the resumption of international weapons inspections in Iraq.

Given this Iraqi stand, Washington is tactically seeking to increase the pressure on Baghdad on other issues — a more effective monitoring of sanctions busting by the Saddam Hussein regime and an intensification of American and British patrolling of the air exclusion zones in southern and northern Iraq.

Mr Cohen's call is also a tacit acknowledgement of the difficulty of the U.S. to effectively counter the leakages in the sanctions regime without the active cooperation of other nations.

In particular, Baghdad has been exporting oil not approved by the Security Council using Iranian territorial waters to avoid capture by American ships. Washington, which wants Teheran to clamp down hard on the use of this route by Baghdad, seems to calculate that Iran could now be more receptive to these calls. After all, the U.S. has

lifted the export ban on some luxury items to Iran and Teheran and Baghdad have, of late, been accusing each other of supporting the activities of violent opposition groups.

The U.S. has pointed to the recent seizure of an Iraqi oil tanker by Teheran within Iranian territorial waters as an example of what ought to be done to counter violations of the U.N. embargo by Baghdad.

It is, however, unlikely that Teheran will be forthcoming on the issue to the extent that Washington would like. The attitude of Teheran would essentially hinge on the state of its relations with Baghdad and the nature of the activities of Iranian opposition groups based in Iraq.

In view of the enormous problems that continue to characterise U.S.-Iranian relations, Teheran could well choose to go slow in clamping down on the use of its territorial waters by Iraq and use the issue as a potential tactical lever in any future discussions with Washington.

In addition, with the conservatives in Iran still exerting an influence over certain key institutions of power, it is scarcely in the interests of President Mohammad Khatami to do anything that could be perceived as conforming to the wishes of the U.S.

— NEWS ANALYSIS —

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MAY 2 1990

US report harsh  
on Pakistan,  
Afghanistan

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, May 2. — The US state department's annual report, which has indicted Pakistan and Afghanistan for their role in terrorism, is being viewed by India as an acknowledgement of its long-standing criticism of the two regimes. The report, analysts point out, has been much harsher on the two countries than hitherto.

Responding to questions on the report, the external affairs spokesman said, "The report confirms in large measure what we have been saying — that Pakistan and Afghanistan have emerged as the focal points of international terrorism and that Pakistan is involved in terrorist activity in India and elsewhere."

The report, he added, also recognised that the government of India had taken a number of steps against terrorism at home and abroad.

THE STATI

3 MAY 2000

# Senate grills Reno on Elian raid

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, April 26. — Senate Republicans grilled attorney general Ms Janet Reno on using force to seize Elian Gonzalez from his Miami relatives' home. They called for a hearing to examine the incident.

But opinion polls showed that most Americans approved of Saturday's raid and the return of Elian to his father. Political analysts even asked whether Republicans hoped to gain politically from the grilling.

Elian, his father, Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez, his stepmother and baby brother were taken from Andrews air force base outside Washington, where they were kept since the raid, to an as-yet undisclosed site.

CNN reported that they were at a private home near Chesapeake Bay, an hour's drive from here. But this remains unconfirmed.

Elian's Miami relatives had defied the justice department in not turning over the boy, triggering an international custody battle pitting Cuba against Cuban Americans in Miami. The relatives had cared for

## Cuban friends may join Elian

WASHINGTON, April 26. — Elian Gonzalez's father wants four of his son's Cuban friends to come and keep him company in USA, state department spokesman Mr James Rubin said. Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez has asked the US government to expedite the visas for the children. The state department has agreed to deal with the applications rapidly. — Reuters

him since he survived a shipwreck off Florida in November.

Senate majority leader Mr Trent Lott of Mississippi led the Senate delegation of both Republicans and Democrats — most of them critical of the government's action — during a nearly two-hour closed-door meeting with Ms Reno on Capitol Hill yesterday.

It was said as having a "courtroom" atmosphere, with some sharp exchanges.

Some Republicans emerged saying they were dissatisfied

with Ms Reno's explanation of why she authorised the raid by helmeted and armed agents, who bundled a tearful Elian into a waiting van.

"Nothing said in the meeting makes me any less concerned about the use of force by our government," said Florida Republican Sen. Connie Mack.

"It is an overreaching of powers by the government," said Mr Mack, who told reporters he would recommend to Mr Lott that the Senate hold a hearing into the government's actions.

Ms Reno, who said she did not "regret" the operation, was accompanied at the meeting by deputy attorney general Mr Eric Holder and Immigration and Naturalisation Service director Ms Doris Meissner.

In the afternoon, Ms Reno and her team were given a standing ovation and praised by President Clinton for the operation at a White House function.

"Now that they are reunited, I believe it is time for all of us, including the media, to give this family the space it needs to heal its wounds," Mr Clinton said.

THE STATESMAN

27 APR 2000

# Elian still a long way from Cuba

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, April 23. — Now that Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez has regained custody of his son, he faces what could be a long legal battle to return with his family to Cuba.

He has promised to stay at least until a federal appeal in his custody battle with Miami relatives is settled.

The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta is scheduled to hear arguments on 11 May on whether six-year-old Elian Gonzalez can seek asylum without his father's permission and whether the US Immigration and Naturalisation Service should have interviewed the boy to determine his wishes.

Legal experts said that the

case could end in a matter of weeks or continue for months.

The court has already indicated that Elian has the right to seek asylum because immigration law does not specify when a child is too young to have such a right.

The precedent is a 1980s case of a Ukrainian boy who successfully sought asylum over his parents' objections. The court that decided that case said 12-year-old Walter Polovchak was "presumably near the lower end of an age range" of maturity to claim rights separate from his parents.

If, after oral arguments, the appeals court decides Elian can speak for himself, the question becomes whether he has been unduly influenced by his

Miami relatives who want to keep him in the USA or by his father, who wishes him to return to Cuba, experts said.

Attorney Neal Sonnett of the American Bar Association's coordinating committee on immigration law suggested that although the Miami relatives say the boy wishes to remain in the United States, now that he is with his father, Elian might say, "I love my Daddy and I want to go back with my Daddy."

Mr Bernard Perlmutter, director of the University of Miami's Children and Youth Law Clinic, contends "children of tender years are incapable of making major life decisions".

Although there's no indication that he would, there is also the

possibility that the father, who is in the USA with his second wife and another, younger son, could change his own mind and seek asylum for himself and his family. Barring that, if the appeals court determines Elian cannot speak for himself, legal experts said the question then becomes: Who speaks for him, Mr Lazaro Gonzalez, his great uncle in Miami, or his father?

With such a ruling, the father undoubtedly will petition the court to replace Mr Lazaro Gonzalez as the boy's chief guardian, the legal experts said. The father's attorney, Mr Gregory B Craig, has said all along that only the father has the legal right to speak for his son. INS Commissioner Doris Meissner has said likewise.

THE STATESMAN

24 APR 2000

1997 Mr. Barak  
10-16

# Clinton, Arafat set date for pact

WASHINGTON, APRIL 21. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton met on Thursday night the Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, to begin a last-stage effort by this administration to work out a final agreement between the Israelis and Palestinians.

The two sides have set an ambitious target of September 13 for the agreement that would establish the size and shape of a Palestinian entity, decide the future of Jerusalem and deal with the future of Palestinian refugees. After the collapse of Israel's talks with Syria, the focus now for Washington, the Israelis and the Palestinians is on this make-or-break agreement, and for that reason, new vigour had been injected into what had become a somewhat desultory process, officials said. They acknowledge, however, that sorting out the most difficult issues in just five months is a tall order. For one thing, it is on those issues that the Palestinians and Israelis bargain the hardest.

Mr. Clinton, speaking just before greeting Mr. Arafat, said there were "risks and difficulties" to both sides. But if they were willing to work at resolving the differences, he said, "I will do whatever we can." More bluntly, the State Department spokesman, Mr. James Rubin, said the administration would like both Mr. Arafat and the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak, to "recognise they can't achieve 100 per cent of their objectives, and authorise their negotiators to be creative in moving forward." Mr. Arafat's arrival was planned as a parallel visit to the meeting last week between Mr. Barak and Mr. Clinton. At that time, the Israeli leader said he wanted to concentrate on the Palestinian talks.

Mr. Arafat had lunch with the Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, in the garden of her Georgetown home. As a sign of his seriousness, Mr. Barak agreed that two of the administration's top West Asia negotiators, the special envoy Mr. Dennis Ross and his deputy, Mr. Aaron Miller, would take part in the next round of talks with the Palestinians. Those talks are planned to build on two sessions held here at Bolling Air Force Base. The next round, with Mr. Ross and Mr. Miller in attendance, is expected to start in West Asia in early May.

Mr. Barak suggested this week that in an effort to gain some momentum, he might offer the Palestinians recognition of a State with contiguous territory on the West Bank. The Palestinians now control about 40 per cent of the West Bank, but in pieces of land that are



The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton (right), and the Palestine leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, walk out of the White House and into the Rose Garden to take questions from members of the media prior to their meeting on Thursday. — AP

not joined together. But Palestinian officials dismissed that as a trial balloon. What land the Israelis give up to the Palestinians, who are demanding withdrawal to the borders that existed before the 1967 war, will be one of the thorniest issues.

The Israelis have been cautious about allowing American diplomats to attend the negotiations, but Mr. Barak's willingness to admit them has been interpreted in the administration as a signal that he would like to achieve agreement speedily. Because the gaps between the two sides are considerable, as one American describes them, and it is not exactly clear where the two sides stand, Mr. Ross and Mr. Aaron will probably not force themselves to the front immediately, an official involved in the process said.

The two sides are to begin their talks in May with little to build on from the talks at the

Bolling air base. There, the negotiators moved beyond "brainstorming" to exchanging draft agreements that amounted to what officials described as "skeletons." The next step would be, perhaps, to merge the "skeletons," an official said. Both sides agreed a while ago that they would reach a "framework" agreement, outlining the generalities of a final accord, by May. But a senior administration official said today that there was not enough progress to meet the May target and that all effort would be directed toward the September deadline.

Overhanging the coming months is the threat by Mr. Arafat to declare a Palestinian State unilaterally if an agreement is not reached by September 13. Last year, Mr. Arafat agreed to delay such an announcement by one year. Under the pressure of Palestinian public opinion, he may be unable to delay another 12 months. — *New York Times*

THE HINDU

2 APR 2 1997



# Elían drama: US Government offers Miami relatives trade-off

MIAMI, April 15: The US Government made a lightning switch in tactics on Friday, offering to meet one of the demands of Elían Gonzalez's Miami relatives — provided they turn over the youngster at the centre of a months-long custody dispute. In court papers filed in Atlanta, the government said it would be prepared to guarantee the boy would stay in the US for the duration of the appeals process, if the federal appeals court ordered the family to surrender Elían.

Late on Friday, the Justice Department also released a letter making it clear that the Gonzalez family had been stripped of any legal authority for Elían when it failed to comply with Thursday's ultimatum. "I am writing to make clear that Elían's parole into your care was revoked ... when you failed to comply with the INS's instruction to present Elían at the Opa-Locka Airport to be reunited with his father," the letter said. "You have no legal basis to continue to exercise control over Elían."

The Miami relatives met a 9 pm

Friday deadline to respond to the government offer, asking the court to reject a government request for judicial intervention in the case this weekend. "This appeal should proceed toward a deliberate consideration and be heard after full briefing less than a month from today," the attorneys for the Miami relatives wrote in a 33-page brief.

Meanwhile, Elían Gonzalez's Miami rela-

tives launched a scathing new salvo against the Cuban boy's father late on Friday, accusing Juan Miguel Gonzalez of having beaten Elían's mother.

At a press conference, a spokesman for family members in Miami read from an affidavit from their court filing in which an acquaintance of Juan Miguel alleged that the 31-year-old tourism worker beat Elían's

mother so severely that she had to be hospitalized. "Juan Miguel is of a violent nature, impulsive nature," said Armando Gutierrez, a spokesman for the Miami family. The abuse, Gutierrez said, was also inflicted upon "his own son Elían."

There was no immediate comment from Juan Miguel Gonzalez or his attorney about those charges. Juan Miguel was divorced from Elían's mother and is currently in a Washington, D.C. suburb with his second wife and infant son awaiting Elían's return. The allegations upped the ante in the increasingly hostile international dispute.

—Agence France Presse



Elían Gonzalez plays at his Miami relatives' home on Friday. (Right) His father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez — AFP photos

INDIAN EXPRESS

16 APR 2000

# US asked Indonesian President not to attend: Report

JAKARTA, April 15: A senior US State Department official asked Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid not to travel to Cuba for the Group of 77 summit, newspapers on Saturday quoted Wahid as saying. "Tom Pickering came to Jakarta recently and asked me not to go to Cuba," *The Indonesian Observer* quoted Wahid as saying while in Havana for the G-77 meeting, during which he met Cuban President Fidel Castro. "We are not a lackey of the US. We are free to go anywhere. If we didn't go (to Cuba) it would

be clear that we are colonised by the US," he said. Wahid said the US undersecretary of state for political affairs, who visited Indonesia early last month, had also asked him not to visit Libya, Iran, Iraq and North Korea. ~~He~~ <sup>He</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement, has full diplomatic ties with all five states considered pariahs by Washington, but it has since the mid-1960's maintained generally close diplomatic and military ties with the United States. Since taking office late last year

Wahid has visited more than 20 countries, including China. Current relations with the United States remain complicated by a ban on military assistance to Indonesia, imposed in September last year when a wave of military-backed militia violence in East Timor left hundreds dead.

But the *Jakarta Post* on Saturday quoted Indonesian Defence Minister Juwono Sudarsono as saying that he was optimistic the defence assistance programme could resume soon.

INDIAN EXPRESS

16 APR 2000

# El<sup>W</sup>ian refuses to meet <sup>SI-11</sup> his father <sup>138/4</sup>

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE &  
REUTERS

WASHINGTON, April 12. — The custody battle over Elian Gonzalez took another twist today after a meeting between his Cuban father and his Miami-based relatives had to be called off apparently because the six-year-old refused to go.

Late yesterday, the boy's great uncle, Mr Lazaro Gonzalez, told a crowd of protesters outside his Miami home that Elian did not want to go to Washington to meet his father, CNN reported.

Mr Gonzalez said Elian tore up a picture of his father, Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez, in a newspaper, one of the protesters told CNN.

After that incident, Mr Lazaro Gonzalez decided that the time was not right for the meeting with Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez, and that he and Elian would not travel to Washington, CNN said.

The meeting would have brought together Elian, Mr Lazaro Gonzalez, and his brother, Mr Delfin Gonzalez, with Elian's father, his wife and infant boy, who flew in from Cuba last week. Two of Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez's cousins would also have been present.

Spokesman for the Gonzalezes, Mr Armando Gutierrez, told a gathering outside Mr Lazaro Gonzalez's Little Havana, Miami, home that the meeting might take place in one of the embassies in the US capital, although not at

the Cuban mission, where Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez and his family are staying.

## Florida meeting?

Elian's relatives fighting to keep the boy in the United States of America have offered to meet Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez in Florida, but have apparently said they would only take the boy along if they were promised he would leave with them, says Reuters.

The call for the Florida meeting came hours before the relatives were due to get orders from the United States government on how to hand Elian back to Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez, and was seen as an eleventh hour bid to stall the reunion of father and son.

In a letter laying down terms for the meeting, Mr Lazaro Gonzalez, Elian's great-uncle and temporary guardian, said it should take place in a neutral place in Florida away from "the glaring eyes of the Cuban government".

A first meeting with the father could be followed by a meeting between Elian and him — but only if Elian went back with his Miami relatives afterward, the letter said.

"We would want to be assured that ... the meeting ... does not become the opportunity for his forced removal," it said.

Mr Juan Miguel Gonzales, a hotel worker from Cardenas, Cuba, has said he does not want to see Mr Lazaro Gonzalez until he has his son back.

THE STATESMAN

13 APR 2000

# Clinton, Barak talks yield little

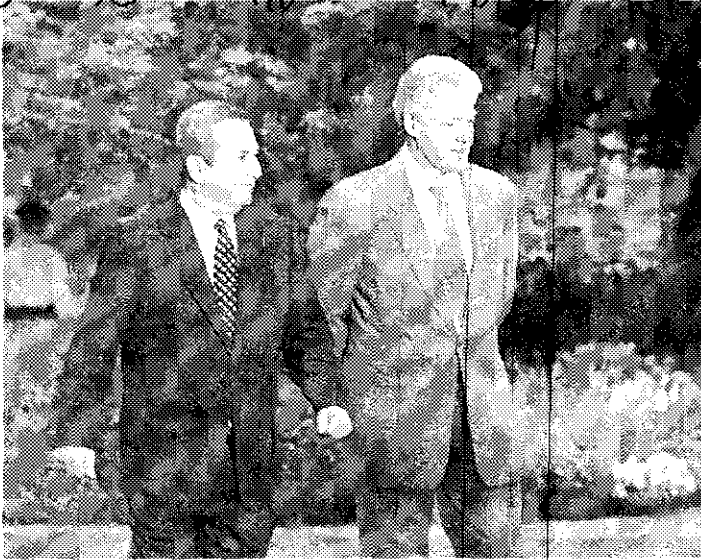
WASHINGTON, APRIL 12. The U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton and the Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak agreed to speed up the Israeli-Palestinian track facing looming deadlines but had no breakthroughs to announce on any of the stalled West Asia peace fronts, officials said.

The two stretched a planned one-hour meeting into four at the White House today for an exhaustive review of all the troubled West Asia peace tracks in which Mr. Clinton is actively mediating. "The President feels coming out of this very encouraged, there is an intensification, a renewed energy on the Palestinian track and he looks forward to building on that momentum," a U.S. official said on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Barak, who left Washington for Jerusalem at midnight yesterday after a 21-hour visit, made no official statement after the meeting, but an Israeli official travelling with him revealed some details of the discussions. "Mr. Barak and Mr. Clinton agreed to accelerate the Palestinian track," said the Israeli official on condition of anonymity.

The Palestinian leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat has accused Mr. Barak of foot-dragging on a framework agreement due in May that is to produce a final accord in September and the U.S. official acknowledged that "there are gaps to be overcome."

"We are in the midst of dealing with the real heart and soul of the



The Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Ehud Barak, and the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, walk through the White House Rose Garden just prior to their meeting. — AP

hardest issues...and it is incumbent on both sides to come up with new ideas," said the U.S. official. Mr. Arafat was due here for talks on April 20 and the official said that meeting combined with the ongoing talks between Palestinian and Israeli negotiators at the Bolling air base in Washington "will give us a good sense of where we are." Washington is putting pressure on both sides to meet the September deadline. Mr. Arafat has threatened to declare Palestinian Statehood in September if a final comprehensive accord is not reached by that date.

"We have always played a constructive role in this (but) ... obviously it is up to the parties

themselves to overcome these and reach agreement on these hard issues and there's no substitute for that," the U.S. official said.

The bulk of the talks here were on the Palestinian track, the official said, but Mr. Clinton also briefed Mr. Barak on the responses the Syrian President, Mr. Hafez al-Assad gave him after their meeting in Geneva last month.

Mr. Clinton said before the meeting that Mr. Assad's responses to his proposals in Geneva were unsatisfactory but added: "there are still differences, but it is no bleaker than before we met." — AFP

THE HINDU

13 APR 2000

HO-16  
11/4

## U.S. weighing options on Elian

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 10. With the Sunday television talk shows taken up by the Elian Gonzalez saga in the U.S. since the tragic shipwreck of last November, the Justice Department is still studying ways for the re-union between the son and the father, an event that will hopefully be without the use of force. But senior Clinton administration officials are quietly warning that the letter of the law will be followed.

If the Justice Department — and the White House — do not wish for any major spectacles to unfold this week, it is not without good reason. The Department under the supervision of the Attorney-General, Ms. Janet Reno, has come under fire over the last six years for a variety of reasons including the fashion in which the FBI handled the Branch Dravi-

dians at Waco, Texas. With the Cuban exile community in Florida up in arms over the manner in which Washington has gone about settling the Elian case, authorities are apprehensive of what would follow.

Outwardly, the law enforcement agencies are not giving the impression that they are wary of using force. In fact, the point has been made last week that if push came to shove, Federal Marshalls will be sent to the home of Elian's relatives. And the Justice Department has said that if Elian's relatives hardened their position, then all other offers — including one that would keep Elian and his father, Mr. Juan Miguel Gonzalez, in the U.S. until such time a Federal Appeals Court rules on the case next month — are off the table.

The drama is being enacted in at least two places — in Miami-

Dade County, Florida where Elian is staying with his great uncle; and in Bethesda, a quiet neighbourhood in Maryland where Mr. Gonzalez is staying at the house of the Head of the Cuban Interests section. In Bethesda, police have cordoned off the residential area to the media and curious on-lookers but the situation is a little tense with relatives of Elian trying to meet his father to try and sort the issue out.

The Clinton administration which has long taken the position that the Cuban lad must be reunited with his father — a ruling initially of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service — is no doubt anxious for the high drama to be over at the earliest. But on Sunday came word from Miami that the meeting between Elian, the family and the group of three psychiatric experts may not be possible on Monday. One of the

daughters of the great uncle of Elian is in hospital and the family is insisting that she should be a part of the discussion.

For the record, the Justice Department's top official, Ms. Reno is not willing to discuss the use of force as a last resort. In fact, the Attorney-General says the plans to this effect have not been formally presented to her. "I hope with all my heart that the rule of law prevails, and I expect that it will," she said in an interview.

But her Deputy, Mr. Eric Holder, has said that while the objective is a peaceful transfer, the authorities will take Elian from unwilling hands if it comes to that. "We don't expect anything like that to happen... We will do what is necessary to reunite father and son, however," he said.

THE HINDU

APR 10 1997

# Clinton-Barak meet rekindles hope

ROSS DUNN  
THE TIMES, LONDON

JERUSALEM, April 10. — President Clinton's surprise announcement of a summit in Washington tomorrow with the Israeli Prime Minister has revived hopes of a Syria-Israel peace process.

The two leaders decided to meet after the US administration received a formal response from Syrian President Assad to Israeli peace proposals.

Mr Assad's message is the first official response from the Syrian leader since he met Mr Clinton last month in Geneva.

The US National Security Council spokesman, Mr Mike

Haunier, confirmed that a message had been received from Mr Assad but refused to comment on the content. He, however, emphasised that the differences between Israel and Syria had still not been breached.

In Jerusalem, Mr Ehud Barak's office ordered a heavy down-pouring of the Israeli press about a possible resumption of the peace talks.

The Syrian foreign minister, Mr Farouk al-Shara, during a visit to Cairo over the weekend, also indicated that Damascus was ready to show greater flexibility to revise the talks.

Syria does not oppose withdrawal of Israeli troops with

from a self-declared security zone in Lebanon by July, he said. This appeared to be a rejection of reports that Damascus, which controls Lebanon militarily, would provoke a new conflict unless Israel also agreed to pull out from the Golan Heights, captured during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

He said that while Syria does not accept any compromise on its demand for Israel to move out completely from the Golan, it is ready to strike a deal on the sharing of the Sea of Galilee, the Jewish state's single largest source of fresh water.

"Land is not negotiable, but

water is," Mr Shara told the Egyptian press. Water was one of the major stumbling at last month's summit between Mr Clinton and Mr Assad.

Mr Barak is to fly to Cairo today for talks with Egyptian President, Mr Hosni Mubarak, ahead of his summit with Mr Clinton.

During his discussions in Washington Mr Barak will also discuss with Mr Clinton efforts to reach a final settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by September.

Mr Barak will be seeking assurances from the US leader that the Palestinians are willing to strike a framework for such a peace treaty by May.

THE STATESMAN

11 APR 2000

# Elian goes back to father next week

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE & ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, April 8. — The father of Cuban castaway Elian Gonzalez has won the green light to take his son home to Cuba next week, setting the stage for a showdown in the bitter custody battle with his Miami relatives who have refused to turn the boy over.

"I am going to have my child soon," Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez told reporters after a meeting yesterday with the US Attorney-General, Ms Janet Reno, in Washington.

Ms Reno announced that, early next week in Miami, custody will be formally transferred to the father and his relatives will be given "instructions on when and where" they are to hand Elian over.

"It is time for this little boy who has been through so much to be with his father," Ms Reno told reporters.

"I wholeheartedly reject Cuba's system of government," Ms Reno said.

"But it is not our place to punish a father for his political beliefs or where he wants to raise his child."

No date was set for Elian's actual reunion with his father, whom the boy has not seen since his November 1999 rescue at sea, but Ms Reno said she expected the family to comply and quickly wrap up the explosive standoff.

Mr Gonzalez (31) will be free to take Elian back to Cuba, but Ms Reno added she would talk

to Mr Gonzalez about staying until the court case is settled next month, provided the Miami relatives agreed to turn Elian over voluntarily.

Ms Reno yesterday enlisted the help of psychiatrist Dr Jerry Weiner and two other doctors to determine how this could be accomplished. Ms Reno has invited Elian's Miami relatives to meet with the doctors on Monday.

"I've been a psychiatrist since 1962. I've worked with custody cases before but nothing like this situation," said Dr Weiner, Professor Emeritus in residence of psychiatry and pediatrics at the George Washington University Medical School in Washington.

"If the family agrees to the proposal that's being made to them ... then we would go meet with them," he said. "We would go to counsel with the family in the most constructive and positive way to do it, and help them to prepare Elian with the transfer."

Also named by Reno were two New York doctors: Dr Paulina Kernberg of New York-Presbyterian Hospital, a professor of psychiatry at Weill Medical College of Cornell University, and Dr Lourdes Rigual-Lynch of Montefiore Medical Center, an assistant professor of pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Given the passions the issue has generated in Miami, it is not clear whether an orderly transfer is possible.

Asked about a report in today's *Washington Post* of a

contingency plan to remove the boy by force, Ms Reno said that she knew of no such plan. "I haven't seen such a plan, nor do I have such a plan that has been prepared," she said via satellite hookup during a televised broadcast of a town hall meeting in Miami.

"I want to work this out so force is not used, so that we do it in a way that is fair to all concerned."

Ms Reno's announcement that there would be no immediate custody change prompted Cuban-American leaders intent on maintaining the status quo to call off a plan to block roads leading to the Miami Airport.

The cancellation seemed to offer only a temporary respite in the custody dispute, as Ms Reno sounded unyielding in her determination to move Elian out of his great-uncle's home in Miami and into the care of his father, now staying in a Washington suburb.

"The law is very clear," she told a US Justice Department press conference. "A child who's lost his mother belongs with the sole surviving parent."

She declined to criticize the Cuban community in Miami despite its persistent efforts to thwart her efforts to arrange for Elian's eventual return to Cuba.

"I understand and respect with all my heart the deep-seated beliefs which the Cuban exile community feels on this subject," said MS Reno, who grew up in Miami and was an elected state prosecutor there for 15 years.

THE STATESMAN

9 APR 2000

## Relatives refuse to give up Elian

REUTERS

MIAMI, April 7. — Talks between Elian Gonzalez's Miami relatives and US immigration officials failed today and the government is soon expected to instruct the family to give up the boy to his father.

The relatives refused to return Elian to his father but urged the US officials to make the handover as painless as possible.

Denouncing the government, one of the relatives' lawyers, Mr Jose Garcia-Pedrosa, said, the talks had ended with Immigration and Naturalisation officials willing to discuss only how, not whether, to transfer the six-year-old to his father.

Mr Juan Miguel Gonzalez arrived in Washington from Cuba early yesterday to try to speed resolution of the four-month, highly politicised tug-of-war.

Dozens of people, many holding flowers to welcome Elian's father, surrounded the Havana home where the boy has been staying after exile leaders called for volunteers to form a "human chain" in case immigration agents tried to remove the child.

Elian survived a migrant boat voyage from Cuba last November in which his mother and 10 others died, only to get caught up in a fierce custody battle between his father, backed by the Cuban President, and anti-Communist Cuban exiles in Miami.

Before Mr Gonzalez's arrival, the INS had made it clear that it was willing to talk about how best to carry out the transfer, but that the handover itself was not up for discussion.

From the moment Elian's father arrived in the USA with his wife and their baby son, it was clear the Miami relatives were unhappy over the looming handover.

The Miami relatives have said they do not want the boy to grow up under Communism.

THE

7 0 APR 2000



# Talks break down on Elian's handover

Miami, April 7

TALKS BETWEEN Elian Gonzalez's Miami relatives and US Immigration officials have broken down and the government was expected to give the family instructions shortly on delivering the Cuban shipwreck survivor to his father.

US officials yesterday said the relatives refused to return Elian to his father but urged them to make the handover as painless as possible.

One of the relatives' lawyers, Jose Garcia-Pedrosa, angrily denounced the government, saying the talks had ended with Immigration and Naturalisation officials willing to discuss only how, not whether, to transfer the six-year-old to his father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez.

The father arrived in Washington from Cuba early yesterday to try to speed resolution of the four-



Elian Gonzalez

month, highly politicized tug-of-war.

In a telephone interview from Washington with state TV in Havana, Gonzalez, 31, sent a message to the Cuban people: "To all the people who are suffering, like I am, don't worry, we will soon have the boy with us in Cuba."

Elian's father did not give details of why he expected a quick breakthrough in his plan to take the boy from his US-based relatives, backed by anti-Castro Cuban-American groups, and bring him back to the Communist-run Caribbean island.

Juan Miguel Gonzalez said he felt "well" in the US where he said well-wishers among the American people had been spontaneously greeting him and sharing cups of coffee on the Washington street where he is staying with a Cuban diplomat. (Reuters)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

2 APR 2000

## Given years of distrust, improvement in U.S.-Iran ties may only be gradual

By Jal Taraporevala

MUMBAI: U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright has again spoken of the need to lower the level of confrontation between Washington and Teheran. Ms Albright has said that she would like the two nations to take advantage of the improved climate as a result of the Iranian parliamentary elections and the lifting of the U.S. ban on the export of some luxury items to Iran.

From the perspective of the U.S., a healthier equation with Iran could have a moderating influence on the latter's role in international relations and reinforce the position of Iranian President Mohammad Khatami vis-a-vis his domestic conservative critics. Mr Khatami, needless to say, would also welcome an improvement in ties with Washington for it would serve to deflect at-

tention from the ideological thumping at home and lay a better foundation for dealing with the pressing economic problems facing Iran.

However, the moves towards improving U.S.-Iranian relations are likely to prove slow and difficult. After all, the legacy of years of animosity and suspicion cannot disappear overnight. Besides, given the

### NEWS ANALYSIS

complexities in the bilateral relationship, both sides will not want to make significant concessions too quickly, at least for tactical reasons.

Domestic politics in the two countries will also dictate the pace at which the bilateral ties develop. Mr Khatami is considered a reformer within the overall context of Iranian politics. This being so, he is unlikely to favour a rapid improve-

ment in ties with Washington. In any case, although his domestic position is stronger in today's post-election scenario in Iran, his freedom for political manoeuvre is still restricted by the fact that the hardliners continue to exercise a substantial influence over certain key institutions of power in the country.

The U.S. will not be in a hurry to normalise ties with Iran partly as a way to sustain pressure on issues as Iran's weapons programme, its support for radical groups like the Hezbollah and Hamas, and its attitude to the West Asia peace process.

The reluctance on the part of many on Capitol Hill to move quickly towards improving ties with Iran will serve as another factor in determining the pace at which the U.S. will move to bury the hatchet.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

- 5 APR 2000

# Clinton blames Syria for stalling talks with Israel

Washington, March 30

THE US President Bill Clinton has lashed out at Syria for stonewalling the Arab country's peace talks with Israel and defended his policy of expecting territorial concessions from Damascus to Tel Aviv.

"There is more than one issue here. And if we are going to have a negotiation, I don't think it is enough to say: I don't like your position, come back and see me when I like your position," said Clinton, whose talks with Syrian President Hafez-al-Assad in Geneva failed last weekend.

Clinton met Assad to try to reopen Syria-Israel peace talks which broke in January.

He told a Press conference here yesterday that he understood "how strongly" Assad feels about Israeli



demand for a slice of Syria's Golan Heights which Israel occupied during the 1967 war.

"But if he disagrees with their territorial proposal, which is quite significant, then there should be some other proposal." Coming from the Syrians about how their concerns should be handled," he said. "And that is what I meant (by

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saying after the failed Geneva talks that the ball is now in Assad's court," he said.

"I did my best (in Geneva) to try to present what I thought the options were, and if we are going to have a negotiation, it takes two people coming up with ideas - or three sides in this case, if we are being asked to mediate it," he added.

Clinton said Assad "obviously has the perfect right to take whatever position he believes is in Syria's interests."

"But if there is a genuine desire for peace here on both sides, and I believe there is, and if both sides face certain significant political constraints within their countries, and I believe they do, then they both need to come up with some ideas and start talking," the American President added. (PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

31 MAR 2000

# No breakthrough at Clinton-Assad summit

By Kesava Menon  
MANAMA (BAHRAIN), MARCH 27. The summit meeting in Geneva yesterday between the U.S. and the Syrian Presidents, Mr. Bill Clinton and Mr. Hafez al Assad, failed to achieve the hoped-for breakthrough through the stalled Syria-Israel leg of the West Asian negotiations. U.S. spokesmen commenting on the meeting said that the gaps between Syria and Israel were still too wide to permit an immediate resumption of talks. Since this meeting was billed as the last chance for a breakthrough, the disappointment at its failure is understandable as is the frustration considering that the substantial difference is said to centre around a small bit of territory.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Assad met for three hours. The summit started late to give Mr. Clinton time to recuperate from his hectic South Asia tour and the leaders initially met for two hours and then once again after an hour's break. Mr. Clinton was reported to have contacted Israel's Prime Minister Mr. Ehud Barak, before and after the meeting.

According to the agencies, the White House spokesman, Mr. Joe Lockhart, said after the meeting

that a narrowing of the differences had not occurred and that the gaps were too wide for the U.S. to believe that an immediate resumption of the talks would be productive.

The Syria-Israel talks were relaunched in December after a gap of four years but broke off after a second meeting in January with Israel refusing to concede the Syrian demand that they return the Golan Heights up to the June 4, 1967 border. While the U.S. Special Envoy, Mr. Dennis Ross, is to come to the region in pursuance of the mediation efforts, the failure of yesterday's summit has dampened expectations. All the parties involved are under time constraints.

Mr. Clinton has only a few more months in office to complete what he could have once thought would be the crowning achievement of his tenure. The Syrian President is believed to be keeping indifferent health and the transition to his successor might not be a very smooth one. Mr. Barak is struggling to keep his ruling coalition intact and he is also under pressure to meet two other deadlines -- a withdrawal of his troops from Lebanon by June end and a final peace deal with the Palestinians by September.

Five issues were understood to be on the agenda for discussions yesterday. These were the demarcation of the border following an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, security arrangements on the Golan Heights and Mount Hermon, the exact nature of the relationship that would be wrought between the two sides, the timetable for achieving normal relations and confidence-building measures.

While there are differences in approach on all of these issues is the border issue, and the attendant issue of water rights, that have proved to be the most intractable. Mr. Clinton's National Security Advisor, Mr. Samuel Berger, has been quoted in the Israeli press as saying that this difference might well prove irreconcilable.

It would indeed be a pity if Mr. Berger's assessment turns out to be correct because Israel appeared to have come around to the Syrian view at least to the extent that they would consider the June 4, 1967 border line as the basis for negotiations. This border line lies only a little westward of the 1923 border (drawn up by the French and British colonial powers) which Israel had once set as an alternate basis for negotia-

tions. Both lines lie below the slope of the Golan but while the 1967 line gave the Syrians a presence on the Galilee Lake (given the size of this water body this term is more appropriate than the grandiose "Sea of Galilee") while the 1923 border was a few hundred metres away from the shoreline.

Israel has so far not come around to accepting a Syrian presence on the shore of the Galilee Lake or any partial control of this water body. They want the border to lie a few hundred metres east of the shore line and the total quantum of land which comprises the substance of the difference is said to amount to just about 22 km.

There have also been several reports of possible compromises. One of the possibilities mentioned was that Israel would have full sovereignty over the Galilee Lake and its shore line but that Syrian citizens would be allowed to use the lake for recreation without needing special permission. Similarly, there was said to be a proposal that Israeli citizens would be able to access hot springs and may be even vineyards on the Syrian Golan even after its return.

THE HINDU  
28 MAR 2000

Clinton meets

Assad in  
Geneva

DEUTSCHE PRESS AGENTUR

GENEVA, March 26. — Mr Bill Clinton and the Syrian President, Mr Hafez Al-Assad, met here today for a crucial summit aimed at reviving stalled Israeli-Syrian peace talks and heading off renewed violence in West Asia.

But there was no immediate sign of any agreement on resuming Israeli-Syrian talks.

A White House spokesman said Mr Clinton intended contacting the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr Ehud Barak, as soon as possible to inform him of the talks, but was unable to contact him during the talks.

Mr Clinton spoke over telephone to Mr Barak shortly before the meeting to consult for the second time in three days.

Earlier, Mr Clinton's chief security advisor, Mr Samuel Berger, said it was not likely that the talks would result in an announcement of a resumption of direct negotiations between Israel and Syria.

THE STATESMAN

27 MAR 2000

## Pak mission failed on three crucial issues: US media

Washington, March 26

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton's mission to Pakistan failed on three major issues — setting firm benchmarks towards restoration of democracy, an end to violence in Kashmir so that India and Pakistan can resume dialogue, and reduction or elimination of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, the US media has said.

Major television networks including ABC and NBC have said that President Clinton's Secret Service misled the civilian authorities about the plane in which Clinton was arriving.

When they expected President Clinton to alight from the first plane with red and blue markings, he actually arrived in an unmarked plane somewhat later than the Secret Service had told the civilian authorities.

They also noted that there were six limousines for the Clinton convoy from the airport, with no indication in which the US President was travelling.

The Secret Service took these elaborate precautions, the networks said because "Pakistan is a country that harbours terrorists".

(PTI)

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

27 MAR 2000

# Clinton's speech stuns Pak lobbies

Vijay Dutt  
London, March 26

**T**HE DIRECT address of US President Bill Clinton to the people of Pakistan during his brief stopover in Islamabad was received with mixed feelings by the Kashmiri leaders here. The pro-Pak lobbyists went underground and refused to comment.

Most Kashmiri leaders described Mr Clinton's address as very polite but extremely firm. They also pointed out that the very fact that he addressed the people directly meant that he did not fully "recognise General Musharraf and his regime as representatives of the country".

Mr Shabir Chowdhury, president of the JKLF in the UK, said that in his speech, President Clinton tried to show the ground realities to the people of Pakistan and gave them the space and

opportunity to respond to the scenario he presented about the future.

Mr Chowdhury added that the President also showed the risks to the state of Pakistan if the present policies, for

instance of arms race and violence and extreme fundamentalism, and fight over Kashmir are persisted with. "The future of Pakistan could be affected because of economic consequences."

Mr Chowdhury, however, was "unhappy as a Kashmiri" that the President did not mention anything about the role of the Kashmiris. He in a way stressed on the LoC which in other words

meant pressing for a status quo. Mr Chowdhury felt that Mr Clinton was more pro-India on the issues of CTBT and Kashmir. "To the outside world he would be seen as more favourable to Indian policies and views."

Mr Anwar Khan of the J&K Peace Committee told this correspondent that the speech was very "encouraging for all those who want peace and democracy in the region". It was a "warning to the ruling Generals and the army to desist from aiding terrorism and secure the LoC". Mr Khan thinks that Gen. Musharraf would not be uprooted in the immediate future but "he would have to get rid of the



Generals who are hardliners". Mr Nazir Gilani, secretary general of the J&K Council for Human Rights, commented that President Clinton's speech was welcome because he advocated for the rule of law. "Democracy is the only mechanics to graduate into a right kind of civilized society. A return to democracy is crucial for the future of Pakistan."

He added that the two countries should share the "prudence and wisdom" in the President's address. "The two countries have to accept to seek a future of peace and prosperity or remain in the past." Mr Gilani agreed that Mr Clinton did not endorse the position of the army in the country.

Pakistan Government insiders have noted the fact that no picture of the President with Gen. Musharraf was flashed and that they did not meet on one to one basis.

# Albright beckons Iran to work with the United States

WASHINGTON: In a dramatic shift, the Clinton administration has invited Iran to enter a "new relationship" with the United States to stabilise the Persian Gulf and its oil reserves and reverse more than two decades of ill will.



M. Albright

Lifting a ban on U.S. imports of Iranian luxury goods, U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright on Friday said both the United States and Iran had fought conflicts begun by Iraq's "lawless regime" and they should work together to reduce tensions in the region.

"Iran lives in a dangerous neighbourhood," Ms Albright said in a landmark speech. "We welcome efforts to make it less dangerous."

In Teheran, Hamid Feza Asefi, an Iranian foreign ministry spokesman, said of the speech and the lifting of a U.S. ban on imports of caviar, rugs and some other luxu-

ry goods "Iran thinks it is positive and welcomes it." There was no indication that Iran was taking the Clinton administration up on its proposal for formal talks nor making any concessions of its own.

"We are not expecting any rapid reaction to it," Ms Albright said of the dramatic American overtures.

But she told reporters enthusiastically that "a new chapter in our relationship" was opening. "Iran and the U.S. must move together in a balanced way," she said. "Iran is obviously a country of strategic importance," Ms Albright said.

Meanwhile, Iran has welcomed the U.S. decision and announced that Teheran in return "was authorising the import of cereals and medicines" from the U.S., state television said. "We welcome this decision and believe it is a positive one," said foreign ministry spokesman Hamid-Reza Asefi on Friday. Iran "is now analysing the content of the speech," delivered by Ms Albright, he said.

Ms Albright announced the lifting of import bans on Iranian

caviar, carpets, nuts and dried fruit and took the unusual step of acknowledging past U.S. interference in Iran's internal affairs. In a major policy address delivered to a conference on US-Iran relations sponsored by the American-Iranian council, she also indicated that Washington was prepared to settle a long running dispute over Iranian assets frozen in the United States since the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Teheran estimated the assets at \$12 billion in the early 1980s. Mr Asefi said Iran would respond "at a suitable time". "This statement admits the mistakes of the past but also contains new and positive points," he said.

Iranian state television described Albright's statement as "interventionist." In its first commentary on the US decision it complained that Albright had repeated "America's old accusations against Iran."

The television failed however to mention the US announcement in its early evening bulletin, its first newscast after Albright's speech. (Agencies)



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## Clinton regrets Ulster stalemate

WASHINGTON, MARCH 17. Expressing regret that he has failed to help end the stalemate in the Irish peace process, the U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton, yesterday urged all parties to work hard to find a way to move forward to an agreement.

On the eve of talks in Washington involving the major players from all sides of the Northern Ireland peace process, Mr. Clinton was given an award by the American Ireland Fund for his efforts to bring about peace in the British province. "I don't know that I had so much to do with the progress that's been made," Mr. Clinton said. "Tonight, I am more burdened by the fact that I have not found an answer to the present stalemate."

Mr. Clinton is trying to help restart the peace process after Britain last month suspended Northern Ireland's home rule institutions over lack of progress on disarmament by Irish Republican Army guerillas.

Addressing an audience of more than 1,000 Irish and American politicians including the Irish Prime Minister, Mr. Bertie Ahern, the Sinn Fein President, Mr. Gerry Adams, the British Sec-

retary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. Peter Mandelson, and the Ulster Unionist leader, Mr. David Trimble, Mr. Clinton said there was no time to waste.

In comments as he introduced Mr. Clinton, Mr. Ahern said the fact that Northern Ireland had a taste of its own Government should inspire all parties to iron out differences. "We need to view this setback not with despair, but against the background of the enormous transformation which has taken place these last years," he said. "The sense of frustration we currently feel comes not from the depths of our failure but from how close we have come to success." — Reuters

*Telegraph reports:*

A terrorist released under the Belfast Agreement was among three men arrested on Thursday for allegedly carrying 220 kgs of explosives for a suspected bomb attack by an IRA splinter group — the Real IRA.

The prisoner had served only months of a five-year sentence when he was released last year. He had plotted to send letter bombs to leading Unionist politicians.

THE HINDU

18 MAR 2000

## U.S.-Iran rapprochement road may be paved with carpets

WASHINGTON: The road to reconciliation between Iran and the U.S., estranged since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, may be paved with carpets.

That's Persian carpets, along with Iranian luxuries Caviar and Pistachios — the three products banned from the U.S. since 1987 as part of the U.S. attempt to contain Iran's revolutionary fervour. Secretary of state Madeleine Albright will make a "major policy address" to the American-Iranian council in Washington on Friday morning, amid widespread speculation that she will lift the ban on non-oil imports, a spokesman said.

State department spokesman James Rubin on Thursday declined to preview what she will say but the organisers are confident the announcement will take place as expected. It will be the first significant gesture towards Iran since reformers won an overwhelming majority in parliamentary elections last month, shifting the balance of power away from hardliners who dominated Iranian politics for years and who continue to call the U.S. the "Great Satan."

"We have been encouraged by the success of reformers ... Secretary Albright believes it's appropri-

ate for the U.S. to respond to that election through a major policy address," Mr Rubin told his daily briefing.

The Iranians may be pleased but the gesture may not be enough in itself to bring about Washington's longstanding objective — direct talks with the Iranian government. "It's a very good beginning but it won't solve all the problems. It will be the first time the U.S. has done something concrete," said Shireen Hunter, director of Islamic Studies at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

"It might start the ball rolling and lay a foundation on which a dialogue can be built," added Prof Shaul Bakhash of George Mason University near Washington and an expert on Iranian politics.

The gesture will give the reformers, led by President Mohammad Khatami, something positive to show to opponents of reconciliation, he said. "But probably not enough," he added. Robert Pelletreau, chairman of the American-Iranian Council and a former U.S. ambassador in the West Asia, agreed that lifting the ban on Iran's non-oil exports was just one step along the road and that dialogue may have to wait a while. "This is all

part of a very slow process," he said.

But one rapid effect could be in stimulating sales of U.S. grain to Iran, which Washington allowed "last year, and this would greatly increase the volume of U.S.-Iranian trade."

Ms Hunter said there was a qualitative difference between the grain trade and the carpet trade from Iran's point of view. "Sales of food and medicines basically helped Americans. Now this has a direct benefit for Iran economically. It will have an impact on the well-being of a substantial number of Iranians. The carpet industry is still a big employer and the closure of the American market has been very detrimental," she said.

But the biggest prize for Iran is persuading the U.S. to lift the ban on its investment in Iran's oil and gas industry, which dominates the economy.

President Bill Clinton extended the ban on Monday, citing the usual U.S. grievances against Iran — its support for "international terrorism," its alleged attempts to develop weapons of mass destruction and its opposition to West Asia peace talks and agreements sponsored by the U.S. (Reuters)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

18 MAR 2000

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES  
16 MAR 2000

# No missile deployed, says US

N. C. Menon  
Washington, March 15

WHITE HOUSE spokesman Joe Lockhart indicated on Tuesday that neither India nor Pakistan had developed an operational deployed missile and the US intended to work with both sides to persuade them from going ahead with such a plan.

The spokesman had been asked whether, with the US unable to persuade India and Pakistan not to develop nuclear weapons, Washington should help them set up safer and more transparent mechanisms for deployment as a way to build confidence on both sides of the border.

"We want them to agree to NPT and non-proliferation standards, and that is one of the reasons why we are going to go and make this trip," Lockhart said.

Asked how specifically the Administration would dissuade the two nations from deploying nuclear weapon systems, the spokesman responded that "we have been working with the Indian and Pakistani governments for some time now on our concern about their nuclear programme. We will make the case, both in terms of non-proliferation and in making the case on CTBT. While we are there, the President will meet with both leaders and make the case directly."

The White House spokesman also made it clear, in response to a question that the President's not visiting other countries in South Asia was only mandated by a limit on the number of places he could visit in spite of the desire to include all nations.

"We think Bangladesh offers an excellent example of reform in Government, of things that the President has talked about as far as programmes of microcredit and things," Lockhart said.

"So there are a number of positive reasons to go there, and we thought that given the limited amount of time, that was a good place to stop," Lockhart added.

# US to back Europe's candidate as IMF chief

Janet Guttisman

WASHINGTON 14 MARCH

**T**HE ACRIMONIOUS struggle to find a new head for the International Monetary Fund effectively ended when the United States promised to back Europe's new candidate for the high profile position.

White House spokesman Joe Lockhart, ending months of bickering between Washington and Europe, said President Clinton will support Horst Koehler, the new European candidate to head

the global lender. Koehler, the head of eastern Europe's development bank, will come to Washington soon to put his case to the IMF's board of directors, which is responsible for appointing a new managing director, Mr Lockhart added.

"The president told

Chancellor Schroeder that the US was prepared to support Mr Koehler as the new head of the IMF," Lockhart said on Monday in comments which stopped short of a ringing endorsement for the German nominee and his qualifications.

"The President and Schroeder agreed that Mr Koehler should come to Washington to meet with the IMF board, particularly with the developing countries...The President and Schroeder also agreed that Koehler should retain the talented management team at the IMF."

Koehler is Europe's second candidate for the IMF job. Schroeder nominated him last week after Washington effectively vetoed Germany's first candidate, complaining that deputy finance minister Cato Koch-Weser did not

The IMF, under fire in the US Congress for misguided policies, controls tens of billions of dollars which it can lend to member states. It monitors the economic performance of countries around the world and provides advice to governments and central banks.

The job of IMF managing director has been vacant since France's Michel Camdessus quit last month after 13 years at the fund. The post is traditionally held by a European, while an American traditionally heads the World Bank. The prolonged argument

about a new IMF boss added to doubts about the institution's role. Koehler, who won a speedy endorsement from major IMF shareholders, will start on a stronger footing than Koch-Weser would have done after months of damaging criticism in the media

and from Germany's partners.

But Lockhart's comments about the IMF's "talented management team" made clear that Washington wants IMF acting managing director Stanley Fischer, a naturalised American, to stay on and to play a major role in the international lender.

Developing countries have already nominated Fischer to head the fund. Washington says it respects Fischer but will not vote for him because it does not want to break with the tradition of a European IMF boss.

Fischer, for his part, says he will stay at the IMF, regardless of who is appointed at its helm. IMF sources expect Europe to nominate Koehler on Tuesday and the board could hold an informal straw poll on his candidacy later this week.



**Koehler: Support system**

have the clout or the experience needed for the job. Washington also wants to ensure developing countries are not alienated in the hunt for a new IMF boss and has repeatedly insisted these countries are consulted in the debate.

## U.S., Vietnam bury the past

HANOI, MARCH 14. Vietnam's Defence Minister, General Pham Van Tra, today welcomed a historic visit by the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. William Cohen, saying it marked a new step in military relations between the former foes.

Gen. Tra, in his first public remarks about Mr. Cohen's landmark trip, said the two men had "fine and useful discussions on the view of each country and of our bilateral relationship with the objective of promoting mutual understanding and respect." "Our fine discussions promote further steps and efforts toward the construction of normalisation of relations between our two countries," Gen. Tra told Mr. Cohen at a lunch in the Vietnamese capital Hanoi.

"I think this is an important achievement of this visit, marking a new step in developments between our two Defence Ministries." In a warm exchange of words, Gen. Tra said he hoped Mr. Cohen would get a good impression of Vietnam and its people.



The United States Secretary of Defence, Mr. William Cohen, with the Vietnamese President, Mr. Tran Duc Luong, at the Presidential Palace in Hanoi on Tuesday. — AP

Mr. Cohen, addressing Vietnam's National Defence Academy, said Washington's security presence in the Asia-Pacific was vital to the region's prosperity.

Despite the warmth shown to Mr. Cohen on his visit, suspicion of U.S. military intentions remain.

Indeed, Vietnam's state media today focused on comments from the Prime Minister, Mr. Phan Van Khai, who told Mr. Cohen during a Monday meeting that he hoped Washington would do more to overcome problems left by the Vietnam War. — Reuters

THE HINDU  
15 MAR 2000

## U.S. for 'mature' ties with Vietnam

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, MARCH 13. The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. William Cohen, today began a two-day diplomatic mission to Vietnam aimed at turning over a new leaf in bilateral ties, without harping on the bitter past of the 1975 war. Mr. Cohen held talks with his Vietnamese counterpart, Gen. Pham Van Tra, and the Communist nation's Prime Minister, Mr. Phan Van Khai.

The primary purpose of the visit, the first by a U.S. Defence Secretary since the end of the war, was normalisation of bilateral relationship. Though diplomatic ties were normalised in a juridical sense in 1995, the two are still far from a state of comprehensive relations.

The details of Mr. Cohen's parleys with the Vietnamese leaders were not immediately known. But the meetings, especially the key session with Gen. Pham Van Tra, set the tone for

Mr. Cohen's more immediate agenda of pushing the bilateral cooperation to a new level of partnership in searching for the nearly 2000 Americans still unaccounted for nearly a quarter century after the war.

An indication was that the new phase of 'partnership' in this limited sphere could encompass a possible U.S. assistance to Vietnam in coming to terms with its own human losses in the war.

The tone and tenor of the talks encouraged the U.S. in its efforts to move towards the stated objective of attaining 'maturity' in bilateral ties. The 'comfort level' and the cordiality of the meetings also had much to do with this.

With the U.S. emphasising the prudence of looking to the future instead of evaluating the past and offering apologies to Hanoi for the war, the stage was also set for discussions on a new beginning in military-to-military cooperation.

The immediate focus was confined to the non-sensitive areas such as the clearance of war-time mines in Vietnam, medical help for the problems caused by the harmful chemicals used during the war and flood-control measures.

THE HINDU  
14 MAR 2000

# Clinton to go ahead with Pakistan visit

HD-1  
12/3  
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

**WASHINGTON, MARCH 11.** The killing of Mr. Nawaz Sharif's lawyer has raised the issue of the U.S. President's safety during his trip to Pakistan, but the White House maintains that Mr. Bill Clinton's trip to that country is on.

"We have a number of dedicated individuals whose role and job is to protect the President, and they'll do that," the White House spokesman, Mr. Joe Lockhart, said during a press briefing. He, however, refused to be drawn into discussing the security aspects of Mr. Clinton's trip.

"This is obviously a cowardly act and a terrible tragedy for those involved which we condemn. But at this point I don't want to draw any further conclusions from that," Mr. Lockhart said. The killing of the lawyer, the spokesman maintained, further underscored the need "to press for openness, democracy and constitutional rule. And those are the points we were already planning to make and we will make while we're there".

Earlier in response to a question on the state of the height-

ened concern over Mr. Clinton's visit to Pakistan, Mr. Lockhart said the President would stress on a number of issues including nuclear non-proliferation, democracy, the fight against terrorism and the support of terrorism.

## Indian role denied

Meanwhile, the Indian Ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Naresh Chandra, asked to comment on reports that India or Indian terrorists were behind the killing of Mr. Sharif's lawyer, said, "I don't think you have to wait for my answer. That there are Indian terrorists who flourish in Pakistan is an impossibility. But it is denied with full force."

At a press briefing on Mr. Clinton's visit to India, Mr. Chandra said India was unlikely to ask the U.S. President to carry a message to Pakistan. "There is no disruption in diplomatic relations. But when it comes to a structured dialogue, then it can only take place meaningfully when the minimum conditions integral to having that meaningful discussion have been met...So I don't think we will be loading the honourable President with a message to carry to Pakistan," he said.

It is being said that several issues including non-proliferation and security would be discussed during Mr. Clinton's parleys with Indian leaders. The nuclear-security aspects of the discussions apart, the issue of sanctions are also likely to be taken up during the talks.

Mr. Clinton is also expected to announce another "list" further pruning the number of Indian organisations targeted in the Entities List. But Mr. Chandra said that the roots of the "legislative baggage" lay elsewhere, in the Export Control Act and the corresponding provisions of the Non-Proliferation Act.

On the issue of terrorism and the setting up of the Joint Working Group between India and the U.S., he said India's concern was not to score a "cheap shot" against anybody but to address the problem in a "scientific and objective" manner, an approach that is shared by Pakistan.

Meanwhile, 26 members of the U.S. House of Representatives have written to Mr. Clinton urging him to take up the cause of freedom and human rights in the sub-continent.

THE HINDU  
12 MAR 2000

# Courting Humiliation

## US Bowing to Pakistan's Dictates

By K SUBRAHMANYAM

**P**RESIDENT Bill Clinton's proposed stop-over in Pakistan deserves to be analysed not from an Indocentric point of view but from what it means to the international democratic order and the struggle against terrorism. President Eisenhower and President Carter visited India in 1959 and 1978 at the height of the cold war. Even at that time when support to military dictators used to be justified on the basis of realpolitik, they chose not to visit the military dictators in Islamabad and sully their reputations by going out of the way to legitimise them.

The cold war is over and the US proudly claims it has helped to promote democracy in eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa and parts of Asia. In these circumstances, Clinton's stop-over in Islamabad would need to be analysed from the point of view of considerations that compel him to discard the healthy precedents set by Eisenhower and Carter and court Islamabad's military dictator.

In 1971, the Nixon-Kissinger administration decided to open up to China as part of a pincer movement against the Soviet Union. The Nixon visit took place at the height of the excesses of the cultural revolution which killed millions. The visit was justified by the presidential spokesperson Herbert Klein saying that the US had no option but to engage a nation of 800 million, armed with nuclear weapons.

### Reputation at Stake

Further, because Pakistan played the role of go-between in promoting China-US contacts, the US administration was prepared to condone the Pakistan army's genocide in Bangladesh and the largest ethnic cleansing in history. Now the US justification is that it cannot afford not to engage a nuclear Pakistan with a 130-million population. In those days, Yahya Khan was sought to be whitewashed when one of the highest placed American diplomats asked how Yahya Khan could be denounced as a dictator when he held relatively free and fair elections to the National Assembly which returned a majority of the Awami National Party.

There must, therefore, be valid reasons why Clinton considers it necessary to take the engagement process to an extent where he feels compelled to stake his reputation as a democrat and the leader of the world's most powerful state to

make this journey to Islamabad. The US administration can engage Pakistan in a number of ways at the official level without the President having to demean himself by going to a dictator's headquarters. The only plausible reason can be that the US President feels he had to do it otherwise the damage to US interests that could be inflicted by Pakistan would be unacceptable in relation to his loss of stature and diminution of his image.

### Asymmetric Strategy

It cannot be the boastful blackmail threat held out by General Musharraf that if Clinton skips Pakistan there would be a rise in tensions in the region. The US is not known to be so considerate of other nations' interests as to diminish the stature of its leader because of some vague threat in a distant region. General Musharraf knows full well that in the wake of the Kargil operations the Indian nuclear deterrent is very effective in containing him and that the Indian armed forces are capable of frustrating all his nefarious plans. Therefore, it is logical to infer that the US is being blackmailed directly by Pakistan vis-a-vis its own national security interests — a threat serious enough for Clinton to talk of a stop-over.

In 1997, the US defence secretary William Cohen in a speech in Georgia University referred to the followers of Sun Tzu and students of asymmetric strategy posing threats to the US through terrorism. There are other possibilities of threats, that of transferring nuclear weaponry and technology to rogue states or handing over weapons to non-state actors, as they did with Stinger missiles. The Pakistani leadership has the full measure of US vulnerabilities. It twisted the US' arm in 1981 to permit it to go nuclear and to develop a worldwide network in the drug trade. Its bank, the Bank of Credit and Commerce International could run rings round US banking laws and operate one of the largest banking chains in the US in flagrant violation of US law. One also wonders how many individual US decision-makers are in the grip of Pakistan's Inter-services Intelligence. Pakistan has hired as its lobbyist a former personal lawyer of Clinton.

Therefore, India has to think of a long-term strategy instead of just crying hoarse about the inappropriateness and lack of sensitivity of a US President coming straight

from shaking hands with a military dictator to address the joint session of the two houses of Parliament in the world's largest democracy. Indian diplomacy and Indian intelligence should focus on unravelling the nature of the hold Pakistan has over the US administration. That is of immense relevance to our own security calculus and to assess how much more Pakistan can get away with.

If the US were to emphasise that it could not afford to isolate Pakistan in view of its nuclear weapons, it will send out a message loud and clear that nuclear proliferation is the surest way of averting US pressure and convince the Pakistanis that they can continue to stay out of the democratic framework because of their ability to blackmail the US. With President Clinton's stop-over and legitimisation, he can safely conclude that he will have helped to postpone indefinitely the restoration of democracy in Pakistan. For Pakistan's military leadership, this is the litmus test to check whether the US will stand up to blackmail. If the US yields, then Pakistan will be encouraged to step up its demands.

### Clinton's Travails

Five months after the military take-over, there is no sign of Osama bin Laden being handed over or any meaningful action against religious terrorist groups. By making this demand to Clinton to humiliate himself, Pakistan is building up a case to justify why it could not accede to US requests since he did not oblige it by stopping over. If he yields, then Pakistan will legitimately conclude that the US administration has no will to resist and can, therefore, be ignored. The US administration is in an unenviable position. This is result of past policies of permissiveness towards Pakistan's nuclear proliferation, drug trade and fostering of religious extremism. Recently, a West European diplomat chuckled "Don't you see, Pakistan is demonstrating that the world is not unipolar." Meanwhile, let us sympathise with Clinton and welcome him with the understanding and hope that he will draw appropriate lessons from his predicament and be a little more transparent in exchanging views on his travails with the Indian leadership.





# Clinton calls meeting on Net security, FBI probes 'zombies'

Dick Satran

SAN FRANCISCO 12 FEBRUARY

INVESTIGATORS, TRACKING hackers who shut down leading websites, turned their focus on the sites used for launching the attacks, on Friday, as President Bill Clinton called a summit on internet security for next week. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was backtracking through sites that were penetrated and used as "zombies" to hit others.

The agency, at a briefing this week, underscored the importance of "unwitting third parties" used to conceal themselves by launching massive co-ordinated attacks on top e-commerce sites.

The University of California

said its computer system was used to aim an attack at the CNN website in this week's wave of internet sabotage. The university said it is providing details to the FBI for the investigation.

But, while the university stepped forward, computer experts said scores more have remained silent, fearing legal action or involvement in costly criminal probes. "People want to stay out of the way," said Stuart McClure, president, Ramparts Security Group. "People are really sensitive about these issues, they think the perception will be negative."

President Clinton is expected to boost the idea of broader cooperation in a still-young industry that's growing fast and has

not made security a high priority. The industry, in turn, wants to give advice to Federal regulators, seen as too unsophisticated in web ways to have much impact.

President Clinton warned not to expect an "instantaneous solution" to a wave of hacking attacks. But "we're doing all we can" at this point, he said. The White House meeting, planned for next Tuesday, will bring officials and leaders in the internet business community together to respond to the threat represented by the computer intruders.

Hackers launched a wave of attacks, taking down popular sites Yahoo! — the largest independent website — leading retailers Buy.com, eBay, Amazon.com and

news site CNN.com.

FBI spokeswoman Debbie Weierman refused to comment on the University of California report. She said no search or arrest warrants had yet been issued in connection with the probe.

"The investigation is continuing," Ms Weierman said. "We are following all leads aggressively. We are interviewing representatives of the victim companies and gathering information and data."

President Clinton, in brief comments to reporters on Friday, said the open nature of the internet and the growing speed and importance of computers, have brought people closer together.

— Reuters

*The Economic Times*

13 FEB 2000

China summons US ambassador

ST- 3/2

# Congress passes pro-Taiwan Bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, Feb. 2. — The US President, Mr Bill Clinton's policy to "engage" China to bring the Sino-US relations on right track received a temporary setback when the House of Representatives approved a bipartisan support to the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act that would bolster military ties with Taipei.

The House of Representatives, with the support of 140 Democrats, yesterday passed the legislation to broaden military ties between the US and Taiwan by 341 to 70 vote.

The Bill, which provides for direct military communications to be established between Washington and Taipei and directs the US military to expand its training of Taiwanese military officers, goes next to the Senate.

The House majority whip Republican Congressman, Mr Tom Delay, said "bipartisan dedication to this cause shows how both sides of the aisle can come together under the goal of peace through strength. Taiwan desperately needs America's help."

Meanwhile, the Chinese vice-minister for foreign affairs, Mr Yang Jiechi, summoned ambassador, Mr Joseph Prueher, in Beijing today to lodge protests on the passing of the Act, official Xinhua news agency said.

Terming the move as "anti-China", Mr Yang said the Congress's move was "a complete violation of the three Sino-US joint communiques and relevant commitments made by Washington, a serious encroachment on its sovereignty, a gross interference in its internal affairs".

Mr Yang slammed the anti-China move as an attempt to

"provide a legal basis for the build-up and expansion of military contacts and exchanges between the USA and Taiwan, and for the sales of all manner of advanced weaponry equipment and technologies to Taiwan".

He said the Act was "a complete violation of the three Sino-US joint communiques and relevant commitments made by the US side, a serious encroachment on China's sovereignty, a gross interference in China's internal affairs".

He pointed out that the Taiwan issue was related to China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and, therefore, was closely linked with the "national sentiment of the entire Chinese people".

"There is only one China, and Taiwan is an inalienable part of the Chinese territory," Mr Yang said.

THE STATESMAN

- 3 FEB 2000

# Pallone motion in US House to dub Pak a terrorist state

N. C. Menon  
Washington, January 29

CONGRESSMAN FRANK Pallone, Jr, New Jersey Democrat and founder and former co-chairman of the Congressional India Caucus, has introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives calling on US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to designate Pakistan as a State sponsor of terrorism. The resolution is co-sponsored by Congressman Bill McCollum, Florida Republican.

Pallone's move, mention of which had been made in a letter he sent earlier in the week to Secretary Albright seeking the terrorist tag for Pakistan, came immediately after the Clinton Administration cautioned Islamabad that it could face such action if it did not end its support to the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and other terrorist groups.

The resolution states: The Secretary of State, pursuant to the

Export Administration Act, should designate the Islamic Republic of Pakistan as a country, the government of which has repeatedly provided support for international terrorism; in addition to terrorist organisations themselves, those countries that harbour terrorist organisations or provide them with technical, financial, political or other support should also be held accountable; and given the shared threat that the US and other countries face from international terrorist organisations, the State Department is urged to explore ways to step up US cooperation with those countries in the struggle against terrorism.

The resolution points out that reports from Western media sources have cited Pakistan as a base and training ground for terrorist groups, and that Pakistan Government has demonstrated a reluctance to halt the use of its soil for terrorist organisations. It also cites reports that have implicated Pakistan's Inter Service

Intelligence (ISI) directly involved in terrorist activities, as well as in the international drug trade.

The resolution notes that Pakistan is one of the three countries to recognise the Taliban in Afghanistan and that the Taliban, which has been declared a foreign terrorist organisation by the US Department of State, has provided refuge and assistance to Osama bin Laden. It notes that Pakistan has hindered US and international efforts to apprehend Osama bin Laden, whom the State Department has declared, with his associate, as a foreign terrorist organisation.

The resolution goes on to cite the fact that Pakistan was placed on the State Department's "watch list" of suspected State sponsors of international terrorism in 1993, and cites numerous cases of terrorist attacks or attempted terrorism that have been linked to Pakistan, many of which have resulted in death or injury to Americans and other Westerners.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

30 JAN 2000

## DOUBTS OVER ANTI-MISSILE SYSTEM

THE FAILURE OF its Anti-Ballistic Missile System (ABM) to hit a speeding warhead high over the Pacific Ocean should have its lessons for the U.S. Defence Department which might have presumed that such a test was wholly routine and it would not have had any doubts about its being successful. The projected missile interception had not materialised in a third test though an earlier anti-missile launch had succeeded in hitting a similar warhead. This is a clear indication that where highly advanced electronic technology is involved, requiring checks for ensuring hundred per cent flawless performance of all the inputs prior to every launch, there is no question of success turning out to be repeatable. This becomes clear from the Pentagon's disclosure that there had been technical problems associated with the test which had become more difficult because of its having to be integrated with the ground-based radars in Hawaii and Kwajalein. If, as it appears, successive launching of the missile system requires such an integration with a global radar network, it further compounds the uncertainties of missile launches.

The Pentagon should be aware of the complexities thrown up by a missile system having to depend upon ground-based rather than space-borne systems and which should prepare those entrusted with their operations for a high failure rate. Maj. Gen. Malcolm O'Neill, Acting Director of U.S. Strategic Defence Initiative Organization, while addressing an armed services sub-committee of the U.S. Senate a few years ago, laid the emphasis squarely on the acquisition of improved ground-based missile defence. The failure of the latest missile launch could suggest that the ground-based systems have not acquired the perfection which should be built into it every time — which implies that the performance of a widespread network of vendors to whom orders for crucial components are farmed out is not wholly error-free. The Penta-

gon was advised to give greater attention to space-based anti-missile systems from 2000 onwards by which time it should have built more reliability on well-functioning ground-based systems. Space-based interceptors, even beyond 2004, should in fact support the ground-based interceptors. The Pentagon discovered that the U.S. casualties in Operation Desert Storm would have been less than 20 per cent of the total if it had not had to depend on a single, tactical ballistic missile. This called for a comprehensive review of the SDI programme and its relationship with the ABM treaty.

The ABM missile system merits attention for the technology headway which the U.S. has made for ensuring that it stays ahead with the massive destructive capabilities it has built up to be prepared for the wars it feels called upon to wage in the future. The latest failure of its intercept weapon to hit a speeding missile could convey to the Pentagon a message which could be very disquieting to the rest of the world. If it gives out a warning that a certain percentage of such weapons in stock, however small, is likely to fail, the U.S. could decide on build-up of a stockpile large enough to ensure that nothing is left to chance when a contingency perceived by the Pentagon as requiring their deployment arises in future. The response to any such move by the U.S. from countries which do not feel wholly comforted by the end of the Cold War would be to fortify themselves adequately. There are already indications that Russia is already very much disturbed by the U.S. becoming more hostile after the inclusion of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in the NATO. A 21-page document published by Russia states very bluntly that it would even consider using nuclear weapons and calls for stepping up Moscow's defence preparedness. Washington should, therefore, keep in mind the responses which an offensive military strategy could provoke.

THE HINDU  
26 JAN 2000

# Missile fails to hit warhead

WASHINGTON, JAN. 19. The proposed U.S. Anti-Ballistic Missile System (ABM) failed a major test when an intercept weapon missed a speeding warhead high over the Pacific Ocean on Tuesday, the Defence Department said.

"An intercept was not achieved," the Pentagon said in a brief statement after a projectile fired from Kwajalein Atoll in the western Pacific missed the warhead launched from the Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, 6,900 km away. The anti-missile weapon, built by Raytheon Co., had hit a similar warhead in space last October in the first test of the system.

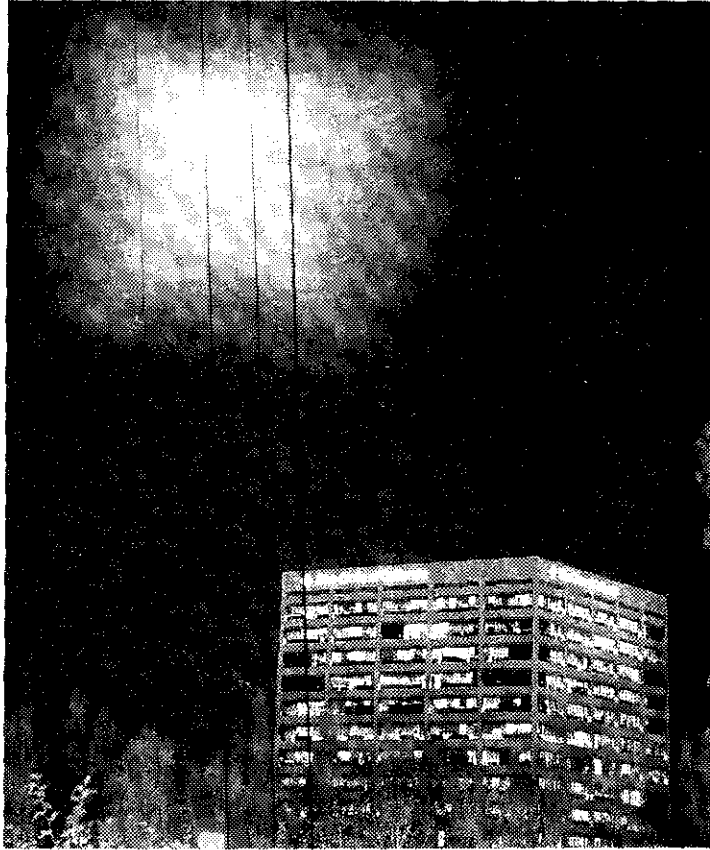
The Pentagon conceded last week there had been technical problems associated with that test that were not disclosed at the time. Tuesday's test was more difficult because it was to include and integrate the use of space and ground-based radars in Hawaii and Kwajalein. The radars, along with global positioning systems, will become more important as the system evolves.

There was no immediate announcement on prospects for a third test of the system, which is being integrated by Boeing Co., scheduled for April or May. But Tuesday's failure could affect a planned decision by the President, Mr. Bill Clinton, on whether to begin deploying a National Missile Defence System over strong objections from Russia.

Mr. Marc Raimondi, spokesman for the Pentagon's Ballistic Missile Defence Organisation, said it could take weeks to determine the cause of the miss. The target warhead was launched on a Minuteman missile from Vandenberg at 6:19 p.m. Pacific time (7:40 a.m. IST) and the prototype interceptor was fired from Kwajalein about 20 minutes later. "Government and industry programme officials will conduct an extensive review of the test results to determine the reason for not achieving an intercept and any other test objectives that were or were not met," the Defence Department said.

"It's hard to hit a bullet with a bullet at closing speeds of 15,000 miles an hour (24,000 kmph)," the Defence Department spokesman, Mr. Ken Bacon, said before the test, stressing the difficulty of the costly and yet unproven missile defence programme.

Mr. Bacon confirmed reports that the Pentagon planned to ask Congress soon to approve an additional \$ 2.2 billions in spending on the missile defence plan, pushing the planned cost to at



A target missile launched from an Air Force base in California is seen in the evening sky on Tuesday. — AP

least \$ 12.7 billions in the years ahead.

The test had international implications and was watched closely by Governments as well as contractors, including Boeing Co. and Raytheon. Russia has warned that a U.S. National Missile Defence System would violate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Moscow has refused a U.S. request to modify the treaty to allow the system and cautioned that a go-ahead by Washington could threaten current nuclear arms reduction agreements.

But the White House and Pentagon have said that what would be a very modest successor to the former President, Mr. Ronald Reagan's "Star Wars" defence plan would only protect U.S. cities from limited attack by countries such as North Korea or Iraq that Washington considers "rogue states" and would not neutralise Russia's massive nuclear arsenal.

Washington's European allies are worried that a revolutionary U.S. defence against strategic missiles might isolate the world's remaining superpower from its friends and cool America's military commitment to Europe. Both critics and supporters of the programme agree the system is technically extremely difficult and the price of a miss in the real world

would be catastrophic if an enemy missile was carrying a nuclear, chemical or biological warhead.

The Pentagon plans a total of 19 intercept tests of the system, which is now using prototype interceptors and rocket boosters because the final versions to be deployed will not be ready for testing until at least 2003. — Reuters

# Clinton resumes mediation

Shepherdstown, January 10

US PRESIDENT Bill Clinton returned to the Israeli-Syrian peace talks to resume his mediation in the negotiations called "tough" by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

Mr Clinton arrived by helicopter yesterday evening for what is expected to be another three-way meeting between himself, Mr Barak and the chief Syrian negotiator, Farouk Al-Shara.

Such a trilateral meeting would be the third since the talks began in the secluded West Virginia town last Monday. Mr Barak and Mr Al-Shara are expected to depart the talks early in the week, leaving behind experts to continue talks.

Mr Clinton's mediation was the fifth in six days of talks. State Department spokesman James Rubin said yesterday that a seven-page document Mr Clinton presented on Friday could become the core of an accord in which Israel would return Golan Heights territory to Syria in return for a peace treaty with the Arab country.

"To get to a point where you have what I described as a core agreement, you have to start somewhere, and yes, this is the starting point of that," Mr Rubin said at a news conference.

Mr Barak called the current round a "tough diplomatic battle". It was the Israeli leader's first public comments on the round of talks. Mr Barak said it was impossible to say when agreement would be reached.

"No doubt, it will be a diplomatic battle," Ehud Barak told Israeli reporters in Hebrew. "We are talking about a difficult, long struggle, and we

don't know how long the talks are going to go on. But we will do everything to protect the security and vital interests of Israel." The six days of talks so far have been conducted in near-secrecy and have been interrupted several times. Yesterday, all four working parties met simultaneously for the first time.

The parties were set up to deal with the most controversial issues at the talks in Shepherdstown. They range from an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights to security guarantees, a new border, sharing water and normalizing relations. (Agencies)

## Israel-Syria Talks

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# Clinton unveils bold cyber defence plan

WASHINGTON: U.S. President Bill Clinton has unveiled a bold and comprehensive \$91 million national cyber-security plan to protect the country from the threat of cyber-terrorism that could potentially destroy the country's critical infrastructure.

"The most vital sectors of our economy —power generation, telecommunications, banking and finance, transportation and emergency services —are potentially susceptible to disruptions from hackers, terrorists, criminals or nation states," he said on Saturday in a statement.

The national plan for information systems protection, nicknamed "Version 1.0", is the first attempt by any nation to develop a plan to defend its cyberspace.

However, Republicans in the Congress were quick to dismiss the plan and said it was inadequately equipped to protect the federal computer systems. "Under this plan, they would be left vulnerable

to hackers," Republican Representative Tom Bliley was quoted as saying.

Senator Robert Bennet, chairman of the Senate special committee on the Y2K problem, said the plan may cause overlaps between security responsibilities of the Pentagon, the FBI and the other agencies that could act as a disincentive for the private sector to share information.

Clinton has hiked the outlay for critical infrastructure substantially over the past three years, with a hefty 16 per cent rise in the fiscal 2001 budget proposal —to \$2.03 billion.

Declaring the immediate need for such a comprehensive cyber-security system, Clinton said, "The United States has benefited from the most advanced information technology (IT) infrastructure in the world. This same IT infrastructure, however, makes us particularly vulnerable to cyber attack."

National security adviser Sandy Berger, speaking at the National Press Club on Friday, included cyber-terrorism virtually at the top of a list of threats facing the U.S. in the 21st century.

Every day in the U.S., thousands of unauthorised attempts are made to invade the computer systems that control key government and industry networks: defence facilities, power grids, banks, government agencies, computer and telephone networks and transport systems.

While many attempts fail, some succeed. Others gain 'systems administrator status', and download passwords or leave behind 'sniffers' to copy transactions and even implant trap doors to permit an easy return.

"In the next war, the target could be America's infrastructure and the new weapon could be a computer-generated attack on our critical networks and systems. We know of foreign governments cre-

ating offensive attack capabilities against America's cyber networks," Richard A. Clarke, the national co-ordinator for security, infrastructure protection, and counter-terrorism, said in statement.

The U.S. is vulnerable to such attacks because its society is more and more dependent on computer networks for many essential services. The first phase of the plan will be implemented by December 2000 and be fully operational by May 2003.

Clinton also announced two other initiatives: Creation of an institute for information infrastructure protection at an initial cost of \$50 million to identify and fund research and technology development in cyberspace; and a \$25 million Federal Cyber Services (FCS) training and education initiative to create a cadre of trained manpower to meet the cyber-security needs.

# U.S. likely to deploy a limited missile defence against ICBMs

WASHINGTON: United states may deploy a limited national missile defence against ballistic missile threats from rogue states. President Bill Clinton has said.

"...The threat posed by a rogue state developing intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) capable of striking the United States is growing," Mr Clinton said in a report to the Congress.

And the U.S., said Mr Clinton, is committed to meeting the growing danger posed by nations developing and deploying long-range missiles that could deliver weapons of mass destruction against the country by determining this year whether to deploy a limited national missile defence against such threats.

"The intelligence community estimates that during the next 15 years, the United States will most likely face an ICBM threat from North Korea, probably from Iran, and possibly from Iraq," he warned.

"Informed by the intelligence community analysis of the August 1998 North Korean flight test of its Taepo Dong I missile, as well as the report of the Rumsfeld Commission and other information, the administration has concluded that the threat posed by a rogue state developing ICBM capable of striking the U.S. is growing," he noted.

Since the U.S. is a primary target of foreign intelligence services due to its military, scientific and technological pre-eminence, he said to protect sensitive national security information, "we must be able to effectively counter the collection efforts of foreign intelligence services through vigorous counter-intelligence efforts and security programmes."

In his report to the Congress, Mr Clinton said many of the challenges that law enforcement face in cyber crime area are extremely difficult to address without international consensus and cooperation.

"Because of the global nature of information networks, no area of criminal activity has greater international implications than high technology crime. Computer hackers and other cyber-criminals are not hampered by international boundaries, since information and transactions involving funds or property can be transmitted quickly and covertly via telephone and information systems," Mr Clinton said.

"Our potential enemies, whether nations or terrorists," he said, "may be more likely in the future to resort to attacks against vulnerable civilian targets in the U.S. At the same time, easier access to sophisticated technology means destructive power available to rogue nations and terrorists is greater than ever."

The U.S. will act to deter or prevent such attacks and, if attacks occur despite those efforts, will be prepared to defend against them, limit the damage they cause and respond effectively against the perpetrators, Mr Clinton said. Mr Clinton pointed out that "over the last five years, we have created new counter-intelligence mechanisms to address economic and industrial espionage and implemented procedures to improve coordination among intelligence, counter-intelligence and law enforcement agencies."

"These measures have considerably strengthened our ability to counter the foreign intelligence collection threat. We will continue to refine and enhance our counter-intelligence capabilities as we enter the twenty-first century," he added.

The Federal government, working with state and local governments, said Mr Clinton, will respond rapidly and effectively to any terrorist incident in the United States.

A plan for defending critical infrastructures of the U.S. will be in effect in May 2001, and fully operational by December 2003. (PTI)



# US Congress blocks return of Cuba boy

Washington, Jan. 8: A US congressional committee late on Friday issued a subpoena for Elian Gonzalez to appear before it, in a move to block the decision by the US immigration and naturalisation service that the boy should return to Cuba by January 14.

The House committee on government reform, which is chaired by Republican legislator Dan Burton, said in a statement late on Friday that the subpoena would "ensure that no precipitous action is taken until the Florida state court in Miami can adequately address the case."

Six-year-old Elian was found on November 25 clinging to an inner tube in the sea off Florida, after surviving a shipwreck in which 10 other would-be immigrants to the United States, including his mother, were drowned.

The INS ruled on Wednesday that he should be returned to his father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, in Cuba by January 14.

The ruling sparked massive protests in Miami, and attorneys for the boy's Miami-based relatives applied to a Florida family court on Friday for temporary custody to be awarded to the boy's great-uncle, Lazaro Gonzalez. The statement issued by the House committee quoted Mr Burton as saying that he had issued the subpoena because he was "concerned that without a ruling from the judges, Elian is without legal protection over the weekend."

"We would hope that the Clinton administration will do nothing precipitous over the weekend," to implement the INS ruling and preempt the court action launched by the Miami-based relatives, Mr Burton said.

And James Wilson, chief counsel for the congressional committee panel, told reporters that through its subpoena the committee was "not taking any issue with the underlying sentiment of the INS," but wanted "to make sure that there's nothing done in the middle of the night on the weekend."

Mr Burton, along with Republican Senator Jesse Helms, was responsible for drafting the Helms-Burton Act of 1996 which strengthened US economic sanctions against Cuba, and his intervention in the custody dispute on Friday did not go unnoticed by the Cuban government. (AFP)



**HIGH ON HOPE:** Delfin Gonzalez (left), the great-uncle of Cuban boy Elian Gonzalez (right), carries the six-year-old as he holds a congressional subpoena on Friday outside the Little Havana home where he has been staying for the past six weeks. (Reuters)

## Cuba blasts exile groups in Miami

Cardenas (Cuba), Jan. 8: Cuba's government heaped scorn and criticism on Friday on its Cuban-exile foes in Miami for trying to block a decision by US authorities to return shipwreck boy Elian Gonzalez to his father on the island.

"They are threatening riots, to set alight to Miami. Why? To carry on exploiting a child," Ricardo Alarcon, president of Cuba's National Assembly, told a big rally held in Elian's home town of Cardenas, about 140 km east of Havana.

He was commenting on an outburst of street protests in Miami by Cuban exiles angry over a ruling by the US Immigration and Naturalisation Service on Wednesday that 6-year-old Elian

belonged back with his father in Cuba. The boy has been at the centre of an emotional custody battle between Havana and Miami since he was rescued November 25 after surviving the shipwreck of a boat carrying illegal Cuban migrants. Mr Alarcon said Cuba would continue a month-long campaign of government-organised demonstrations, not just to ensure Elian was returned in line with the INS ruling, but also to press for an end to hostile US government policy toward Havana. Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, wept at the Cardenas rally, which he attended with other family members who joined several tens of thousands of flag-waving, chanting Cubans. (Reuters)