

Bush turns down Afghan appeal to end bombing

REUTERS

WASHINGTON/KABUL, Dec. 29 — US President George W Bush poured scorn on Osama bin Laden and made clear that Afghan calls for a quick end to US bombing would not be met until the USA found the world's most wanted man dead or alive.

Mr Bush urged Americans yesterday to remain on the alert in case of new attacks by Bin Laden's Al-Qaida network saying he had Intelligence reports that the group was bent on more destruction.

In disdainful comments, Mr Bush said the USA did not know Bin Laden's fate or location but the Saudi-born Islamic militant was a man on the run who in three months had swapped control of a country for control of a cave.

Making his first direct remarks since Christmas holidays when a new videotape of Bin Laden set off reports that he had escaped to neighbouring Pakistan, Mr Bush said Bin Laden's main achievement had been to be

FBI questions Al-Qaida men

ISLAMABAD, Dec. 29. — A six-member FBI team, assisted by top Pakistan Military Intelligence officials is interrogating 139 Al-Qaida men at the Kohat central prison to get first-hand information regarding whereabouts of Osama bin Laden and his activities, *The Dawn* said today.

So far they had only been able to know that Laden was alive, and efforts were underway to get more information. —UNI

on the losing side of a rout.

The USA, though, said it had received no request to stop the bombing, and declined to make such a promise. Mr Bush and his military commander in charge of the Afghan operation said they were keeping all their options open.

"We don't know if he's in a cave with the door shut, or a cave with the door open.

There's all kinds of reports and all kinds of speculation," Mr Bush said of Bin Laden.

With operational commander Gen Tommy Franks at his side at his Texas ranch, Mr Bush said he expected US forces to remain in Afghanistan "for quite a long period of time".

"I think that it's best for all of us to recognise that we will not be hurried," Gen Franks said.

Mr Bush also declined to sign on to any suggestion that Bin Laden was no longer in a position to mastermind another attack.

In Pakistan, two US helicopters and an aircraft with more than two dozen Marine Commandos on board landed at the Dera Ismail Khan airport in North Western Frontier Province late Thursday night to hunt down Laden and Mullah Mohammad Omar, adds UNI from Islamabad.

Washington fears General Pervez Musharraf could switch forces from the Afghan to the Indian border, making it easier for Bin Laden or his followers to escape.

THE STATESMAN

30 DEC 2001

Shoe bomber denied bail

HT Correspondent & Agencies
Boston, December 29

THE MAN suspected of trying to destroy a transatlantic airliner by detonating explosives in his shoes was ordered held without bail on Friday after an FBI agent said the bombs were powerful enough to blow a hole in the jet.

Judge Judith Dein said prosecutors had produced enough evidence to show that Richard Reid was a danger to the community and might try to flee. Shortly after finding there was probable cause for his arrest last Saturday, Dein ordered Reid's indefinite detention pending further court proceedings.

"The defendant is to be bound over for further proceedings in the District Court," Dein said.

US Attorney Michael Sullivan said on Friday there was no credible evidence Reid had an accomplice on the plane and neither US nor European officials have disclosed any links to Osama bin Laden.

But some possible links have been established. Reid wor-

shipped at the same London mosque as Zacarias Moussaoui, a Frenchman of Moroccan descent who is the only person charged in the September 11 strikes.

In addition, FBI agent Margaret Cronin testified on Friday that preliminary tests showed Reid's shoes contained enough of a volatile and powerful plastic explosive called triacetone triperoxide, known as TATP, to blow a hole in the side of the aircraft if it had been detonated.

"If the sneakers had been placed against the outside wall ... they would have created a hole in the fuselage," Cronin said.

TATP is an explosive that can be made from nail polish remover, hair bleach and acid and has been found by Israeli investigators in the debris of car bombs and other explosions blamed on Palestinian guerrillas. Reid was also identified by al-Qaida fighters in US custody as a trainee at the network's camps in Afghanistan, according to unconfirmed reports.

Reid appeared in shackles at the Boston court. He spent most of the 17-minute hearing with

his head bowed, showing little emotion. But he appeared to smile when the court was told how he was tackled by passengers and flight attendants and subdued with belts and ties.

Osama with Pak tribals

OSAMA BIN Laden escaped from Tora Bora on November 19 and was hiding in Bajaur area of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) in Pakistan, captured al-Qaida men have told US Intelligence. He was given shelter by Sufi Mohammad, chief of tribal outfit Tariq-e-Nifaz Shariat. It is difficult to nab Osama there as even Pakistani troops do not enter the area because of the violent tribal groups.

Al-Qaida's N-links

The al-Qaida was investigating the use of nuclear and biological weapons and had conducted experiments on animals, *The Times* reported on Saturday. This emerged from an examination of documents found in abandoned al-Qaida houses.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

30 DEC 2001

1998/12/28 U.S. / GOVT. PROCEEDS WITH CAUTION ON MILITARY TRIBUNALS

Al-Qaeda men to be held in Cuba base

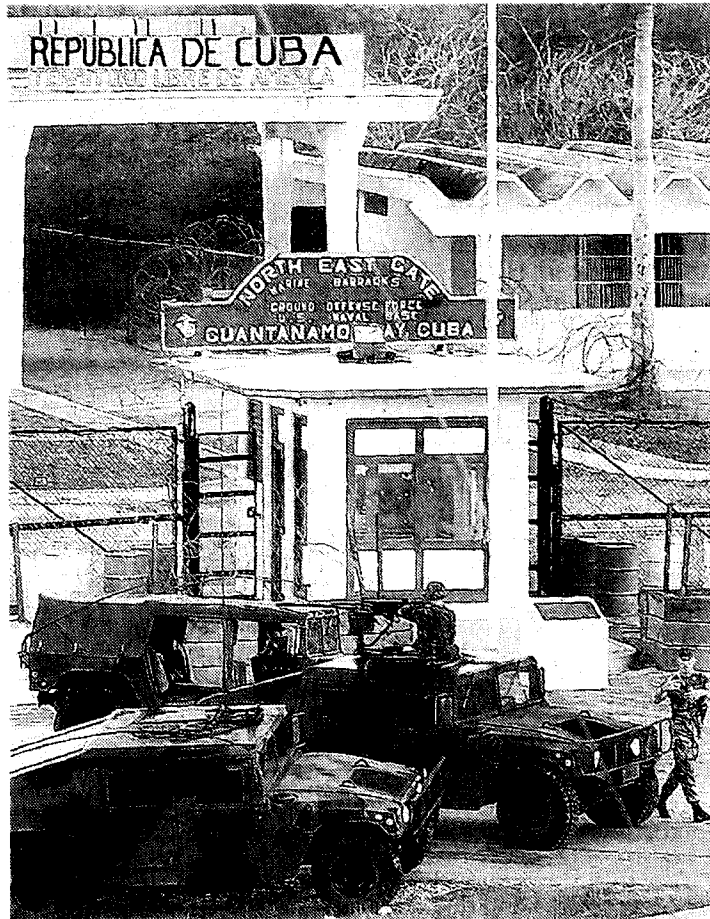
By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, DEC. 28. The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld said on Thursday that the U.S. military will hold Taliban and Al-Qaeda detainees at a Navy base in Cuba, but has no plans to use it as a site for military tribunals.

At a Pentagon briefing, Mr. Rumsfeld described the base as the "least worst place" to hold the detainees, suggesting there were few options for imprisoning the men once they were in U.S. custody. He said it could take weeks to prepare the site, at Guantanamo Naval Base, which the U.S. controls. Surrounded on three sides by Cuba, the base is a highly secure facility patrolled by the American military.

In the past, the Guantanamo Bay has been used to detain Haitian and Cuban refugees and the facility also serves as a refuelling and maintenance depot for the U.S. navy operating in the Caribbean. "We don't anticipate any trouble with Mr. (Fidel) Castro in that regard," Mr. Rumsfeld said in reference to the Cuban leader's criticism of the American war efforts in Afghanistan.

The U.S. holds about 50 prisoners in the Afghan war, many of whom are senior Taliban military functionaries or top Al-Qaeda fighters close to Osama bin Laden. The prisoners are being held in makeshift arrangements in places like Kandahar or have been kept in navy ships near Afghanistan. The U.S. military is interrogating the prisoners among other things on the whereabouts of the Saudi fugitive, Osama bin Laden. The Bush administration is also trying to determine which of the



Marines who serve as the security force at the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, stop in front of the north east gate with the Cuban gate in the background in this Jan. 15, 1998 file photo. The sign over the Cuban gate reads: "Republic of Cuba, Free Territory in America."— AP

prisoners should be tried.

The President, Mr. George W Bush has authorised military tribunals to try suspected terrorists from third countries. Defence officials are, however, not sure if the tribunals will take place. Media

reports say the Bush administration is working on the rules for the tribunals and the requirements to be met before a foreign terrorist can be given the death sentence. One version is that the unanimous vote of all the military offi-

cers in the tribunal will be needed to hand down the death penalty.

The Pentagon has not given details of the proposed draft on the military tribunal procedures but obviously, a lot of thinking is going into the subject given the concern expressed by civil rights groups and members of Congress who are generally wary of military court proceedings. One cause of concern has been on the right to appeal.

Meanwhile, the "shoe bomb" suspect is due in court in Massachusetts today for allegedly trying to set fire to his shoe while travelling in an American Airlines flight from Paris to Miami last week.

Richard Reid has so far only been charged with intimidating or assaulting flight crew — a charge that could attract 20 years in prison if convicted — but the Federal Bureau of Investigation is expected to file additional charges.

Tests on Reid's shoes have shown the presence of PETN, a material that is used to make the explosive Semtex — similar to the one used by terrorists to down Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland.

Investigating agencies are checking if Reid acted alone or had help. It is suspected that the British national could not have acted alone given the way in which the explosives were packed in the shoes. Intelligence agencies are also trying to track down Reid's travels in Europe and the Middle East. American intelligence is also sifting through information obtained from some Al-Qaeda prisoners that Reid underwent training in camps in Afghanistan.

THE IRISH

US passes attack proof to Pervez

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, Dec. 27: Evidence gathered by India about the involvement of the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad in the attack on Parliament is now in the hands of General Pervez Musharraf.

India had shared the evidence with the US, which, in turn, passed it on to Pakistan's military rulers. This prompted Musharraf, under pressure from Washington and London, to take at least cosmetic action against the two terrorist outfits.

US officials are unwilling to go on record about the sharing of such evidence with Islamabad. But senior staff at the National Security Council have told American correspondents in background briefings that India has proof of Pakistan's role in the December 13 assault and that the evidence has reached Islamabad via Washington.

India had shared the evidence, among others, with the UK. As a result, both Whitehall and Washington delivered demarches in Islamabad just before Christmas on the terrorist threat emanating from within Pakistan.

Sources here said the demarches were specific and prompted the military junta in Pakistan to act, at least cosmetically, against Lashkar and Jaish.

Secretary of state Colin Powell has been on the phone even during the Christmas holidays. While most of America rested on Boxing Day yesterday, Powell spoke twice to Musharraf and twice to external affairs minister Jaswant Singh.

He had spoken last with Singh on Sunday, but had been on the phone to Musharraf on Monday and even on Christmas Day. That Powell is devoting most of his time to Pakistan and India when the US is at war in Afghanistan is an indication of American determination to avoid a new battlefield opening in South Asia.

Officials at the Pentagon are saying the US wants heavy deployment of Pakistan armed forces along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border to prevent al Qaida and Taliban forces from crossing over.

They also want Pakistani forces to search for Osama bin Laden if he is in Pakistan, as alleged today by Afghanistan. All this would not be possible if Islamabad had to divert its military resources to the border with India.

Equally worrying for the Pentagon is the possibility that the military top brass in Rawalpindi may be forced to pull out its forces now guarding US bases, installations and personnel in Pakistan as part of the ongoing military build-up along the border with India.

There is considerable anti-American sentiment in Pakistan and US forces would be vulnerable to attacks without protection from the Pakistani army.

THE TELEGRAPH

29 DEC 2001

29 DEC 2001

25 civilians killed in US misfire

WT-10
28/12
WT-10

Kabul, December 27

AT LEAST 25 civilians were reported killed today when US planes pounded a village in eastern Afghanistan even as American troop deployment was put on hold.

The US Marines have, for the time being, been left out of the risky job of flushing out bin Laden and remnants of his al Qaida network amidst reports that the American military is offering incentives to the Afghan forces to take the lead rather than risk the lives of its troops.

The Afghan fighters are being offered incentives including weapons, money and winter clothing, according to American officials. The 500-odd Marines will not be deployed as previously contemplated but they would be on standby, they added.

The Pakistan-based *Afghan Islamic Press* reported, quoting unidentified sources, that women and children were among those killed in the US bombing at Naka village in Paktika province at 2 am (local time) today.

The AIP quoted witnesses as saying that five houses, including that of a Taliban commander Mawlawi Tauhaw, were destroyed but the commander was not at home. There was no immediate reaction from the US about this report.

The whereabouts of bin Laden continued to be a matter of speculation amidst reports that he may have fled to Pakistan or may still be in his hideout in Afghanistan. There were reports that he might have died of a natural cause or under intense US

300 MORE BRITISH TROOPS FOR KABUL

THREE HUNDRED more British troops have been sent to Afghanistan to help establish the UN-approved multinational peacekeeping force.

The Defence Ministry said the troops would join the several dozen British soldiers already in Kabul. "They are being sent to ensure that conditions are right for the deployment of the international security force there," a ministry spokeswoman said.

Britain had said it would commit around 1,500 troops to lead the peacekeeping force.

Reuters, London

bombing at the Tora Bora caves.

According to Interior Minister Yunus Qanooni, there were reports that bin Laden is still staying with a former commander of Hezb-i-Islami in the east.

US troops continued to be on heightened alert at the Kandahar Airport in southern Afghanistan after officials said they received warnings of a possible attack.

The US-led coalition, meanwhile, said that military operations in Afghanistan will not stop until bin Laden and Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar are found.

But, tribesmen from an eastern Afghanistan province, where a controversial US bombing flattened a convoy of vehicles last week, pleaded for immediate end to air attacks on their territory.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 DEC 2001

7 3 2001

US army maps Iraq invasion

Washington/New York, Dec 24

TOP US military officials are studying the possibility of invading Iraq from both the north and the south in order to topple President Saddam Hussein, *Newsweek* magazine reported.

Under heavy political pressure, the joint chiefs of staff have been looking at a study that suggests deploying 50,000 US troops on Iraq's southern border and another 50,000 on its northern border, according to the report.

The plans calls for sending the two armies towards Baghdad simultaneously, but strategists doubt that even that force would be enough to take the Iraqi capital, *Newsweek* said. Commander of US ground forces in the region, Lt-Gen Paul Mikolashek, believes taking Baghdad and overthrowing Saddam would require forces "at least at the level" of Desert Storm — when around 169,000 US troops were deployed, according to the report.

However, US President George W Bush and his national security team have decided that Saddam has to go, said the magazine, quoting unnamed US officials.

"The question is not if the US is going to hit Iraq, the question is when," the report quoted a senior US envoy in West Asia as saying. Faced with such "resolve", the report says, "cru-

cial allies of the US in the region — Turkey, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia — are quietly saying they're ready to cooperate".

"If there is a war against terror, then Iraq is part of the terror," the report in *Newsweek* quoted Kuwaiti Information Minister Ahmad al-Fahad al-Sabah as saying.

An advisor to Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah said the discussions about targeting Saddam have already begun. Listing some "potent signals under the present circumstances", the report says the commander of US ground forces in the region Pentagon is building up its administrative resources in the region and preparing for the contingencies of war. The US Third Army is moving its headquarters to Kuwait, besides the air force has also beefed up its operations over Iraqi skies, the report said.

Walker met Osama

American al-Qaida fighter John Walker met Osama bin Laden when he was undergoing training in one of his secret camps in Afghanistan, *Newsweek* reported. After proving his loyalty to the al-Qaida cause, Walker was allowed to live in a camp near Kandahar, where he once had a small meeting with bin Laden.

Agencies

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

25 DEC 2001

Bid to blow up US plane foiled

WJW
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Agencies

BOSTON, Dec. 23. — A man attempting to blow up a plane from Paris to Miami with explosives packed in his shoes was overpowered by the crew and passengers yesterday.

US aviation officials said two F-15 fighter jets escorted the American Airlines flight 63 with 185 passengers and 12 crew members to Logan International Airport here after the mid-air drama over the Atlantic.

The director of aviation at the airport, Mr Thomas Kinton, said a flight attendant had approached the man, Richard Reid, when he lit a match in mid-flight and attempted to set his shoe on fire.

"The flight attendant then challenged Reid as to what he was doing," Mr Kinton said. But the man got up and bit the crew member. At this both got into a "wrestling match". The other passengers rushed to her aid. They subdued Reid and strapped him to a seat with belts. Two doctors used the on-board medical kit to sedate him, and the man's shoe, which had protruding wires, was removed.

Officials feel Reid's British passport, issued three weeks ago in Belgium, was bogus.

Meanwhile, the Boston Globe reported that the suspect had tried to board the same flight the day before but was stopped by security guards at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris.

In Washington, the Republican senator on the Senate Intelligence Committee, Mr Richard Shelby, today said the suspect was on a suicide mission. "He was was trying to blow himself up, blow the plane up and we are very fortunatè that it did not happen." He said the FBI was investigating whether the man, who French police said identified himself as Sri Lankan national Abdel Rahim, was acting alone or not. Another report said his name was Tajik Raja. A French police officer said the suspect's identity and nationality was learnt from sources in the USA.

Photograph on page 6

THE STATESMAN

24 DEC 2001

'IT IS A STATELESS SPONSOR OF TERRORISM'

Bush blocks Lashkar finances

WASHINGTON, DEC. 21. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, moved to block the finances of two more groups allegedly linked to terrorism — a Kashmir-based group that “aimed to disrupt Indo-Pakistan relations” and an organisation that “gave nuclear information to the Al-Qaeda network.”

“Today I’m announcing two more strikes against the financing of terror,” Mr. Bush said at the White House Rose Garden on Thursday.

Mr. Bush accused the Kashmir group, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), also known as army of the righteous, of using terrorism to undermine Indo-Pakistan ties. The group was formerly identified on a State Department list of terrorist organisations.

“LeT is a stateless sponsor of terrorism, and it sought to destroy relations between Pakistan and India and undermine Pakistan’s President, Pervez Musharraf. To achieve its purpose, LeT has committed acts of terrorism inside both India and Pakistan,” he said.

Mr. Bush said the second group, the Umma Tameer-e-Nau (UTN), was established by a former Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission official and masqueraded as a charity for the hungry in Afghanistan. He said that in reality the group gave nuclear weapons information to Osama bin Laden’s Al-Qaeda network.

“We know that the Al-Qaeda would like to obtain nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and we know that often times they do not act alone. The Al-Qaeda has international supporters, and some of those supporters hide themselves in the disguise of charity,” he said.



On the LeT, Mr. Bush said, “It is a terrorist organisation that presents a global threat and I look forward to working with New Delhi and Islamabad in a common effort to shut it down and to bring the killers to justice.”

He also strongly condemned the December 13 attack on the Indian Parliament, saying it “was only the most recent terrorist attack on the institutions of Indian democracy.”

Since September 11, “we have witnessed a series of terrorist attacks made at the United States and our friends around the world,” Mr. Bush said.

“The legislature of the world’s largest democracy was attacked. A nation founded on the principles of freedom of speech and freedom of worship was ruthlessly attacked. The terrorists killed eight innocent people.”

“The U.S. condemns these terrorist attacks against India. We extend our sympathies and friendship to the families of the murdered. American power will

be used against all terrorists of global reach.” — Reuters, PTI

U.S. misguided, says Lashkar

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 21. The Pakistan-based militant outfit, Lashkar-e-Taiba, said today that it would continue fighting against the “oppression and atrocities of Indian forces in Kashmir” and denied it was a terrorist group after Washington ordered a freeze on its U.S. assets.

“The U.S. decision is very unfortunate, it is not based on correct information. The U.S. is misguided by India,” the Lashkar spokesman, Mr. Yahya Mujahid, said. He strongly denied Lashkar’s involvement in terrorism and in the December 13 attack on the Indian Parliament.

“We are neither a terrorist organisation, nor does Islam allow acts of terror,” he said. He alleged that, on the other hand, the RSS and the BJP were “harbouring extremist Hindu terrorists” in their training camps and that they should be banned.

Pak. to freeze assets

AFP reports:

Pakistan is to freeze the assets and accounts of a Pakistani-based group, Umma Tameer-e-Nau (UTN), accused by Washington of helping terrorist mastermind, Osama bin Laden, a Government spokesman, Mr. Anwar Mahmood, said.

“An advisory is being issued to the State Bank of Pakistan about the affairs of Umma Tameer-e-Nau and an announcement about action against Lashkar-e-Taiba will be made tomorrow,” he said.

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THE HINDU

Why US presence in Afghanistan is necessary

19/12
The fall of Kandahar and Tora Bora, the last hideouts of hardcore Taliban fighters, might give the illusion of the final victory but that would be missing the whole purpose of the war. The USA did not go to Afghanistan only to liberate the people from the tyranny of the Taliban. There's a greater purpose.

The surrender of the Taliban is only the beginning of the struggle against an enemy that has no head or tail, an enemy that has decentralised its operations and functionalities by establishing dedicated on-demand sleeper cells that can be activated as needed in several countries.

Those who are jumping in their seats over the sudden collapse of Mullah Mohammed Omar and his goons should listen to Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, probably the most astute thinker in the Bush administration. This 70-year-old hardheaded gentleman seems to have learned the lessons of all the wars of the previous century.

He knows what military technology can do and what humans must do to ensure a lasting peace. He knows the purpose and the moral obligations of the US leadership in the world. Mr Rumsfeld has repeatedly said that Al-Qaida, rank and file, its entire network and financial support system, must be destroyed. After the killing of thousands of innocent people in the USA, atrocities against the people of Afghanistan, relentless terrorism in other parts of the world, including India, there can be no amnesty for anyone.

There can be no deals; there can be no plea-bargaining. Mullah Omar and Osama bin Laden, if they surrender or are captured alive, must be put on trial and face justice for death and destruction, for creating thousands of widows and orphaned children.

There can be no forgiveness for Islamic Nazis and fascists, taking shelter in the Koran as *jehadis*. Had the USA not been attacked on 11 September, international terrorism fuelled by the Al-Qaida militants might have continued to grow. It

China. (W) 51-5
For international peace and economic prosperity, the horrific attacks against the World Trade Center, a soaring symbol of free market capitalism, and against the Pentagon, the military might of the USA, has been a turning point in history, if not a blessing in disguise.

The centre of gravity has shifted from the Far East. Central Asia, particularly, Afghanistan, has assumed a great political, economic and cultural significance because it is from this focal point that a new world order would arise. By helping to rebuild Afghanistan and its institutions, including the rule of law and the rightful place for its women, the USA might instigate reformation in the entire Islamic world, most of which remains crushed under brutal authoritarian regimes.

A hasty withdrawal from the region will be a betrayal of the innocent. In more than one way, the USA must plan a long stay in Afghanistan.

cyber age ND BATRA

First and foremost, US military presence is crucial to peace in the region, as it has been in the Pacific-Asian Rim. The USA has to keep a watch both on Iran and Pakistan, the latter more so because it might plunge into chaos as the returning Taliban enter Pakistan and disappear into the existing terrorist sleeper cells in the country.

There is always the possibility of another military coup, since General Pervez Musharraf has not succeeded in purging the armed forces, except the top echelon, of the widespread presence of Taliban elements. It has been comparatively easy to rid Afghanistan of the Taliban, but cleaning up Pakistan of its terrorist bases will not be easy and can only be done by a continued US presence in the region. Camp Rhino in southern Afghanistan must be turned into a permanent military base.

There has been a growing concern within the Bush administration since 11 September that some Pakistani nuclear scientists might be in cohort with the Al-Qaida leadership to develop crude nuclear weapons, those that can



Mujahideen fighters with US Marines at the entrance to the Kandahar airport on Monday. The Mujahideen came to help the Navy Construction Brigade restore water and electricity disrupted for the last few years. — AP/PTI

seems to have been checkmated for the time being, but left alone it might start growing again. It must be rooted out, whatever the cost. Common sense tells us that economic growth cannot occur in countries ravaged by terrorism.

Direct foreign investment does not flow to regions where terrorism is endemic. And if you wonder why China draws huge foreign direct investment, one of the reasons is that there are fewer terrorists' threats there than in other developing countries, for example, India. Terrorism negates all the advantages that India has over China in terms of fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and an abundance of knowledge workers. A terrorism-free India will surge ahead of

spread low-level lethal radiation. Establishing long-term military presence in the region modelled on South Korea, Taiwan and Japan would help the USA not only to monitor "the privatisation" of nuclear technology through the hands of renegade scientists for profit or terrorism; it will also transform the region economically through expanded trade, commerce and oil exploration. With Afghanistan as a strong ally, the USA will have a unique opportunity to forge a new relationship with central Asian nations, a region that sits on China's backyard.

(ND Batra is Professor of Communications, Norwich University, Vermont.)

THE STATESMAN

19 DEC 2001

US releases list of Osama and his gang

Washington, December 18

IT IS the blackest of blacklists: names of the top al-Qaida terrorist leaders that the US wants dead or captured.

Some are almost universally known — there's Osama bin Laden, of course, and his top deputy, Ayman al-Zawahri. Others are publicly identified among the FBI's most wanted terrorists, or in other UN or US lists and documents, but few details are provided. Still other senior lieutenants are known only to US Intelligence and military officials.

Get them, and you hurt al-Qaida, US officials and experts say.

"It disrupts the channels of communications. It disrupts the chain of command," said Stan Bedlington, a retired senior analyst from the CIA's counterterrorism centre. "But the cells on the ground are allowed a certain freedom to operate. We can expect some of the cells will continue to operate."

At least three lieutenants are dead, including Mohammed Atef, an Egyptian who was among bin Laden's top aides, killed in an airstrike near Kabul. Two more high-ranking Egyptians, Tariq Anwar al-Sayyid Ahmad and Muhammad Salah, were killed in another strike near Khowst.

Many of the rest are thought to be in Afghanistan, although some, if they're still alive, may have escaped to Pakistan or elsewhere. Many of the names are code names.

AP

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

19 DEC 2001

HD-19

AFGHANISTAN / RUMSFELD MEETS KARZAI

18/12

U.S. to help rebuild nation

BAGRAM, DEC. 17. Rebuilding Afghanistan into a stable nation won't be easy, the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald H. Rumsfeld, has said, but the U.S. wanted "to be as helpful as we can."

Mr. Rumsfeld also told U.S. troops that their task was to ensure terrorists faced punishment for the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Sitting less than 2 km from former Taliban front lines, on folding chairs in a room draped with camouflage inside a damaged aircraft hangar, the interim Prime Minister, Mr. Hamid Karzai, told Mr. Rumsfeld the U.S. military had boosted an opposition "incapacitated" by years of war. "The way you provided help for us was the opportunity that we wanted," Mr. Karzai said.

Prisoners paraded

Shuffling and shell-shocked after three weeks of terrifying bombing, 19 Al-Qaeda prisoners were ritually humiliated on Monday by being paraded before the world's press. They were paraded in a roped-off area of the dusty square in the village of Mia, some 15 km north of the frontline.

The first to appear, a tall bearded man wearing a long striped robe, his head heavily bandaged,

was led into the square and he sat down on a simple bed. "Where are you from?" journalists asked. "They are all Arabs," one of Commander Zahir's men shouted back, forbidding further questions. A second, older man came limping in, followed by a third. All three sat with their heads bowed until they were led away.

After the Arabs were finished, it was the turn of five Afghan Al-Qaeda members to make an appearance. They came out together

and sat down in front of their guards.

Meanwhile, the U.S. re-established a diplomatic presence in Kabul on Monday for the first time since its diplomats fled the city shortly before the end of the Soviet occupation in 1989.

In another development, an Australian fighting with the Taliban and captured by Northern Alliance fighters has been handed over to U.S. military forces.

— AP, Reuters



A captured foreign-born member of Al-Qaeda tries to cover his face with a bandaged hand as two anti-Taliban fighters parade him in public in Agom, Afghanistan, at the base of the White Mountains on Monday. — AP

18/12

US raises flag in Kabul, prisoners paraded



A foreign member of the al Qaida covers his face in Tora Bora on Monday. (AFP)

FROM SEBASTIAN ALISON
AND JEREMY PAGE

Tora Bora/Kandahar, Dec. 17 (Reuters): Anti-Taliban forces paraded some of Osama bin Laden's routed al Qaida fighters captured in the eastern Afghan mountains of Tora Bora, today as the US flag rose in the capital, Kabul, for the first time in 12 years.

There was no sign of the main US quarry, the Saudi-born militant accused of the deadliest attacks on US soil. As Pashtoon fighters prepared to attack Mullah Omar's redoubt, the United States re-established a diplomatic presence in Kabul for the first time since its diplomats fled the city shortly before the end of the Soviet occupation in 1989.

On a cold and drizzly today afternoon, two US Marines hoisted the same Stars and Stripes on the same flagpole from which it was taken down on January 30,

1989. US warplanes bombed suspected hideouts in the Tora Bora ridges and canyons of the eastern White Mountains through out the night, but only one bomb was heard exploding this morning.

Front-line commander Haji Zahir said the anti-Taliban mujahideen holy warriors had taken the main al Qaida positions. "The mujahideen are still positioned to go after the remaining al Qaida but there is no fighting as they have lost their ammunition, their confidence and their food," he said.

Asked about bin Laden's whereabouts, Zahir said: "I am not in a position to say anything about his location".

Shell-shocked

More prisoners were apprehended overnight in the jagged hills where 200 bodies were found and 25 fighters captured yesterday as Afghan anti-Taliban fighters ad-

vanced. Zahir paraded 19 in a dusty village square, all referred to as "Arabs". They shuffled forward, looking shell-shocked after three weeks of US bombing.

In the night, three Arabs and eight Afghans loyal to al Qaida were captured. All were wounded, some lightly and some more seriously, said Haji Atiqullah, a spokesman for Zahir.

CNN said it had seen five al Qaida prisoners, of Saudi, Iraqi and Qatari nationality, brought down from the mountains and they said that as of two days ago they believed bin Laden was still in the area. Any remaining al Qaida were likely caught in a tight ribbon of rugged territory between the Tora Bora ridges and the Pakistan border seven km to the south.

Haji Zaman, top military commander in the eastern Jalalabad region near Tora Bora, said bin Laden was no longer in the

area and the remnants of his al Qaida forces were all but wiped out.

Underlining the rout of the Taliban, the former Taliban finance minister said the hardline militia's rule had ended and it could accept a new government.

"If a stable Islamic government is established in Afghanistan then we don't intend to launch any action against it," Mullah Agha Jan Mutasim told the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) from an unknown location inside Afghanistan yesterday.

Hamid Karzai, the head of the interim Afghan government taking power on Saturday, flew to Rome for talks with ex-King Zahir Shah, sources said. He was expected to stay for two days.

James Dobbins, the US special envoy to Afghanistan, told reporters at the US embassy that advance troops of an international peacekeeping force should

reach Kabul by Saturday. Details had not been announced, but British Prime Minister Tony Blair said in parliament today that London would send up to 1,500 troops and was prepared in principle to lead it.

A spokesman for the British diplomatic mission in Kabul said a British vanguard was on standby at an undisclosed location for rapid deployment if the prime minister ordered them to go. "If we need to bring troops in, we can bring them very quickly," Paul Sykes told reporters.

An Australian man captured among al Qaida fighters in Afghanistan has been handed over to the US military but there was no evidence to confirm reports a second Australian had been caught, officials said.

Australian attorney-general Daryl Williams said Northern Alliance fighters handed over Adelaide-born David Hicks to US forces early today.

Israel begins pullout from northern Gaza

US vetoes pro-Arab UN resolution

United Nations, Dec. 15 (Reuters): The United States today used its veto power to kill a UN resolution that demanded an immediate halt to West Asia violence and said the Palestinian Authority was essential to any peace process.

Israel said today it had begun to withdraw its troops from a Palestinian-ruled town in northern Gaza that it entered as part of a sweep for militants responsible for attacks on Israelis.

"We have begun leaving Beit Hanoun," an Israeli army spokesman said. She added she expected the pullout to be completed by the end of the night. There was no immediate confirmation from Palestinian witnesses or officials that the withdrawal had begun.

Israeli troops shot and killed four Palestinians after tanks carrying troops hunting for militants plunged deep into Beit Hanoun early today.

US ambassador John Negroponte said the Security Council resolution, sponsored by Arab states, was aimed at isolating Israel politically and did not mention recent suicide bombings against Israelis or those responsible for them.

The vote in the 15-member council was 12 to 1 with 2 abstentions, Britain and Norway. The other two Europeans on the council, France and Ireland were among the "yes" votes following two dozen speeches that



A Palestinian youth throws stones at an Israeli tank in the town of Beit Hanoun, northern Gaza Strip, on Saturday. (Reuters)

spilled into the early-morning hours. The US veto was the second this year on a Palestinian-backed resolution. In March, Washington killed a tougher measure that called for an international observer force, which Israel opposes.

Today's resolution, sponsored by Egypt and Tunisia and amended by France, encouraged "all concerned to establish a monitoring mechanism" to help ease conditions in the West Bank and Gaza. It condemned all terrorist acts, excessive use of force

and the destruction of property.

But Negroponte said it was fundamentally flawed because it did not even mention "recent acts of terrorism" against Israelis or those responsible for them. On December 1, Palestinian suicide attacks killed 26 in Jerusalem and Haifa.

The resolution sought to bolster Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat days after Israel severed ties with him and branded him "irrelevant" in response to the spate of attacks on Israelis this month.

THE TELEGRAPH

16 DEC 2001

Anthrax spores linger in Senate

WASHINGTON, DEC. 15. Trace amounts of anthrax were found in a Senate office building that had been fumigated with chlorine dioxide gas two weeks ago in an attempt to kill lingering spores. Officials began trying again early on Saturday to eliminate the contamination.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Friday it was unlikely that all the spores will be killed.

The Hart Senate Office Building has been closed since October 17, two days after an anthrax-filled letter was received in the offices of Senate Majority Leader, Mr. Tom Daschle. "We're not going to go back in until it's been certified as absolutely safe," Mr. Daschle said on Friday.

The Environmental Protection Agency had planned to begin the new fumigation operation later on Friday. But technical problems pushed the start back to early Saturday morning, Capitol Police, Lt. Dan Nichols said.

The EPA said it would use chlorine dioxide gas in part of the building's ventilation system. In Mr. Daschle's office, they planned to use the liquid form of chlorine dioxide. Traces of anthrax were found in both places.

Mr. Richard Rupert, the EPA's onsite coordinator, said the positive samples "were all pretty much in one area that was always one of the hottest areas" — the cold-air return in the ventilation system.

Senator Jim Bunning said on Friday that traces of anthrax had just been found in the mailroom of his office, which is in a different wing and floor of the Hart building than Mr. Daschle's suite. The EPA planned to do further tests.

The EPA pumped chlorine dioxide gas into Mr. Daschle's suite two weeks ago in an attempt to kill all traces of anthrax. In 11 other Senators' offices in the building, they have used liquid and foam decontaminants and vacuuming to try to kill the anthrax.

Mr. Rupert said though the first round of gas did not kill all the

anthrax spores, other more invasive methods, such as the use of formaldehyde, would have required at least two to three applications.

In its natural state, anthrax forms spores that tend to stick together. When the spores are refined for use as a weapon, however, they are milled so that each spore is separated and capable of easily wafting into the air. Some federal scientists said samples from the Mr. Daschle letter were so prone to take flight that it was difficult to contain them on laboratory slides for examination.

— AP



A worker gets his suit sealed with tape by a co-worker as preparations are made to resume decontamination of sections of the Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill in Washington on Friday. — AP

THE HINDU

16 DEC 2001

'Scrapping ABM will end arms race'

1712
BAKU, DEC. 15. The U.S. withdrawal from the 1972 anti-ballistic missile treaty will end the cold war arms race, not start a new one, the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld said today.

"With the withdrawal from the treaty we are seeing both sides announce the end of the arms race and a dramatic reduction in the number of strategic weapons," he told reporters on a visit to Azerbaijan.

"Rather than causing problems it seems to me that this puts aside a problem so that we can look forward into the 21st century and not backward into the cold war," Mr. Rumsfeld added.

Mr. Rumsfeld arrived in Azerbaijan with the offer of military and economic assistance to States close to Afghanistan in return for their help in the U.S. war on terrorism.

Mr. Rumsfeld was on the first leg of a one-day tour of the South Caucasus States of Azerbaijan, Armenia

WOW HD-11
and Georgia — situated across the Caspian sea from the Central Asian States, which border Afghanistan.

The three former Soviet republics have offered Washington use of their airspace for U.S. military action in Afghanistan.

Mr. Rumsfeld earlier told reporters flying with him that U.S. and Afghan troops, backed by some of the heaviest bombing of the Afghan war, had made a major advance against al-Qaeda guerrillas in their besieged mountain hideout.

Washington accuses Osama bin Laden, leader of the al-Qaeda network, of masterminding the September 11 hijack attacks on New York and Washington which killed nearly 3,300 people.

Mr. Rumsfeld and senior U.S. officials on his aircraft said Washington was anxious to reward the three impoverished countries for their support in the U.S. campaign. — Reuters

1712

Osama tapes doctored: Arab world

Washington, December 14 15/12

THE ARAB world accused the US of tampering with the videotapes of Osama bin Laden even as the US leaders and people in general expressed their revulsion at the video.

The head of a purported al-Qaida stationhouse in Europe today said he believed the US had tampered with the tape.

On the amateur tape, Osama discusses the September 11 terror attacks, revealing what seems to be advance knowledge. The US Government released the tape yesterday to buttress its claim that Osama indeed master-minded the attacks.

Abel Hamid Shaari, president of the Islamic Cultural Center in Milan, said: "I think the probability that the video of Osama broadcast on TV was manipulated by Americans is very high."

US officials have alleged that the Islamic Cultural Center is the main al-Qaida stationhouse in Europe. It has been under surveillance for years and was recently raided by Italian police. Shaari has repeatedly denied links with Osama.

"Of course it is fabricated," said Dia'a Rashwan, a Cairo-based expert on Islamic movements. "If this is the kind of evidence that America has, then the blood of thousands who died and were injured in Afghanistan is on Bush's hands," he said.

The 40-minute camcorder tape shows Osama telling a visiting Muslim cleric, recognised as Sheikh Sulayman, a key figure in the al-Qaida, details of the planning for the attacks and his delight at the devastation.

The video, thought to have been made in early November, is likely to focus attention on support for Osama among ultra-conservative Muslim clerics in Saudi Arabia. His unnamed visitor conveys congratulations from a string of Saudi sheikhs and relates details of their sermons justifying the operation.

US officials had earlier suggested that at least some of the



DONALD RUMSFELD

hijackers were not aware they were going to die, but Osama's remarks suggest that though they did not know the details of the plan, they were aware they would end up dead. It was a "martyrdom operation".

"We calculated in advance the number of casualties from the enemy who would be killed based on the position of the tower. We calculated that the floors that would be hit would be three or four," he says, illustrating the impact with his hands, jabbing his right hand into his left held vertically for the World Trade Center.

US leaders expressed their revulsion at the video and in particular at bin Laden's cool countenance. New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani said, "It leaves you wondering just how deep the evil of his heart and soul really is."

Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said: "It should be clear from the very matter of fact way that he refers to the attacks that killed thousands of innocent people, from several dozen different countries, why terrorists and terrorism must be defeated before they get their hands on weapons of mass destruction."

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said: "By boasting about his involvement in the evil attacks, Osama confirms his guilt. This totally vindicates the action that we, the US and the international coalition have taken in Afghanistan."

Agencies

Bush announces ABM pullout

11/12
WGW
HP-7

Washington, December 13

US PRESIDENT George W Bush today served formal notice to Russia that Washington was withdrawing from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty in order to deploy the National Missile Defence.

Bush said he had given Russia notice on US withdrawal in accordance with the treaty which had kept the peace for 30 years through the doctrine of mutually assured destruction.

"I have concluded the ABM treaty hinders our government's ability to develop ways to protect our people from future terrorist or rogue state missile attacks," Bush said in a speech in the White House rose garden flanked by his top foreign policy aides.

"Defending the American people is my highest priority as commander in chief and I cannot and will not allow the US to remain in a treaty that prevents us from developing effective defences," he said.

"The old doctrine," he said, "is no longer valid in light of the new friendly relations with Rus-

sia, when the threat to them comes not from each other but from rogue states which may attack with missiles."

Bush said that he was looking forward to visiting Moscow to continue discussions with Russian President Vladimir Putin as they seek in a formal way to express the new strategic relationship between the two countries that will last long beyond their administrations and provide the foundation for peace for years to come.

Putin and he, said Bush, have agreed that the US decision to withdraw from the treaty will not in any way undermine their new relationship. "We are on the path to a fundamentally different relationship," he said.

"The cold war is long gone and today, we leave behind one of its last vestiges. But this is not a day for looking back. This is a day for looking forward with hope of greater prosperity and peace," he said. The US President also said that the September 11 terrorist attacks made his cause more urgent.

PTI

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

14 DEC 2001

Deadline expires, Osama keeps US guessing

Tora Bora/Washington, Dec 13

US PLANES bombed trapped fighters loyal to Osama bin Laden in eastern Afghanistan on Thursday as the whereabouts of the man himself remained a mystery.

With his al-Qaida forces apparently refusing to surrender, newspapers reported variously that the Saudi-born militant had fled to Pakistan or was still with his men.

US planes pounded the mainly Arab al-Qaida fighters holed up in caves and bunkers in the jagged Spin Ghar mountains near Tora Bora, the blasts send-

ing up huge plumes of smoke along a mountain ridge, journalists in the area said on Thursday.

"The overnight bombardment continued until the pre-dawn hours on Thursday," anti-Taliban commander Hazrat Nabi said from Jalalabad.

Surrender talks between unidentified members of al-Qaida forces and tribal military leaders apparently failed with a second deadline expiring on Thursday afternoon and no sign the hardened fighters were giving up. Talks with tribal leaders Hazrat Ali and Haji Mohammad Zaman came to nothing on Wednesday.

troops from mainly Nato nations into Afghanistan by December 22 when the new interim government is to take office.

But the key stumbling block was how the operation would be coordinated with the US military, diplomats said.

Fighting or fleeing?

Newspaper reports added to the confusion over the whereabouts of bin Laden, who has a \$25 million price on his head.

The Christian Science Monitor quoting a Saudi financier and senior operative in bin Laden's al-Qaida network, reported the militant left Tora Bora and entered Pakistan 10 days ago

with the help of Ghilzi tribesmen.

Abu Jaffar, reported the *Christian Science Monitor*, claimed that bin Laden had sent his 19-year-old married son, Salahuddin, to act on his behalf in Tora Bora.

"Osama bin Laden travelled out of Tora Bora two times in this Puzan month. He left to meet Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar about three weeks ago and stayed with him near Kandahar," Jaffar said. "He left again just over a week ago and was headed to Pakistan, where he was helped across the border by Pashun tribesmen."

Jaffar was speaking from a vil-

lage at the base of Tora Bora after his foot was blown off by a cluster bomb.

Jaffar said that he had travelled with bin Laden in a truck out of Jalalabad. He said that after bin Laden left 10 days ago, he had contacted al-Qaida inside Tora Bora to say that he was sending his son to join them.

His son supposedly travelled through Paktia province with 30 Arabs and 50 Afghan fighters. Abu Jaffar claimed that most of the family of Ayman al-Zawahiri, the Egyptian doctor said to be Bin Laden's number two, have been killed by US bombing. He said earlier reports

of Zawahiri's own death had proved false.

An Arabic magazine quoted another top bin Laden aide as saying he was still in Afghanistan directing the battle against US forces and their tribal allies.

The London-based *al-Majallah* magazine quoted Ayman al-Zawahiri, a senior member of al-Qaida, as saying he and other leaders including bin Laden, Sulaiman bu Ghaith and Abu Hafs, were still fighting in Afghanistan.

Officials in Washington were sceptical about the reports.

Agencies

U.S. withdraws from ABM treaty

WASHINGTON, DEC. 13. The U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, today served formal notice to Russia that Washington was withdrawing from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty in order to deploy a National Missile Defence.

Mr. Bush said he had given Russia notice on U.S. withdrawal, in accordance with the treaty which had kept the peace for 30 years through the doctrine of Mutually-Assured Destruction. "I have concluded that the ABM treaty hinders our Government's ability to develop ways to protect our people from future terrorist or rogue State missile attacks," Mr. Bush said in a speech in the White House Rose Garden flanked by his top foreign policy aides.

"Defending the American people is my highest priority as Commander-in-Chief and I cannot and will not allow the U.S. to remain in a treaty that prevents us from developing effective defences. The old doctrine is no longer valid in light of the new friendly relations with Russia, when the threat comes not from each other but from rogue States which may attack with missiles."

Mr. Bush said he was looking forward to visiting Moscow to continue discussions with the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, as they seek in a formal way to express the new strategic relationship between the two countries that will last long beyond their administrations and provide the foundation for peace for years to come.

Mr. Putin and he, said Mr. Bush, had agreed that the U.S. decision to withdraw from the treaty would not in any way undermine their new relationship. "We are on the path to a fundamentally different relationship."

"The Cold War is long gone and today, we leave behind one of its last vestiges. But this is not a day for looking back. This is a day for looking forward with hope of greater prosperity and peace."

The U.S. President also said that the September 11 terrorist attacks made his cause more urgent. "Today, the events of September 11 made all too clear that the greatest threats to both our countries come not from each other or other big powers in the world but from terrorists, who strike without warning, or rogue states, who seek weapons of mass destruction."

Mr. Bush appreciated Russia's help in the



The then U.S. President, Richard M. Nixon, shakes hands with the Soviet Union leader, Leonid Brezhnev, in this May 1972 file photo in Moscow after the two signed a joint statement of long-range principles agreeing to avoid military confrontations and envisioning total world disarmament. The then Premier, Alexei Kosygin, is at left centre, behind Nixon's copy of the treaty.

U.S.-led war on terrorism and reiterated his pledge to reduce America's nuclear arsenal to a level of 1,700 to 2,200 operationally-deployed strategic nuclear weapons.

A mistake: Putin

Calling the U.S. decision a "mistake", Mr. Putin, in a nationwide television address in Moscow, said that Mr. Bush's announcement was not a surprise for Moscow. He repeated Russia's often-stated position that the treaty was a cornerstone of world security. "This step was not a surprise for us. However, we consider it a mistake."

Mr. Putin also responded to Mr. Bush's proposal to cut U.S. nuclear warheads, saying Russia was ready to bring the number of its

warheads down to 1,500-2,200. He again pushed for these cuts to be written into a formal treaty, something Mr. Bush has opposed.

Earlier, the Chief of the Russian general staff said the U.S. decision would endanger world security, but not Russia's. "From a military point of view, the problem of U.S. withdrawal from the ABM treaty can be solved," Gen. Anatoly Kvashnin said, according to the Interfax news agency.

He said the U.S. withdrawal would "lead to a change in the military-political situation and reflect negatively on strategic stability as a whole". Britain played down the U.S. decision, saying maintaining strategic stability was more important than the means to achieve it. — PTI, Reuters, AFP

ABM relic of the past: Bush

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13/12
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WASHINGTON, Dec. 12. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, informed leaders of Congress on Wednesday of his decision to withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, the Senate Majority leader, Mr. Thomas Daschle, said.

Asked whether Members of Congress visiting the White House were informed of the decision, Mr. Daschle told journalists: "Yes we were."

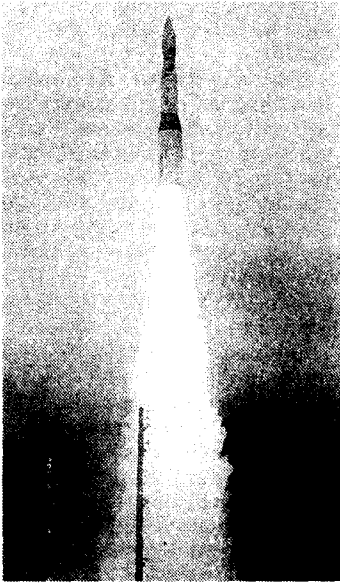
Earlier, speaking at the State Military College in Charleston, South Carolina, Mr. Bush vowed not to let the ABM treaty come in the way of deployment of a missile shield, amid reports that Washington has informed Moscow about a soon-to-be-given six months' notice for withdrawing from the treaty. "We must move beyond the 1972 ballistic missile treaty, a treaty that was written in a different era for a different enemy," Mr. Bush said on Tuesday.

"America and our allies must not be bound to the past. We must be able to build the defences we need against the enemies of the 21st century," he said claiming the success of the last week's anti-ballistic missile test.

Reports from Moscow said the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, has informed Russia that Mr. Bush would soon give a six-month notice to get out of the treaty. Mr. Bush said the new threat to civilisation from terrorism was erasing old lines of rivalry and resentment between nations.

He said the U.S. was determined to build "limited and effective defences" against a missile attack. "Our enemies seek every chance and every means to do harm to our country, our forces and our friends and we will not permit it." He said if Taliban and the terrorists had struck America or its allies with a ballistic missile, "our coalition would have become fragile."

He said, "We will give our men and women in uniform every resource, every weapon, every tool they need to win the long battle that lies ahead." The President said "America's next priority to prevent mass terror was to protect against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them."



An interceptor is launched in the Kwajalein Atoll in the central Pacific during the "hit-to-kill" missile defence test in this October 1999 file photo.

'A slap in Putin face'

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, Dec. 12. U.S. withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) will be a slap in the face of the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, and may weaken his hold on power, a leading analyst said here. The American move would betray the spirit of a new bonhomie between the Russian leader and the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, said Dr. Viktor Kremenyuk, deputy director of the Institute of U.S. and Canada Studies.

Russian officials on Wednesday confirmed they had been informed of Washington's intention to serve Moscow a six-month notice of the U.S. withdrawal from the treaty. However, Foreign Ministry sources said Russia would officially react only when Washington made a formal statement on the issue. Earlier Mr. Putin suggested the treaty could be preserved by introducing amendments to enable the U.S. to build a limited missile shield.

The American move will "land Putin in a fix and greatly complicate the political situation in Russia," said Dr. Kremenyuk. "Putin's chances of re-election for a second term (in 2004) may be thrown in doubt."

The Russian leader has staked his political fortunes on building a strategic partnership with the U.S. in the fight against international terrorism. "Putin will now stand accused of selling out his country's interests without getting anything in return," the analyst said.

THE HINDU

13/12/01

OSAMA IN TORA BORA MOUNTAINS, CLAIMS REPORT

Al-Qaeda forces miss surrender deadline

USA
40-1

13/12

TORA BORA (AFGHANISTAN), DEC. 12. A ceasefire collapsed today as U.S. warplanes repeatedly pounded Osama bin Laden's Tora Bora mountain bases after cornered Al-Qaeda forces missed a deadline to disarm and reportedly set new terms for their surrender.

Sporadic bursts of heavy machinegun fire, apparently from U.S.-backed tribal eastern alliance forces, echoed through the area — less than 24 hours after the truce took effect.

Journalists were barred from entering the battlefield area, where an undetermined number of Al-Qaeda men were holed up in a desolate mountainside canyon. While one local commander said

U.S. bomber crashes

WASHINGTON, DEC. 12. A US B-1 bomber engaged in the air war over Afghanistan has crashed in the Indian Ocean, the Pentagon said today. There were no known casualties, the Pentagon spokeswoman, Ms. Victoria Clarke told a briefing. She said a US aircraft was hovering over the crash site 50 km. north of the island of Diego Garcia and that a US destroyer was on the way. — AFP

the surrender might still take place, others doubted whether the men would give up.

It appeared from a distance that bombs from several circling B-52s and other U.S. warplanes directly hit the canyon. Others appeared to fall on Al-Qaeda positions nearby in the Tora Bora and Milawa valleys, which are riddled with hundreds of caves and tunnels. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Pentagon officials warned that some Al-Qaeda members might still be hiding in the underground network. The Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald H. Rumsfeld, said holdouts might continue to fight and that "a wounded animal can



Anti-Taliban fighters look at munitions left behind in an Al-Qaeda cave bunker in the Milawa Valley of White Mountains in north-eastern Afghanistan on Tuesday. — AP

be dangerous."

The whereabouts of Osama bin Laden remained unclear. Some U.S. officials and tribal leaders suspect he might be in or near Tora Bora, in eastern Afghanistan. Others believe he is hiding in the country's south.

An ABC News report said U.S. intelligence services had received the clearest confirmation yet that Osama and his inner circle are in the Tora Bora region.

The intelligence was collected after a U.S. warplane dropped a powerful bomb near the suspected headquarters of the Al-Qaeda leader in the mountains of Tora

Bora, the network reported late yesterday, citing intelligence sources.

In addition to causing mass destruction, the blast immediately sparked a series of panicked radio and satellite calls among Al-Qaeda members, ABC reported.

Those communications provided confirmation that the Saudi dissident and his entourage remain in the region, the network said.

A report from Washington, quoting the Washington Post today said two detained Pakistani nuclear scientists had admitted they held wide-ranging discussions on

nuclear, chemical and biological weapons with Osama bin Laden.

Pakistani officials characterised the talks between the two retired nuclear scientists and the Islamic extremist as "academic" and said they had no evidence the discussions resulted in the production of any weapons, the newspaper reported. — AP, Reuters

Al-Qaeda fighters slipped into Pak.?

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, DEC. 12 The United States-led coalition today claimed that some members of Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network could have slipped out of their Tora Bora stronghold and into Pakistan.

The U.S. Coalition Information Service spokesman, Ambassador Kenton Keith, was, however, quick to add at a news conference here that those who could have escaped into Pakistan are a "microscopic minority". He was not prepared to venture a guess on the number of fighters who could have slipped and those still holed up in Tora Bora.

Mr. Keith said Washington was confident the bulk of Al-Qaeda forces would never escape the valley where they have been being pounded by U.S. planes and anti-Taliban Afghan ground forces.

He maintained that it would not be an easy job for the fighters to escape in view of the offensive mounted by the coalition along with the forces of the Northern Alliance and the extraordinary steps taken by Pakistan on its border facing Afghanistan.

Meanwhile an American Taliban fighter held captive by the Marines has told investigators that Al-Qaeda plans to make a biological attack on the US at the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, which ends on Sunday.

John Walker Lindh made the statement in intelligence debriefings at the US Marine corps base near Kandahar, the *Washington Times* reported.

— PTI

'Noose tightening around Osama, Mullah Omar'

TORA BORA (Afghanistan), DEC. 10. As Afghan tribal fighters backed by tanks and U.S. jet fighters launched a ground attack on Monday against around 1,000 Al-Qaeda forces and seized a key ridge near a suspected hideout of the terrorist mastermind, Osama bin Laden.

WSN 11/12
 'Osama wants to die on TV'

NEW DELHI, DEC. 10. Terrorist mastermind, Osama bin Laden, is reported to have planned to die on television to be projected as a 'martyr' before the U.S.-led forces can catch him, hoping that his death would trigger a series of terror strikes on the Capitol Hill, the Big Ben and the Eiffel Tower, according to British media reports. — PTI



A Russian T-55 tank of the anti-Taliban forces firing at the Al-Qaeda positions in Tora Bora on Monday. — AFP

In Islamabad, the U.S. coalition spokesman, Mr. Kenton Keith, told presspersons there was credible information that Osama, and the Taliban chief, Mullah Mohammed Omar, were still in Afghanistan and the noose around their necks tightened by the hour.

Though there were no con-

firmed sightings, the coalition forces believed that they were holed up in their hideouts. "There was no credible evidence that they have left."

In southern Afghanistan, U.S. marines moved closer to Kandahar to cut off escape routes of the fleeing Taliban men. Marines se-

cured the abandoned grounds of the U.S. embassy in the heart of Kabul — the first time American troops have been seen in the capital since the Taliban fled.

For the third time in the conflict the U.S. unleashed its most lethal 'Daisy Cutter' bomb, aiming at the Tora Bora caves near Jalala-

bad, where senior Al-Qaeda leaders, including possibly Osama bin Laden, were believed to be hiding.

A senior Pentagon official said in Washington that the 6,800 kg bomb was dropped "at a cave target ... It was believed that that's where some substantial Al-Qaeda forces would be, and possibly including senior leadership."

Just after dawn B-52s and other U.S. warplanes pounded the caves. Later, fighters from the Al-Qaeda came out of their caves and fired mortars at tribesmen who tried to move their aging Soviet-built T-55 tanks forward.

Hours later, hundreds of tribal fighters in small groups launched a three-pronged attack and climbed narrow mountain trails under the cover of tank fire.

Al-Qaeda fighters above responded with more mortars and machine gun fire as the tribesmen countered with 40mm anti-aircraft guns and 50mm machine guns. U.S. fighters fired missiles repeatedly at two Al-Qaeda positions. — AFP, AP, Reuters

Lambah, Karzai meet likely

By Atul Aneja

KABUL, DEC. 10. Afghanistan's interim head of government, Mr. Hamid Karzai, arrives here on Wednesday as part of an exercise to position a post-Taliban leadership. India's Special Envoy on Afghanistan, Mr. S. K. Lambah, also arrives on the same day. A meeting between Mr. Lambah and Mr. Karzai is not ruled out.

By establishing contact with Mr. Karzai, India will reach out to the Pashtun element of the lead-

ership at the highest level. India already enjoys special ties with the Tajik element of the Afghan hierarchy. Afghanistan's powerful Interior Minister, Mr. Yunus Qanooni, who represented the Northern Alliance delegation at Bonn, significantly chose India as his first official overseas destination, even prior to his arrival in Kabul. In a sign of the importance India attaches to Afghanistan, the External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh, is expected to represent India when the new

government formally assumes charge on December 22.

India's diplomatic activism in Afghanistan is partly explained by the fact that Pakistan had marginalised its influence during the Taliban regime. By pushing in the Taliban, Pakistan appeared to have acquired a "strategic depth" vis-a-vis India. In all the earlier wars with India, Pakistan was looking for a safe haven to transfer and preserve its military equipment in case the conflict went out of control.

THE HINDU

11 DEC 2001

MONDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2001

A WAR OF 'PRINCIPLES' AND PROXIES

THE 'NEGOTIATED SURRENDER' by the Taliban at Kandahar and the fallout of unanswered questions seem to illustrate America's acute dilemma in the present phase of its ongoing war on terrorism in Afghanistan. The leadership of the obscurantist Taliban and its brutal ally, Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network, still remain the elusive targets of the U.S. in the context of its declaratory "principles" of this anti-terror war. In choosing a horde of tactical allies and friends who might be able to pursue the leaders of the Taliban-Osama axis, the U.S. has encouraged even adversarial Afghan groups on the basis of their compatible professions of an anti-Taliban agenda. Since the very beginning of this war two months ago, the only factor uniting these antagonistic Afghan groups with the U.S. was their litany of grudges against the Taliban. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, has sought to rule the sky during this period and let his Afghan proxies hound the Taliban on the ground. The limited presence of America's land-based Special Forces is said to have more to do with the "hunting" of Osama and the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar. It is within this tactical space of such war aims that the U.S.' proxy, the Northern Alliance, gradually wrested control of almost all strategic areas, including Mazar-e-Sharif and the capital of Kabul, from the Taliban. And now, the Taliban's original springboard, the Kandahar city, has "fallen" into the hands of a loose coterie of Pushtun tribal groups. Unlike the Northern Alliance, which is primarily dominated by Afghanistan's ethnic minorities, these Pushtun groups hail from the country's majority population that was the mainspring of the Taliban too.

In some ways, the farcical aspects of the Taliban's "negotiated surrender" to an amorphous front of Pushtun tribal groups can be linked to the eagerness of both sides to avoid a bloodbath involving some political adversaries

of the same ethnic stock. Surely, there is nothing at all wrong with a largely bloodless "surrender" by the Taliban at Kandahar. However, the international community is simply aghast at the amateurish manner in which the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, has been allowed to remain at large instead of giving himself up in line with the terms of a "negotiated surrender". This may exemplify America's troubles with its own proxies. However, Washington's promise of a sustainable 'campaign' in the future against globalised terror will call for political candour as also strategic credibility of a very high order that was not witnessed during the "fall" of Kandahar at this time.

Surely, the Bush administration does not seek to downplay the dangers and difficulties ahead as it tries to capture Osama and Mullah Omar. The larger concerns of the global community, inclusive of the U.S., go beyond tactical necessities. Already, genuine doubts have arisen regarding the viability of the power-sharing agreement that the U.N. brokered only a few days ago for a post-Taliban dispensation in Afghanistan in the short run. This has much to do with the political ambitions of the various Afghan groups that signed the relevant accord. More disturbing is the trend of some U.S.-friendly Pushtun groups allowing a sizable number of the Taliban radicals to flee from Kandahar with their weapons. A tiny fraction of such fugitives has been engaged by the small contingent of the U.S. Special Forces on the ground. The overriding imperative is that the U.S. should ensure that the lapses of its proxies do not result in a future shock for the other countries including India on the hit-list of the Taliban-Osama axis. The essentially apolitical "principles" of the present war — a universal anti-terror agenda and the need to avoid humanitarian tragedies — cannot be lost sight of for any reason.

THE HINDU

10 DEC 2001

KARZAI ENDS STAND-OFF OVER CONTROL OF KANDAHAR

U.S. jets target Osama hideout

^{WS (10)}
KABUL, DEC. 9. The hunt for terrorist mastermind, Osama bin Laden, and the Taliban leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, intensified in Tora Bora mountains in eastern Afghanistan today, as tribal chiefs tried to defuse a potentially explosive stand-off for the control of Kandahar.

The snow-capped white mountains flashed orange overnight as B-52s and other U.S. warplanes unleashed waves of airstrikes on Osama's cave hideout and fighters from his Al-Qaeda network, an AFP reporter said.

The raids came almost every 30 minutes, pounding mountain sides and foot hills and filling a valley below with clouds of dust and smoke.

But Osama and the Taliban leader were still at large, and a combined search is on by U.S. air and ground forces and Afghan tribal militia.

An Islamabad report claimed that Mullah Omar and a band of die-hard fighters blazed their way out of Kandahar on Friday and were hiding in nearby mountains.

The *News* daily quoted Taliban sources as saying Mullah Omar's forces engaged in a fierce gunbattle with fighters loyal to the leader of the interim Government, Mr. Hamid Karzai, before leaving Kandahar in a convoy of vehicles. Attempts to stop the convoy failed. But there was no independent confirmation, the report said.

A stand-off between rival anti-Taliban commanders in Kandahar has been resolved peacefully, Mr. Karzai said late today.

The royalist Pashtun chief said

⁴⁰⁻¹ that he had brokered successful talks today in Kandahar between Mullah Naqibullah, to whom the Taliban surrendered the city, and Mr. Gul Agha, a former Governor.

"It was agreed that Mr. Agha will be in-charge of security and the administration of Kandahar. He will continue his mandate until the nomination of a real administration in Afghanistan," Mr. Karzai said over telephone.

Tribes clash

Opposing tribes fought overnight in southern Helmand province for the control of its capital, Lashkargah, the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press reported. It said Noorzai tribesmen, led by Mr. Abdul-ur Rehman Jan, seized the city and forced Barakzai tri-

Taliban splits — Page 11
India may open hospital — Page 12
Deadly cave assault — Page 14

besmen out. At least seven fighters from both sides were killed and several others wounded.

The report could not be independently verified.

The factional skirmishes prevented the Afghan Red Cross workers from recovering bodies from streets and houses, said Mr. Michael Kleiner, a spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Kabul.

Escape routes cut off

In the surrounding desert, but staying out of Kandahar, U.S. marines hunted for fleeing Taliban fighters and sealed off escape

^{10/12} routes. There were no reported encounters with hostile groups on Saturday, but American forces remained on alert despite the routing of the Taliban.

U.S. officers said Mr. John Walker Lindh, a 20-year-old American captured fighting with the Taliban, was being held for his own safety at a U.S. marine base in southern Afghanistan and should soon be transferred to civilian authorities.

He was involved in a week of fierce fighting between Taliban prisoners and the Northern Alliance forces at a prison fortress near Mazar-i-Sharif and was handed over to U.S. forces after he came out on December 1.

The only bridge connecting Afghanistan with Uzbekistan reopened on Sunday for the first time since 1997, and the first train carrying humanitarian aid crossed over. The Friendship Bridge spans the Amu Darya River and links Termez, in Uzbekistan, to the Afghan town of Hairaton.

Tape reveals Osama hand

A Washington report said today the U.S. Government had a videotape of Osama in which he appears to indicate his prior knowledge of the September 11 terror attacks in New York and Washington.

The *Washington Post* said the videotape was being regarded as the most-conclusive evidence against Osama, contrary to his claims that he knew nothing about the attacks.

The newspaper cited unnamed Government sources who had seen the 40-minute tape as saying that Osama spoke about the at-

tacks in which the damage in New York was greater than he had expected. They said the tape shows Osama demonstrating with outstretched hands to explain that he had expected only the top of the World Trade Center towers to collapse, from the point where the planes struck. The total collapse had been unexpected.

The U.S. officials only said that tape, which appeared to have been made by an amateur, was acquired in a private home in Jalalabad. The tape was first sent to experts to ascertain that it was not a fake. The experts verified that

21 killed in copter crash

KABUL, DEC. 9. Twenty-one persons, including captured Taliban fighters and the family of a senior Northern Alliance commander, have been killed in a helicopter crash.

An Alliance commander said today that the helicopter went down on Saturday in bad weather about five km southwest of Taloqan, the capital of northeastern Takhar province.

The dead included Haji Mustafa, a former bodyguard of the slain Afghan commander, Ahmad Shah Masood, Alliance commandos, the crew, and the family of Haji Haider Qul, a senior Alliance commander in Takhar. Haji Qul was not on board. Two Taliban commanders, Arbab Hashim and Mirza Nasiri, who had surrendered in Kunduz province were also killed. — AFP



A U.S. Marine carrying an M-16 rifle climbs through a gap in the bullet-ridden wall at Camp Rhino in southern Afghanistan on Sunday. — AFP

the videotape was 'legitimate', the paper said.

'Osama will be handed over to U.S.'

In London, the British Defence Secretary, Mr. Geoff Hoon, said Osama would be handed over to the U.S. if the British forces captured him in Afghanistan — but only on condition he not face the death penalty.

Mr. Hoon told a BBC programme that extradition would require "certain undertakings" from U.S. authorities. But he said the U.S. would be the best country to try Osama. — AP, AFP, DPA

THE HINDU

10 DEC 2001

Taliban collapses, Omar, Osama elude U.S. dragnet

No mercy for Taliban chief, says PM-designate

KABUL: The Taliban reportedly abandoned its last stronghold in Kandahar on Friday while Afghanistan's would-be prime minister upped the post-war ante by saying the militia's leader Mullah Mohammad Omar must stand trial for unspecified crimes.

There were also reports, most of which could not be immediately confirmed by independent sources, of other fast-moving developments in the war in Afghanistan.

► The Northern Alliance and tribal leaders said they had seized all or most of a huge Al Qaida mountain-cave complex in the east after several days of fighting. But they said they had not found Osama bin Laden.

► U.S. Marines staged their first offensive ground action since setting up a base in southern Afghanistan. The Marines said they had attacked a convoy near Kandahar, killing seven Taliban fighters.

► Chaos and looting broke out in Kandahar and other southern areas as the Taliban surrender began to take effect in several provinces. One rival anti-Taliban leader criticised the deal that apparently led to the surrender of Kandahar.

Would-be prime minister Hamid Karzai told CNN that the Taliban no longer held Kandahar. "The Taliban authority is effectively finished," said Mr Karzai, who is also the leader of one of the two main military factions that have been attacking Kandahar.

Reports said the Taliban transferred all power in Kandahar to a tribal council. Council member

Hajid Bashir Ahmed, a local Pashtun tribal leader and mujahideen commander, said, "The national shura (council) has taken control of the army corps (headquarters), the airport, army division (barracks) and other areas. They have deployed their people

abouts are still not known, must be brought to justice. On Thursday, reports had suggested that the surrender agreement included guarantees for Omar's safety. The U.S. had condemned it, arguing that the Taliban leader must be brought to justice.

Mr Karzai said on Friday that Omar must face trial after missing his last chance to renounce terrorism and repudiate Bin Laden. "For the higher-ranking Taliban, if there is a case against them, they must face trial," he said. "It (the trial) is for all those who committed crimes, including him (Mullah Omar). He has not made even a statement regretting what he has done. If he is found, he must face trial."

Reports from Kandahar said the Taliban chief "disappeared" after the transfer of power in the city. However, spokesman of the U.S.-led coalition Kenton Keith said Omar was still believed to be in Kandahar and opposition forces were close to nabbing him. "The opposition forces are closing in on him and we expect at some point, within a reasonable period, that he will be in the hands of the opposition. We hope to cooperate in bringing him to justice."

One of Mr Karzai's key Pashtun tribal allies criticised the surrender deal and said chaos was widespread. "Hamid Karzai, the new Prime Minister, the new leader, has made a very, very wrong decision in Kandahar by himself. He did not consult the elders or anyone else," said Khalid Pashtoon, spokesman for former Kandahar governor Gul Agha Shirzai whose troops are the other main anti-Taliban force outside Kandahar. (Agencies)



U.S. Marines stand behind their weapons in fighting holes at Camp Rhino in southern Afghanistan during a period of heightened alert on December 7.

to avoid any unrest."

Fleeing Taliban fighters backed out of a deal to hand in weapons to another opposition tribal leader, Mr Karzai said from a desert base outside the city. "The Taliban ran away with their weapons," he said. "Basically they have just run away."

In perhaps the day's most significant development, Mr Karzai said that Mullah Omar, whose where-

U.S. clears Indian proposals on military hardware

Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Giving a major thrust to strategic cooperation, the U.S. on Tuesday announced the clearance of seven Indian proposals for the acquisition of weapon-locating radars, light combat aircraft (LCA), components and other key military hardware. Washington also invited New Delhi for joint missile defence exercises.

The two sides also decided to establish a security cooperation group (SCG) to manage defence supply relationship and agreed to expeditiously review New Delhi's acquisition priorities, including multi-mission maritime aircraft, components for jet trainers and high performance jet engines.

After a two-day meeting of the revived defence policy group (DPG), U.S. under secretary of defence for policy Douglas Feith said the two sides had identified a lot of common issues.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

U.S. to use Tajik air bases for strikes

By Atul Aneja

WJW S An

DUSHANBE, DEC. 4. As a new flashpoint in the war against terrorism emerges in northern Afghanistan, U.S. forces are positioning themselves for launching strikes from key air bases in Tajikistan.

The U.S., so far, has used air bases such as Kulyab in Tajikistan for landing humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan. But, an Italian military aircraft landed here on Sunday night, ferrying 16 pilots and engineers who are likely to be deployed at Dushanbe and Kulyab. The third air base, which is now not in use but of interest to the U.S. is Ayni, not far from Dushanbe.

The purpose of the mission was to prepare for launch pads in Tajikistan from where 35 U.S. and Italian helicopters could launch strikes on remaining Taliban strongholds, Government sources said.

Media reports here suggested that Kulyab could become a major staging post for U.S. forces in the future as new check-points had emerged along the road to the air base.

Significantly, the new round of aerial activ-

ity in Tajikistan follows the emergence of a new Taliban stronghold close to the city of Mazar-e-Sharif.

Sources here said the Northern Alliance had surrounded around 2,000 to 2,500 Taliban and foreign fighters, including Arabs, at Balkh, west of Mazar-e-Sharif. Most of these forces may be composed of fighters that had entrenched earlier in Kunduz but had "escaped".

While around 2,000 "youngsters who had escaped have been apprehended by Pashtun tribals not far from the Pak.-Afghan border", another 2,000 of a "hardcore variety had been unaccounted for". The assessment here is that it is these missing numbers that have now surfaced in Balkh. The area is a stronghold of the Uzbek General, Mr. Rashid Dostum, but under the local command of Commander Naziri.

Analysts here ascribe considerable significance to the fact that the Balkh area was under the overall supervision of Gen. Dostum. The Taliban, on an earlier occasion in Kunduz, had preferred to surrender before Gen. Dostum in-

stead of ethnic Tajiks. It now remains to be seen whether a similar "surrender at Balkh is in the offing..."

40-15
5/12

Indications are that military action against Taliban forces in Balkh is imminent... The U.N. personnel in neighbouring Mazar-e-Sharif have pulled out, citing security threats in the area. Reports reaching here also suggest that media presence there is also not being discouraged. Significantly, 50 more U.S. soldiers have been positioned at the Mazar-e-Sharif airport. Analysts here are of the view that the preparation of Tajikistan air bases for military operations by the U.S. is likely to be with Russian consent.

Russia which looked at Tajikistan as an area of influence would be seriously concerned only if the U.S. decided to position itself permanently in the area. That does not seem to be a case as of now, diplomatic sources said.

The air-base of Kulyab has been used by the Russians for landing supplies to Northern Alliance forces. Flights from Mashad in Iran have also landed here in aid of the alliance in the past.

THE HINDU

5 DEC 2001

U.S. SUCCESSFULLY TESTS MISSILE SHIELD

BY JAMES DAO
New York Times Service

Washington, Dec. 4: A prototype anti-missile weapon demolished a mock warhead on Monday night high above the Pacific Ocean in the second consecutive success for the Pentagon's costly missile defence programme, military officials said.

Just before 10.30 pm, the "kill vehicle," launched from the Kwajalein atoll in the Marshall Islands, smashed into a dummy warhead that had blasted off from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California 4,800 miles away. The force of the collision, at 15,000 miles per hour, scattered fragments of the target into the ocean 140 miles below, the officials said.

"Total success," said Ms Cheryl

Irwin, a Pentagon spokeswoman. "We achieved intercept."

Coming on the heels of a similar success in July, Monday night's \$100 million test is expected to pave the way for more complex trials as soon as February. It also heightens the likelihood that Congress will grant the Bush administration's request to increase missile defence spending by \$3 billion in the 2002 fiscal year, to \$8.3 billion.

The administration has said it wants a rudimentary missile defence against long-range missiles available by 2004 to 2006 to protect against emerging threats from nations like Iraq, Iran and North Korea.

But the politics of missile defence have changed since the September 11 terrorist attacks in ways that could both hinder and help the administration.

N. Korea, China fume over NMD test

Seoul, Dec. 4: North Korea warned the United States on Tuesday it would build up its military to counter what it said was US "strong-arm policy" against the Communist state.

"The US escalated policy intended to stifle the DPRK compels the DPRK to increase its military capabilities for self-defence to cope with it," the ruling party daily *Rodong Simun* said in a statement.

"The US is still pursuing the headline policy to contain the DPRK though it calls for the 'resumption of dialogue without any precondition'," it said. China said on Tuesday it remained staunchly opposed to plans to develop a national missile defence system after the US tested its missile defence shield. "Our position is very clear and consistent: We are opposed to the US building a missile defence system," a foreign ministry spokeswoman said. (Reuters)

Congress may allow increased missile defence spending

in Congress to missile defence. Though many legislators remain critical of missile defence, they have been less vocal, and less aggressive about trying to block funding, while the so-called war against terrorism in Afghanistan has raged on.

On the other hand, the United States' newfound alliance with the Russian Federation in fighting global terrorism has made it harder for the administration to unilaterally withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which President George W. Bush contends hampers missile defence testing. Moscow views the treaty as a foundation of nuclear arms control and wants it revamped, not

scrapped. The launch on Monday night was the seventh of 18 tests anticipated by the Pentagon for its ground-based system. Five of those tests have involved attempts to hit a streaking intercontinental ballistic missile with a non-explosive kill vehicle; three of those intercept tests have been successful in hitting their targets.

Monday night's test, which had twice been postponed because of bad weather, required the 120-pound kill vehicle to separate from its two-stage booster high in the atmosphere, orient itself in space with help from the stars and use an infra-red sensor to home in on the target. It was almost identical in design to one conducted in July 2000, which ended in failure after the \$25 million kill vehicle failed to separate from the booster rocket.

THE ASIAN AGE
5 DEC 2001

U.S. fears Bin Laden made nuclear strides

By **BOB WOODWARD,**
ROBERT G. KAISER and
DAVID B. OTTAWAY

WASHINGTON: U.S. intelligence agencies have recently concluded that Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaida terrorist network may have made greater strides than previously thought toward obtaining plans or materials to make a crude radiological weapon that would use conventional explosives to spread radioactivity over a wide area, according to U.S. and foreign sources.

Some of the conclusions come from interrogations of captured Al Qaida members or associates. Some come from evidence gathered in the last month on the ground in Afghanistan by CIA officers and U.S. Special Forces from former Al Qaida facilities.

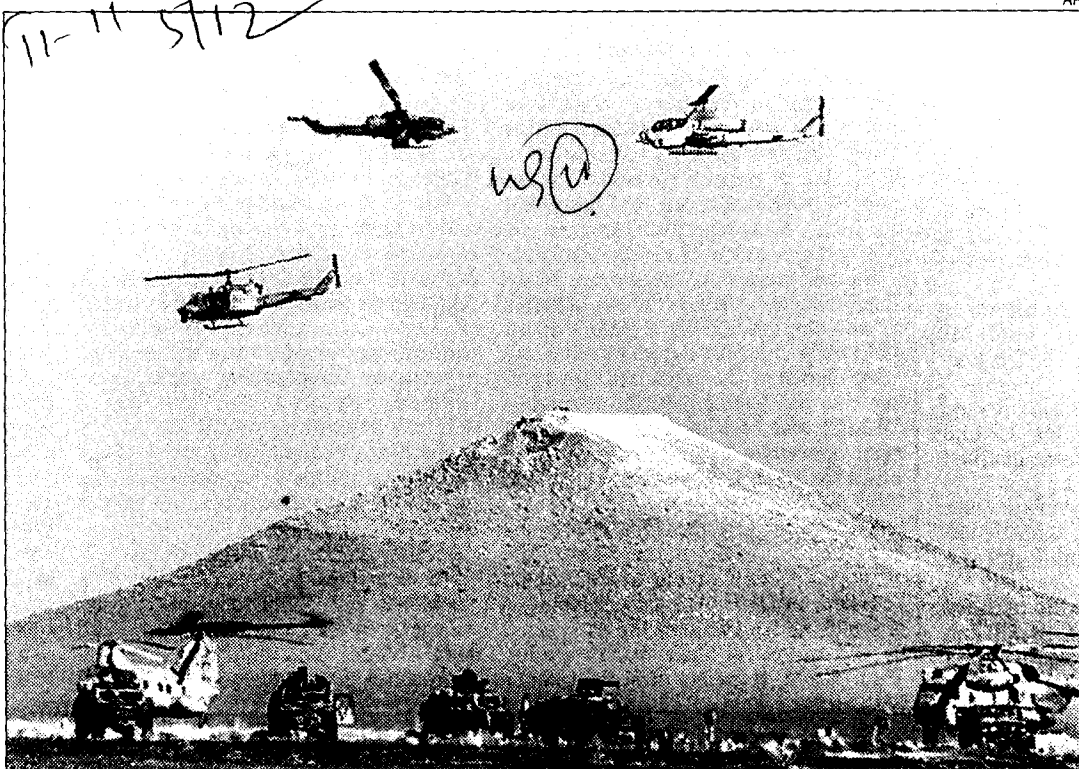
In addition, recent U.S. intelligence reports describe a meeting within the last year in which Bin Laden was present when one of his associates produced a canister that allegedly contained radioactive material. The associate waved the canister in the air as proof of Al Qaida's progress and seriousness in trying to build a nuclear device.

The U.S. government last month urgently asked a few key allied governments to assist in determining whether the associate, identified only with a common name, may have entered their countries, perhaps with radioactive material. The concern is sufficiently deep that some countries have adopted extreme security procedures at their borders, including the increased use of devices that measure radioactivity, the sources said.

There is no conclusive evidence that Bin Laden or his associates have built a radiological bomb or even have the capability to do so, these sources emphasised. But for years Bin Laden has said publicly he was working to obtain a nuclear capability.

U.S. officials are very concerned that any nuclear detonation by Al Qaida would be a calamitous psychological setback to the war on terrorism, and a maximum effort has been launched to detect and prevent the possibility, remote as it might be, several sources said. The worry about Al Qaida's efforts to obtain a nuclear capability was a factor in the decision to issue another national alert about possible terrorist attacks, a senior source said.

On at least one occasion, the White House cited the increased concern that Al Qaida might have a radiological bomb as a key reason that Vice President Cheney was not available for a face-to-face meeting with visiting senior foreign officials. The meeting usually would have allowed for informal personal contact, but took place via



U.S. Marine Cobra attack helicopters circle above larger CH-53 helicopters on Tuesday at the U.S. Marines operations base in southern Afghanistan before heading out north on a mission.

secure video conference because Mr Cheney was at a secure location outside Washington.

U.S. intelligence agencies are looking not only for evidence that terrorists could be assembling a radiological bomb but also for any sign that Al Qaida could be trying to make a very crude and small atomic or fission bomb.

A radiological bomb, also known as a "dirty bomb," could be made by taking highly radioactive material, such as spent reactor fuel rods, and wrapping it around readily available conventional high explosives. The device is designed to kill or injure not through its explosive force but by creating a zone of intense radiation that could extend several city blocks. A large, highly radioactive bomb could affect a much larger area.

There is no public record that any country or terrorist group has detonated a radiological bomb.

A diagram of a dirty bomb has been found in a Taliban or Al Qaida installation in Afghanistan in recent weeks, according to a source. In addition, numerous other documents about nuclear weapons in general were recovered. But a well-placed U.S. source said such diagrams and documents could be found in public sources, including the internet. The source said some designs were so inadequate and primitive that they most likely would not work.

Al Qaida's longstanding interest in acquiring a nuclear capability is well-documented. In February, a Sudanese man who worked for Bin

Laden for nine years, Jamal Ahmed Fadl, testified that Al Qaida was trying to acquire nuclear material in the early 1990s. He said that a Bin Laden lieutenant ordered him to buy uranium from a former Sudanese army officer, who offered to sell ore from South Africa for \$1.5 million.

Though he did not have personal knowledge that the deal went through, Fadl testified, he was paid a \$10,000 bonus for arranging the deal. Fadl was a government witness at the New York trial of four participants in the Al Qaida bombing of two American embassies in Africa in August 1998.

Last month, Bin Laden told a Pakistani journalist that his movement already had chemical and nuclear weapons. "I wish to declare that if America used chemical or nuclear weapons against us, then we may retort with chemical and nuclear weapons," Bin Laden was quoted as saying. "We have the weapons as a deterrent."

In 1998, Bin Laden called it "a religious duty" to acquire weapons of mass destruction, adding: "If I have indeed acquired these weapons, then I thank God for enabling me to do so."

One Taliban official in Afghanistan has denied that Al Qaida has a nuclear capability. "We do not even have modern weaponry, not to mention weapons of mass destruction," Abdul Salam Zaeef, former Taliban ambassador to Pakistan, said recently after widespread reports of Bin Laden's deterrent comment.

Pakistan has detained two nuclear scientists, both veterans of the secret programme that has given Pakistan about a dozen nuclear warheads, and is interrogating them about their contacts with Taliban and Al Qaida members. The two, Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood and Abdul Majid, worked in Afghanistan in recent years but have said they were only providing charitable assistance to Afghans.

Mahmood is an expert in plutonium, the highly fissionable material used in the heart of most nuclear weapons. He was given a desk job in 1999 after he publicly said that Pakistan should help other Islamic nations build nuclear weapons. He also spoke publicly in support of the Taliban.

Russia and Pakistan are considered the two most likely sources of radioactive material for the Al Qaida. Russian officials have reported dozens of attempts to steal enriched uranium or plutonium since 1990. Last month, a Russian general said unidentified terrorists recently had twice tried and failed to penetrate Russian top-secret fortified nuclear storage facilities known as "S-shelters."

Mohamed El Baradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said in a November 1 statement that after the September 11 hijackings, the agency had been alerted to the possibility that terrorists might use "radioactive sources to incite panic, contaminate property and even cause injury or death among civilian populations." (LAT-WP-Svc)

N. ALLIANCE CLAIMS TO HAVE QUELLED PRISON RIOT

U.S. jets hit Taliban compound but Omar 'safe'

HD-1
28/11

WSN

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 28. Jets belonging to the U.S. struck a potentially devastating blow to a compound believed to have housed the Taliban's supreme leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, near the militia's last bastion, Kandahar, amid the Northern Alliance claim that it had crushed a bloody rebellion by prisoners in northern Afghanistan.

As more U.S. Marines poured into the war-ravaged country, the U.S.-led forces narrowed the search for the Saudi fugitive, Osama bin Laden, and his supporters around Kandahar and Jalalabad.

The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, said the strike was ordered yesterday against the "leadership compound" after learning that it was being used by senior Taliban leaders, the Al-Qaeda and the Wafa, a Saudi group suspected of aiding Osama.

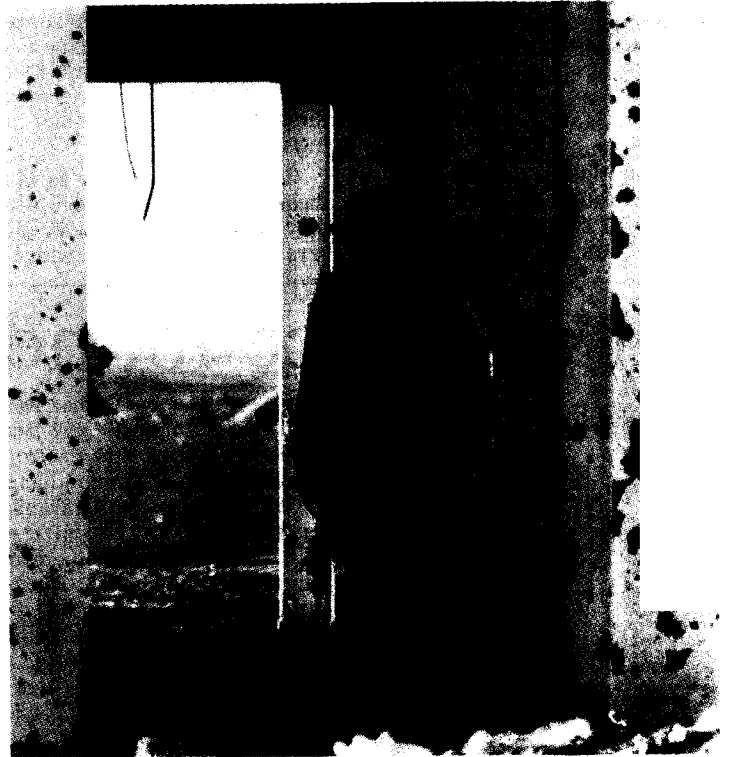
CNN quoted Pentagon sources as saying that the U.S. planes struck two known Taliban facilities around 1.30 a.m. (local time) after information was received

that Mullah Omar was inside one of them. The pilots reported "good hits" on both but the extent of damage was not known.

"Whoever was there is gonna wish they were not," said Mr. Rumsfeld, who watched the attack live from the headquarters of the U.S. Central Command in Florida.

However, the Taliban's chief envoy, Mr. Abdul Salam Zaeef, told the Afghan Islamic Press news agency that the bombing was southwest of Kandahar and had hit the house of a local official. "Neither the Taliban supreme leader nor any Taliban official was there," he said. Mullah Omar was "safe," he said, but denied having any idea of where Osama was.

Meanwhile, in Mazar-e-Sharif, the Northern Alliance fighters, using knives and scissors cut away black scarves from the bound hands of some of the corpses of Taliban fighters killed during a violent three-day revolt before laying out the bodies for the Red



An armed U.S. Marine walks through a pock-marked building near the forward base in southern Afghanistan on Tuesday. — Reuters

'Ups and downs' in Bonn talks

By Vaiju Naravane

KOENIGSWINTER (Germany), NOV. 28. Mr. Francesco Vendrell, United Nations Deputy Special Envoy on Afghanistan, today tempered initial optimism over the talks in Bonn to find a political solution for Afghanistan saying: "It's early days yet. I don't want to speculate on the length of these talks. The atmosphere has been very good so far but it does not mean that it will necessarily remain very good. There will be ups and downs... A full agreement may not be possible."

This was the first time in 28 years that discussions of this nature were being held on the future of Afghanistan; too much should not be expected of these preliminary talks, Mr. Vendrell warned.

— Details on Page 11

Cross to haul away. The Alliance officials allowed reporters on Wednesday into the fort.

Gen. Rashid Dostum, a senior Alliance commander, warned journalists to stay away from the southern section of the fort where the prisoners had been held, including the field with the bodies, which were then carried to a central courtyard where the Red Cross took charge of them. Its

workers, wearing rubber gloves, loaded the corpses brought by the Alliance troops on to trailers attached to tractors.

Denying that his forces had tied the hands of the prisoners behind their backs, the General said "we did not tie them."

We brought them here to be safer... We treated prisoners according to human rights." — AP, AFP

THE HINDU
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29 NOV 2001

Kunduz overrun as U.S. Marines land in Kandahar

KUNDUZ (AFGHANISTAN), NOV. 26. Stomping on the faces of captured Taliban forces and shooting others as they lay wounded, the forces of the Northern Alliance rampaged through Kunduz on Monday, laying claim to the Taliban's last northern stronghold.

Gawking crowds ringed Taliban fighters dying on the streets. Little boys jeered as they ran alongside trucks carrying terrified Taliban prisoners, who sat with their arms bound behind them. Some Alliance fighters turned immediately to Kunduz's spoils, hauling off captured Taliban pick-up trucks, cars and vans.

The Alliance claimed to have taken over Kunduz on Sunday. But, when one main contingent of its forces moved in at daybreak on Monday, the Taliban was lying in wait — and opened fire with rocket-propelled grenades and rifles in long battles. The last stand ended dismally for the militia.

Angered by the attack, the Alliance fighters roamed the dust-covered streets of the town, blasting away at the wounded Taliban soldiers lying crumpled against store awnings. Three fly-covered men lay dead in empty market stalls. Each man's big toes had been looped together with cords to prevent his escape while alive.

The Northern Alliance troops were going from house to house, flushing out the Taliban forces, a witness said.

On the main street, a burly, bearded Taliban soldier appeared to be trying to win over uni-

formed soldiers who had hauled him from hiding. Within seconds, he was on the ground, rifle butts smashing into him. The Alliance fighters stomped on his face as he lay writhing. They finally threw the man's body, inert, into the back of a truck. And this was the treatment for the Afghan Taliban

foreign fighters were nowhere in sight.

At the scene of a bloody prison uprising in Mazar-e-Sharif by captured fighters for Osama bin Laden, heavy new explosions and gunfire rang out for a second day despite official assurances that the insurrection had been quelled. Holdouts barricaded themselves inside a tower and fired rocket-propelled grenades, witnesses said.

A report from Southern Afghanistan said transport aircraft bringing U.S. Marines and equipment came and went from the *USS Peleliu* in the northern Arabian Sea and from land bases on the coast, the locations of which the military has kept a secret.

The chosen airstrip was isolated. The only lights for km around were the runway lights installed by the Marines and those they were burning in the airstrip's buildings.

According to Col. Peter Miller, Chief of Staff of the Marine task force in Afghanistan, the sand airstrip and buildings had been built by a wealthy Arab to reach his hunting lodge. The press was allowed on security conditions that included not identifying the exact locations of the base or numbers of troops and future mission plans.

In Washington, the Pentagon spokeswoman, Ms. Victoria Clarke, said about 500 Marines had seized the airstrip. — AP

All set for meeting in Bonn: Page 11

We're smoking them out: Bush

WASHINGTON, NOV. 26. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, today said American forces were hunting down those responsible for the Sept. 11 terror attacks on the U.S. "We're smoking them out, they're running and now we're going to bring them to justice," he said. The first wave of Marines seized the airfield near Kandahar and encountered no immediate resistance, said the Pentagon spokeswoman, Ms. Victoria Clarke.

"There were no difficulties," Ms. Clarke said. Their mission is to establish a forward operating base, she said, declining to further explain their operation except to say the U.S. forces would apply pressure on Taliban militia forces and the Al-Qaeda terrorist network of Osama bin Laden.

Later, speaking in the White House Rose Garden after meeting with two freed humanitarian aid workers, Mr. Bush said, "We're patient, we're resolved, and we will stay the course until we achieve the objective. — AP

THE HINDU

27 NOV 2001

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2001

A WAR WITHOUT RULES?

HQ-10
28/11

AMERICA'S MILITARY 'CAMPAIGN' against international terror seems to have acquired the proportions of a war without rules on the rugged terrain of Afghanistan. In a political sense, the battle lines themselves are overshadowed by controversies. In a clear escalation, the U.S. has begun to deploy hundreds of ground troops on the outskirts of Kandahar — presumptively, the fall-back bastion of the suspected terror twins, the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda organisation. The mandate of the U.S. Marines has been variously outlined. However, the central theme pertains to their training for dexterous operations that might require high skills for non-conventional manoeuvres as also the more orthodox combat duties. The message being conveyed by Washington is that the U.S. will now try every trick in the book and beyond it to carry forward what may turn out to be the ultimate push in the hunt for Osama bin Laden and his chief Taliban host, Mullah Omar. In America's apparent reckoning, the two are thought to have made the Kandahar region their final sanctuary in the war which the U.S. launched on October 7 with a massive show of cruise missile attacks and aerial bombardment against the Taliban's military and other infrastructure facilities. Despite the incremental military steps that the U.S. has taken since then, the latest battle lines evoke a poignant dilemma. There is no doubt that the U.S., on one side, and the Taliban as also Osama's Al-Qaeda, on the other side, regard each other as the sworn enemy. What complicates their stand, though, is the obvious plight of the ordinary Afghans. It is this aspect that blurs the 'moral' dividing line that certainly exists between the U.S. and Britain as the allies-in-combat, in one formation, and the Taliban-Osama axis.

From the beginning of this war, the U.S.

has not been found wanting in its articulation of concerns about the well-being of innocent Afghan civilians. However, there is little encouraging evidence to show that either the United Nations or the U.S. itself has been able to ameliorate the obvious hardships of the ordinary Afghans in a meaningful manner. If this is inevitable in a war without precedent against terrorism, the sheer disorder that seems to define the amateurish conduct of the 'campaign' itself raises many disconcerting questions. The motley anti-Taliban group, known as the Northern Alliance, is America's acknowledged proxy or ally (depending on one's perspective). Yet, shockingly messy is the manner in which the Northern Alliance has sought to quell a major riot by the Taliban's non-Afghan comrades after they were taken prisoner during the battles for Kunduz and Mazar-e-Sharif. This demonstrates a failure by the U.S. to ensure that the recognised norms of war are adhered to by those acting under its auspices.

On a higher plane of war aims, the U.S. has not so far produced the fine judicial-grade evidence that the larger international community would like to see regarding Osama's proven complicity in the terrorist crimes against humanity that occurred on American soil on September 11. However, this does not negate the other reality that Osama himself may have in some ways taken credit for the tragic events on that day. Discernible beyond these niceties are two disturbing aspects of the 'war' on terror. First, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, has yet to outline clearly a blueprint of political-diplomatic goals that determine his disproportionate use of force in Afghanistan at this time. Second, he seems to be in a hurry to enlarge the definition of terrorism, solely from a U.S. perspective, without leaving the task to a forum like the United Nations.

THE HINDU

29 NOV 2001

NORTHERN ALLIANCE SERVES ULTIMATUM

Surrender only option, U.S. tells Taliban

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, NOV. 21. The United States said today that the only way to avoid a confrontation in the Kunduz province in Afghanistan — where majority of the supporters of the Taliban are reportedly holed up — is for the Taliban and its supporters to surrender to the Northern Alliance. (The Alliance has meanwhile served an ultimatum on the Taliban to surrender by tomorrow or face the consequences, a PTI report said.)

The U.S. coalition spokesperson, Mr. Kenton W. Keith, told a news conference here that there was little anyone could do in Kunduz if the Taliban militia was not prepared to surrender. The U.S. assertion came a day after Pakistan made a passionate plea to consider on humanitarian grounds the offer of surrender by some of the persons "previously

aligned with the Taliban".

Mr. Keith said he had no knowledge of the surrender offer and it was a matter between those who wished to surrender and the Northern Alliance. In response to a specific question on the request made by the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, to the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair and the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, to consider the offer of surrender by some of the men, the spokesman said that he had no knowledge of the response of the two leaders.

"It is important to remember that those who are hiding in Kunduz are a group of the most hardened fighters. They are not only heavily armed but are also using them. As we see it, the easy way to stop the conflict in Kunduz is by the surrender of these forces. I can assure that those who surrender would be treated with dignity", the spokesman said.

Going by the smooth manner in which the Alliance fighters took control of Mazar-e-Sharif and Kandahar, there was no reason for any apprehension of a bloodbath in Kunduz. "We have been observing the situation. The Northern Alliance is not only a disciplined force but it acted in moderation while taking over Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul," he said.

Mr. Keith said it was wrong to compare the Northern Alliance with the Taliban on the basis of the past record of the former. "The Taliban is a threat to the whole world. To make a comparison between the Taliban of today and the Northern Alliance of yesterday is not correct".

The coalition spokesman maintained that the U.S. military campaign was aimed at the military targets in Afghanistan and the coalition forces were not attacking civilian targets.

'Will not abandon Kandahar'

AP reports from Spinboldak, Afghanistan:

The Taliban have lost contact with Osama bin Laden and he is no longer under the militia's control, the spokesman for the movement's supreme leader said Wednesday.

Mr. Syed Tayyab Agha, spokesman for Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar, also said the Taliban had decided not to abandon Kandahar and would fight to defend the four or five provinces that remain under the militia's control.

"We have no idea where he is," Mr. Agha said of Osama. "There is no relation right now. There is no communication.

"You should forget the 11 September attacks because now there is a new fighting against Muslims and Islam, and the international and global terrorists like America and Britain, they are killing daily our innocent people," he said.

Shoot me before I am caught: Osama

RIYADH, NOV. 21. Osama bin Laden has told aides to kill him before he is captured by American troops, a newspaper reported today.

"Osama has informed a number of people close and dedicated to him that he was living his last weeks or days," said *Al-Watan* newspaper, quoting informed U.S. and European diplomatic sources in Paris.

"He refuses to allow Americans or members of the Afghan Northern Alliance to kill him and also refuses to be taken prisoner by them because that will be a major defeat for him.

"So, he has instructed his aides to remain until the end to shoot him if he is surrounded and there is no escape," the Arabic daily said adding that Osama had asked those aides to swear to him that they would abide by these instructions and they did. "Osama has even asked one of his sons to shoot him instead of being captured..."

According to *Al-Watan*, Osama has recorded his political "will" or his last message on a videotape, which is to be broadcast after his death. In the tape, he urges more strikes on U.S. interests everywhere.

The information, which could not be independently confirmed, was received by the U.S. administration after the interrogation of a number of military and security officials, defected from the Taliban, *Al-Watan* said. — AFP

THE HINDU

22 NOV 2001

US gears to block Osama flight by sea

Agencies
Islamabad, November 20

CONCERNED THAT a cornered Osama bin Laden could now try to flee Afghanistan via Pakistan, the US Navy's Fifth Fleet yesterday began a search of all ships leaving Pakistani territorial waters. The combing operation began after the Bush Administration issued orders to this effect through its Maritime Liaison Office in Bahrain.

The directive also announced a \$25 million reward to anyone who would turn in the fugitive Saudi terrorist. In almost a knee-jerk reaction to the directive, the Fifth Fleet mounted a picket on all ships leaving Pakistani territorial waters.

Anyone suspected of assisting or transporting Laden or other

Taliban approach UN for Kunduz surrender

TALIBAN COMMANDERS in Kunduz approached the UN in Islamabad on Monday with a formal offer to surrender. Secretary-General Kofi Annan is in touch with the ICRC in this connection. His representative has urged the Northern Alliance to respect international conventions because the Taliban troops are fearing reprisals.

PTI, United Nations

al-Qaida leaders would risk the sinking or seizure of his vessel and would be detained and jailed, a US advisory warned.

In Afghanistan, Taliban forces trapped in the northern town of Kunduz today offered conditional surrender even as US bombers kept pounding their frontlines.

In the southern Taliban stronghold of Kandahar, the militia still appeared in control amid reports that Pashtun tribal chiefs were trying to broker a peaceful handover of the city.

At least 37 people were killed in Shamshad town of Nangarhar in overnight US strikes and bombing raids today, the Afghan Islamic Press said.

International efforts to set up an interim administration in the country gathered pace with the arrival of a Russian delegation in Kabul and discussions in Uzbekistan between US envoy James Dobbins and Northern

Alliance Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah.

The prospect of an inter-Afghan forum got a boost after the Alliance climbed down from its earlier demand that talks could be held only in Kabul.

Afghan talks: UN-supervised talks on a post-Taliban Government might begin in Germany as early as Monday but the Taliban would not be represented, UN and Afghan Opposition officials said on Tuesday.

UN special envoy to Afghanistan Francesco Vendrell said the Alliance had agreed to attend the talks, which would include representatives of all major factions and ethnic groups.

More reports on Pages 9 & 10

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

21 NOV 2001

US sends more ground troops to Afghanistan to dig out Laden

Robert Burns

WASHINGTON 19 NOVEMBER

MORE US commandos have been put on the ground in Afghanistan to help in the hunt for Osama bin Laden, the Pentagon said on Monday.

US planes pounded Taliban front lines just outside Kunduz, where Taliban and Al Qaeda forces have been holding out.

With US bombs still falling, the Taliban regime cracking and Afghan opposition forces rising, Bush administration officials said chances of finding bin Laden are improving.

Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke said on Monday that more American troops were sent on Friday into the country's south, where special operations forces have been gathering intelligence and setting up roadblocks to try to catch bin Laden and fleeing Taliban. There are a few hundred Americans now on the ground throughout the country, she added.

"We're beginning to narrow his possibilities for hiding," Condoleezza Rice, President Bush's national security adviser, said on Sunday.

In television interviews, Rice and other officials said bin Laden is on the run with little chance of gaining safe haven in neighbouring countries if he were to escape Afghanistan. — AP



HE WAS HERE! A Western reporter looks inside an underground bunker used by Laden in the suburbs of Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan on Sunday. — AFP

US suspects Iraq has bio arms

Geneva

19 NOVEMBER

THE UNITED States said, on Monday, it strongly suspects Iraq of building up a germ warfare programme, but stopped short of saying that the country might supply biological weapons to Osama bin Laden's terrorist network.

John R. Bolton, under-secretary of state for arms control, also told the 144 nations that have signed the 1972 biological weapons convention that the United States finds North Korea's biological weapons programme "extremely disturbing."

"The United States strongly suspects that Iraq has taken advantage of the absence of UN inspections for three years to improve all phases of its offensive biological weapons programme," said Mr Bolton. "The existence of Iraq's programme is beyond dispute." — AP

The Economic Times

20 NOV 2001

TALIBAN'S CONDITIONAL OFFER TO SURRENDER KUNDUZ

British, American special forces 'closing in' on Osama

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, NOV. 18. In a major breakthrough, British defence experts today claimed that the international search for the fugitive terrorist, Osama bin Laden, had been narrowed down to a 30-square mile range in southeastern Afghanistan, and the special troops trailing him were simply "hours" behind him. He was believed to be "static" somewhere to the southeast of Kandahar, one newspaper said quoting a defence intelligence source.

This is by far the most optimistic assessment of the coalition's chances of capturing Osama since the military hunt for him began six weeks ago amid widespread pessimism reflected most starkly in the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld's exasperating remarks that looking for Osama in the labyrinthine caves of Afghanistan was like searching for a needle in a haystack.

The British claims were reported to be based on a dramatic improvement in intelligence in the past few days following the rapid collapse of Taliban strongholds, leaving Osama with very little "cover". The *Sunday Telegraph* quoted a Defence Ministry official as saying that the coalition had been able to get "some very hot" intelligence which could lead to the capture or death of Osama "within days".

"Our intelligence picture is getting better every day. This time last week it was pretty poor. Now we are on to him. He is running out of places to hide," he said.

According to *The Sunday Times*, British SAS and U.S. troops are monitoring the southern approaches, near Kandahar, to prevent Osama from escaping into Pakistan. Intelligence agencies were reported to be "confident" that he had not been able to move far in recent days. The British De-



Northern Alliance soldiers watch the explosions after a U.S. bomber dropped bombs on Taliban positions near Khanabad in Kunduz province of Afghanistan on Sunday. — AFP

fence Secretary, Mr. Geoff Hoon, told newspapers that the "space" left for Osama to operate in had been sharply reduced, limiting his ability to move around. "That gives us an advantage in running him to ground," he said. He expected that Osama would be betrayed by someone in the Taliban/Al-Qaeda fraternity given the disarray in their ranks.

"My view is that either we will come across information that allows us to track him down or more likely, given the state of collapse in the south, someone will give him away, perhaps a local leader who learns of his position. Either way, we will go on going after him," Mr. Hoon told *The Sunday Telegraph*. But tracking down a moving target remained a

problem, it said citing a British intelligence officer who said: "It is no good being told he was here yesterday. You have to have someone telling you he will be in this exact cave at this exact time

Osama deputy's death confirmed; Zahir Shah says he will return: Page 13

tomorrow and you can get people there very quickly, that's the only way it will happen."

Meanwhile, confusion over the deployment of British troops in Afghanistan continued.

AP reports from Bangi, Afghanistan:

After devastating U.S. airstrikes on Sunday, surrounded Taliban

forces offered to surrender their last northern stronghold of Kunduz if the Alliance pledged to spare the lives of foreign fighters loyal to Osama. Opposition commanders said. There was no immediate word on whether the Alliance has accepted the offer.

U.S. B-52s led a day of intense bombing on Taliban positions outside Kunduz, sending huge fireballs skyward.

Elsewhere in Afghanistan, a private news agency said U.S. bombardment of Taliban positions in their home base of Kandahar in the south and outside the eastern city of Jalalabad had killed more than 70 people overnight. The reports could not be confirmed.

The reports of bombings in eastern Nangarhar province and in Kandahar came from the Afghan Islamic Press. It said the Nangarhar raid killed 30 people, and quoted a Pakistani official at the nearby Torkham border crossing as saying seven wounded were brought to Pakistan for treatment.

It also said U.S. jets struck targets around Kandahar, killing 46 people, as the stalemate continued over control of the Taliban stronghold.

Rabbani, Vendrell meet

AFP reports from Kabul:

Afghanistan's deposed President, Mr. Burhanuddin Rabbani, had his first meeting today with the U.N. envoy, Mr. Francesc Vendrell, who is seeking to convene a special council to discuss the formation of a post-Taliban government.

Mr. Rabbani and Mr. Vendrell were due to meet again on Monday, the Minister said.

UNI reports from Tashkent:

The U.S. special envoy Mr. James Dobbins, and Alliance Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah, today reached an agreement on forming a Government representing all segments of the Afghan population. After the meeting here, Mr. Dobbins said consultations would continue with the involvement of representatives of the international community, the Novosti reported.

Al-Qaeda 'slaughtering' deserters

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, NOV. 18. A bloody civil war is reported to have broken out between the elite foreign cadres of the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, and the indigenous Taliban troops, according to *The Sunday Telegraph* which said the Al-Qaeda guards were "slaughtering" the Taliban in Kunduz to prevent them from surrendering to the Northern Alliance.

In a front-page report, it quoted refugees as saying that an Al-Qaeda commander had ordered the "massacre" of 150 Afghan Taliban soldiers who wanted to defect. "As (Northern) Alliance commanders prepared for their latest offensive on Kunduz, refugees described atrocities committed by Al-Qaeda militiamen," it said. Giving details of the "massacre", which allegedly took place on Friday, a refugee told the newspaper that it followed the defection of 1,000 Afghan Taliban men under Gen. Miral Nasery, a local commander. He said that Al-Qaeda soldiers were holding more than 100 prominent Kunduz citizens as hostages to 'stall' an Alliance attack.

The refugee, Mr. Mohammed Ibrahim, said civilians were not only being prevented from leaving the area but were also being forced by the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban to fight for them. They were alleged to be "beating or killing those who refused." "Some civilians were using this as a means of escape, agreeing to go to the front line then running away when night fell," the newspaper said. Hundreds of residents were believed to be "trapped" in their homes, too frightened to go out. The streets were deserted and the only sign of life was the Taliban soldiers "walking around with their guns".

The tension between civilians and the Taliban in Kunduz was confirmed by *The Sunday Times* which said that the militia had "threatened to massacre

civilians if the Alliance attacked". Most of the Taliban waiting to meet the Alliance offensive were believed to be foreigners — Arabs, Pakistanis and Chechens. Media reports highlighted the hostility between Afghan Taliban men and "foreigners", mostly belonging to Osama's elite guards.

In most places, the native Taliban soldiers have been the first to surrender or defect to the Alliance forces and in turn they have been treated with consideration while foreign mercenaries have been dealt with ruthlessly, often being summarily executed.

The Observer, meanwhile, said there were "reports of Al-Qaeda troops massacring Taliban soldiers to prevent them from defecting". It also quoted an Alliance Foreign Ministry official as saying that the "foreign Taliban" were not prepared to give up Kunduz even as the "local" Taliban were apparently inclined.

Observers, however, were inclined to treat some of the stories coming out of the "war" zone as exaggerated. *The Sunday Telegraph* story, they said, was based on just one man's account and it would be premature to talk of a "massacre" until independently verified information was available. In another report, the newspaper itself pointed to the problem of "sifting through the deluge of rumour and misinformation sweeping Afghanistan in the euphoria of victory over the Taliban".

A PTI report from Islamabad quoting CNN said that in Kunduz hundreds of Taliban fighters, holed up in the besieged city, were killing each other to avoid capture by the advancing Alliance troops.

About 60 Chechen fighters drowned themselves in the nearby Amu river, while an Alliance commander said 25 trapped Taliban fighters fatally shot one another when they saw Opposition troops advancing towards them.

Cracks widen between Washington, Afghan opp US envoy sidesteps Northern Alliance

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ISLAMABAD, Nov. 17. — Cracks in the relationship between Washington and the Northern Alliance appeared to be widening today as US special envoy Mr James Dobbins steered clear of Kabul during a trip to the region.

Mr Dobbins is Washington's pointman with Afghanistan's opposition groups but has so far failed to meet any senior officials from the alliance's armed factions during his first round of talks.

He is currently meeting exiled ethnic leaders in Peshawar to convince all parties to work towards a broad-based post-Taliban government, the US state department spokesman, Mr Philip Reeker, said in Washington.

Mr Reeker said: "At the moment there are no plans for him to go into Afghanistan. We are holding consultations with a number of nations at the UN in terms of examining security options, possible structure of a multinational force and other things."

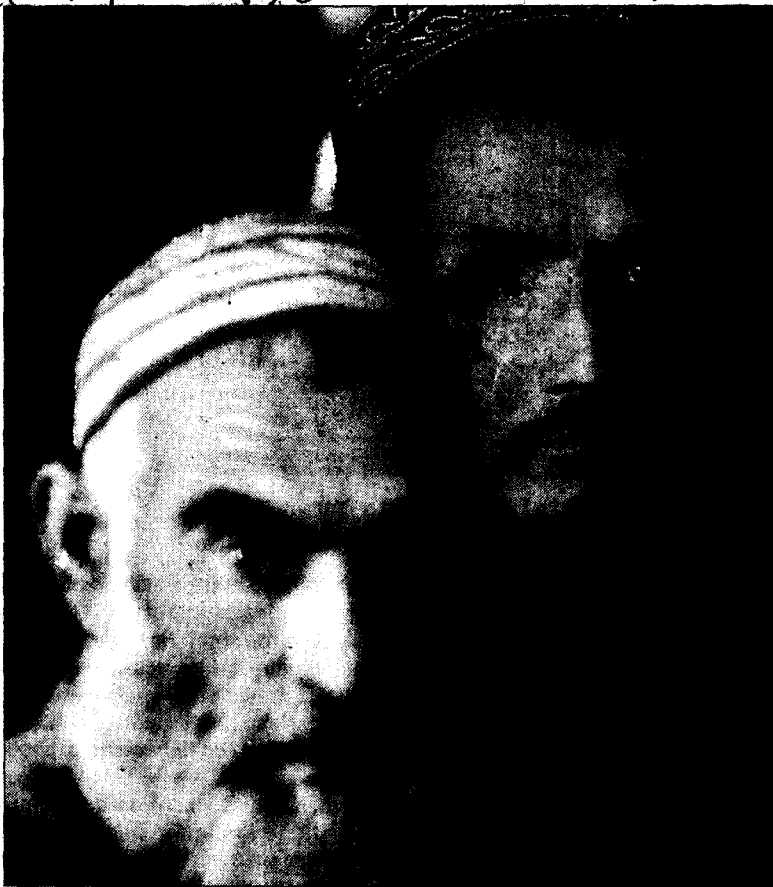
Meanwhile, the UN deputy special envoy, Mr Francesc Vendrell, had arrived in Afghanistan and a Russian military delegation was en route to make contact with the Northern Alliance for the first time since their march into Kabul.

The alliance has agreed to participate in the UN-backed council but its rapid march into Kabul has raised doubts that it is ready to share power.

US officials admitted having no control over the Northern Alliance, which entered Kabul on Tuesday despite repeated US pleas to steer clear until political arrangements could be finalised.

The Northern Alliance had also made it clear it would brook little foreign interference in the process of forming a new government.

Mr Dobbins on Thursday met the Pakistani foreign secretary,



YESTERDAY'S FIGHTERS, TODAY'S PRISONERS: Two Taliban fighters look through a prison in Taloqan in northern Afghanistan on Saturday. — AP/PTI

Mr Inamul Haq, to discuss a peaceful transition of power after the collapse of Taliban rule.

He later conferred with Mr Vendrell and exiled Afghan elder Pir Sayad Ahmad Gailani, the royalist Pashtun leader of an umbrella group of Afghan political organisations.

He met Zahir Shah in Rome earlier in the week.

The UN has proposed a five-point plan which would lead to a representative, multi-ethnic transitional government and a new constitution.

The USA has been highly supportive of the initiative, though insisting it is not interested in "nation building".

LOVE AMONG RUINS

MUNICH, Nov. 17.— Authorities probing the anti-US terrorist assault have uncovered a love letter sent by one of the hijackers to his girlfriend the day before the 11 September 11, German news weekly *Focus* reported today.

Focus said 26-year-old Ziad Jarrah had sent a long farewell letter from the USA to his girlfriend in the western German city of Bochum on 10 September in which he referred to a deadly mission.

— AFP

THE STATESMAN

Bombings continue despite Ramadan

PTI, REUTERS and DPA

ISLAMABAD/LONDON, Nov. 16. - Ignoring appeals from the Islamic world to cease bombing Afghanistan in the holy month of Ramadan, which began in these parts today, US war planes pounded the Taliban bastion of Kandahar, destroying the militia's foreign ministry building and troops landed in the war-torn country.

Fighting raged around the northern city of Kunduz where several thousand militiamen and Al-Qaida fighters were holding out against opposition forces' onslaught and US airstrikes. Taliban supreme leader Mulla Mohammed Omar is reported to be battling the forces in Kunduz.

Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press reported that the bombing of Kandahar last night left 11 civilians dead and 25 injured.

Reports reaching here said the Taliban forces were digging in and building new defensive positions to defend Kandahar. Northern Alliance forces have laid a siege to the northern city of Kunduz and were engaged in fierce fighting with an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 foreigners, mostly Arabs and Pakistanis, loyal to Osama bin Laden.

Six British C-130 aircraft and two from the US landed at Bagram airport for the first time after opposition forces captured Kabul earlier this week, carrying 160 soldiers including Britain's 100 elite Royal Marines.

Fresh reports on the war in Afghanistan indicate that the Al-Qaida may have suffered another setback - Mohammed Atef, a senior Al-Qaida leader believed to be Laden's right-hand man, was reported to have been killed in this week's bombing of Kabul. Atef left for Afghanistan in the mid-1980s from his native Egypt, where

he was wanted for the 1990 murder of Egyptian parliament speaker Mr Rifaat Al-Mahgoub.

Taliban, however, denied reports that senior leaders of the militia were killed in US attacks. It also affirmed that Kandahar was "very much" under its control. Meanwhile, the UN special envoy to Afghanistan Mr Francis Vendrell has ruled out participation of India, Pakistan, Russia and Iran in a multi-national force being proposed for deployment in the war-torn country, reported PTI.

"I do not think the UN Security Council and the secretary general would find them acceptable to be in the force," he told a media briefing here yesterday. Traditionally, the countries which do not have national interest are preferred in such a situation, he said. The proposed force would mostly be made up of US and European nations, Mr Vendrell said.

The Pakistani foreign office spokesman,

Mr Aziz Mohammad Khan, however, dismissed Mr Vendrell's remarks, saying it could be his personal view and the issue has not yet been discussed by UN Security Council.

Laden not in Pak: Islamabad today dismissed as "preposterous and mischievous" an Iranian radio report that Laden had probably fled from Afghanistan to Pakistan.

"It seems to be an attempt to create turmoil and confusion," the military government's top spokesman, Major General Mr Rashid Qureshi, told Reuters.

State-run Iran radio had quoted an unnamed "informed source" as suggesting that the millionaire militant had probably fled for his life across the border near the remote and inaccessible region of Tihrah, north-western Pakistan.

■ **Editorial: Ridiculed by US: page 6**
■ **More reports on pages 5 and 8**

U.S. BOMBING WRECKS TALIBAN FOREIGN MINISTRY BUILDING

Mullah Omar to abandon Kandahar

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

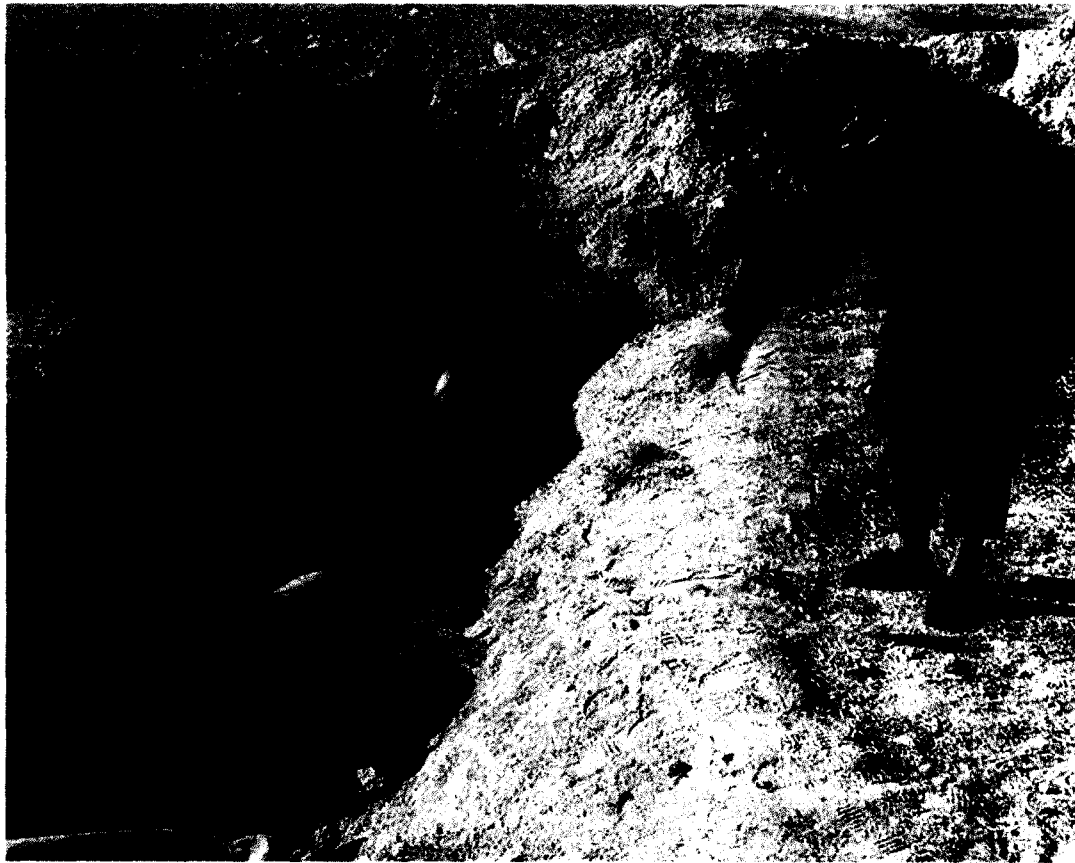
ISLAMABAD, NOV. 16. The Taliban militia is believed to have taken a decision to retreat from Kandahar and the top leadership of the regime, including Mullah Mohammad Omar, would head for the mountains, the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) news agency said tonight.

However there was no independent confirmation of the report. No functionary of the Taliban embassy here was willing to comment on it. The Taliban Deputy Ambassador, Mr. Suhail Shaheen, was not available for comment and the Ambassador, Mullah Abdul Saleem Zaef, is away in Afghanistan for consultation with the Taliban leadership.

Quoting sources, AIP said Mullah Mohammad Omar had decided to hand over the city to two former mujahideen commanders after several days of discussions with his military commanders and close aides.

The agency said the Taliban were expected to leave the city within the next 24 hours. It said the decision was taken to avoid more civilian casualties from daily U.S. bombing.

It is difficult to comment on the veracity of the report, particularly considering the manner in which the militia chose to retreat from several of the key provinces in the last few days. Political observers and commentators here are left guessing whether it is part of any considered strategy or a simple



A man hurls a rock at a dead Taliban fighter on the highway, nine km north of Kabul on Friday. — Reuters

case of outright defeat in the war against the U.S. and its allies.

'Osama has fled to Pak.'

The Iran Radio has claimed that the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, has probably fled from Af-

ghanistan to Pakistan. However, authorities in Pakistan promptly denied it as a 'baseless' report and asserted that the security on the Afghan border had been stepped up to ensure that illegal persons did not cross the border.

"Osama bin Laden has most likely abandoned Afghanistan for the Manatiq-e-Azad (free areas) of Pakistan to save his life," the Iran Radio, quoting an informed source said. Maj. Gen. Rashid Quereshi, Press Secretary to the

Pakistan President, told reporters at a Foreign Office briefing that the vigil along the 2500-km border with Afghanistan had been stepped up.

He denied reports that tanks had been moved to the border. Maj. Gen. Quereshi said that there had been additional deployment of border security guards and scouts to maintain strict vigil on the border.

He said that along with paramilitary troops, a few Pakistan soldiers had been sent to the border. He did not agree with the suggestion of a correspondent that the people in the tribal areas of Pakistan were sympathetic to the Taliban. "The President of Pakistan, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, has met with each and every tribal leader in the country. Let me assert that not even a single leader has come out in support of the Taliban. They have appreciated the decision taken by the government to join the international community in combating terrorism".

AP, AFP, PTI report:

Meanwhile reports from Kabul said U.S. warplanes struck positions near Kandahar in the south and Kunduz in the north today, the first day of Ramadan.

Kandahar was bombed, continuing a pattern of relentless strikes on the city and its surroundings. AIP said the Taliban's Foreign Ministry was wrecked, along with a mosque located in the eastern part of the city.

It claimed at least 11 civilians were killed, but that could not be independently confirmed.

The attacks came despite earlier calls from some Muslim nations — including key ally Pakistan — for restraint during the Islamic holy month.

But Pakistan implicitly defended the airstrikes, noting they were much less intense than in recent days and weeks.

"The bombing has been reduced," said the Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mr. Aziz Ahmed Khan, adding that U.S.-led military operations would continue until the goal was achieved.

Pak. denial

Pakistan has denied reports that some of the bombs dropped by U.S. fighter planes strayed into its territory in areas bordering Afghanistan.

The Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Aziz Mohammad Khan, told reporters in Islamabad that some bombs fell close to the border inside Afghanistan and not in Pakistani territory.

'Poison plan' unearthed

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, NOV. 16. Yet another document confirming the terror plans of the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, and his Al-Qaeda network is reported to have been found, and it contains instructions for preparing the deadly biological chemical 'Ricin' which was exploited by British scientists in the Second World War to develop a 'W Bomb', and used by the Bulgarian secret service in 1978 to kill a dissident exile in London.

The discovery was reported by *The Times* today, a day after it published details of Al-Qaeda's nuclear preparations found in an abandoned house in Kabul. The latest 'find' — a rough manual explaining the manufacturing process of 'Ricin' and its fatal effects — was buried amid a pile of dummy bombs and propaganda documents scattered in the cellar of a house in Afghan capital. The newspaper said the place was once used as a terrorist training centre and two Arab doctors, killed by a mob on Monday as they tried to flee, were believed to be the brains behind the 'Ricin' poison manual.

It said the document made 'chilling' reading in describing the doses required to kill a child or an adult, and the agonising symptoms which the victim would develop before dying a slow death — the period of death varying from three days to 14 days. "A certain amount, equal to a strong dose, will be able to kill an adult, and a dose equal to seven seeds (of castor oil plant from which 'Ricin' is made) will kill a child," the instructions said prescribing the precautions which must be observed while making 'Ricin', such as using gloves and a mask. The symptoms to look for the effect of 'Ricin', it explained, were vomiting, stomach cramps, extreme thirst, throat irritation, respiratory collapse and death.

Osama deputy killed

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, NOV. 16. In what will be a major blow to the Al-Qaeda network, senior U.S. officials are saying that Mohammed Atef, a senior deputy of Osama bin Laden, has been killed in operations in and around Kabul.

Atef, a former Egyptian policeman, was apparently killed in U.S. airstrikes on a house in Kabul. "We believe that it is true that he was killed in the U.S. bombing around Kabul", an official has said.

Another version is that Atef may have been killed by the Special Forces on specific combat missions inside Afghanistan.

Atef is seen here as the military commander of the Al-Qaeda and one of the masterminds of the September 11 terror attacks against the United States in New York and Washington.

The Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, has said that American Special Forces are busy



in ground operations in Southern Afghanistan, particularly going after Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces which did not surrender.

"They are killing Taliban that won't surrender and Al-Qaeda that are trying to move from one place to another", Mr. Rumsfeld remarked, while travelling from Washington to Chicago.

We'll smoke Osama bin Laden out, says U.S.

Battlefield advances outpace political plans

KABUL/WASHINGTON: U.S. special forces scoured Afghanistan for Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaida network on Thursday after his Taliban protectors fell back on their southern stronghold of Kandahar in disarray. With their U.S.-backed civil war foes in control of the capital Kabul and advancing on several fronts, the fundamentalist Muslim militia and their leader Mullah Mohammad Omar vowed to regroup and fight on. But reports from the Kandahar area and from U.S. officials spoke of anti-Taliban revolts there and fighting in the city.

Tribal leader Hamid Karzai, inside Afghanistan drumming up support for the return of ex-king Zahir Shah, told presspersons that the people of Kandahar had revolted against the Taliban.

U.S. special forces on the ground whisked eight foreign aid workers out of Afghanistan. They had been accused of spreading Christianity, an offence punishable by death.

The eight—four Germans, two Americans and two Australians—worked for the German-based Shelter Now International (SNI) charity. Northern Alliance forces had stumbled on them in a Ghazni jail.

From his Texas ranch, U.S. President George W. Bush hailed the military successes in Afghanistan, but said the U.S. would not rest until the objectives of the destruction of Al Qaida and the elimination of the Taliban were accomplished. American officials said Washington was prepared to send troops into the southern caves and mountains in a guerrilla campaign to ferret out Bin Laden.

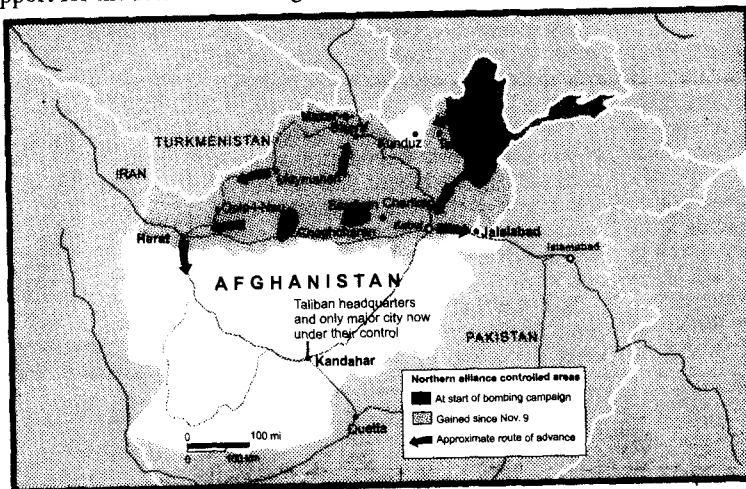
"We'll keep after him until we smoke him out and run him to ground," Vice President Dick Cheney told CNN. Rumours spread in the financial markets that

Bin Laden had been captured. But a Taliban spokesperson quoted by the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press denied this. "America can never arrest Osama bin Laden alive," Mullah Abdullah said.

With battlefield advances outpacing political plans, world leaders sought a multinational force and a transitional government for a country racked by war since 1979. The UN Security Council on Wednesday unanimously endorsed an Afghan political plan envisaging a two-year interim government bringing all ethnic groups under one umbrella with a multinational security force to protect them.

The Security Council called on the Northern

Alliance and other Afghan factions to take part in a UN-sponsored conference on the future of their country without preconditions. The U.S., on its part, said it was not prepared to endorse the call for a multinational security force to police the Afghan capital while the world body



works with Afghan groups to set up an interim government, a media report said quoting U.S. officials.

A senior State Department official and other sources told the paper that the U.S. had in fact "never been hot" on using UN forces to deal with the volatile, proud and warlike Afghans. The Bush administration, the official said, would prefer to see an all-Afghan security force replace the Taliban. Spokespersons for the Northern Alliance said that they had no desire to cling on to power but that they would run Kabul until a broad-based post-Taliban government was formed.

Indonesia said it was ready to join the peacekeeping mission, which could include troops from France, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Turkey, Bangladesh and Jordan. (Agencies)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

16 NOV 2001

Raids have killed Taliban, Al-Qaida leaders: Pentagon

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, Nov. 15. — US forces, increasing pressure on the Taliban, had killed some leaders of the militia and Al-Qaida network in targeted bombing raids on houses in Kabul and Kandahar this week, the Pentagon said today.

But the spokeswoman, Ms Victoria Clarke, couldn't say whether any senior leader had died. However, there was no proof that Osama bin Laden was present when the bombs struck.

She said US jets, acting on Intelligence inputs, bombed a house in Kabul on Tuesday and one in Kandahar today.

The jets bombed Taliban positions in Kunduz today, but an Alliance general said a planned offensive had been held back to let civilians flee.

An Alliance official said the Taliban's deputy interior minister, Haji Mullah Khaksar, has chosen to remain in Kabul after the militia lost the capital. "Khaksar is still here.

MEN TAKE TO THE SOCCER FIELD IN SHORTS

KABUL, Nov. 15. — A group of men in Kabul flung off their baggy trousers and tunics today for a game of soccer.

"In the past, soccer matches were interrupted and executions would be carried out for everyone to see," said Ahmed Marof in the middle of a practice match in the same Kabul football ground that the Taliban used for shooting criminals. Bullet casings could still be seen on the ground.

The Taliban allowed soccer on special occasions, but with bizarre restrictions. Players had to wear long-sleeved shirts and long trousers and applause was banned. — Reuters

He has willingly opted to stay in Kabul. We have not captured him. This was his own choice."

Fighting continued today around the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar. *Mujahideen* and tribal fighters have taken Kandahar's main airport from the militia which has been forced to retreat to the home base of Mullah Omar, said Mr Hamid Karzai, a pro-royalist former deputy foreign minister.

Rabbani's amnesty

Former Afghan President, Mr

Burhanuddin Rabbani, has announced a general amnesty. Mr Rabbani had called upon the Afghans to unite and expressed readiness to form a broad-based government under the UN's supervision.

The Alliance today denied reports that Mr Rabbani had returned to Kabul. He is still in Jabul Seraj, north of Kabul, said Mr Younis Qanuni, alliance's interior minister.

The Taliban ruled out joining the broad-based government and said such a set-up was impossible under Mr Rabbani.

THE STATESMAN

10 NOV 2001

US special forces rescue aid workers from Taliban

Washington/Islamabad,
November 15.

THE EIGHT foreign aid workers, who were detained in Afghanistan, were rescued by US special forces after a local mujahideen commander told the Americans of the workers' whereabouts, the Red Cross said here today.

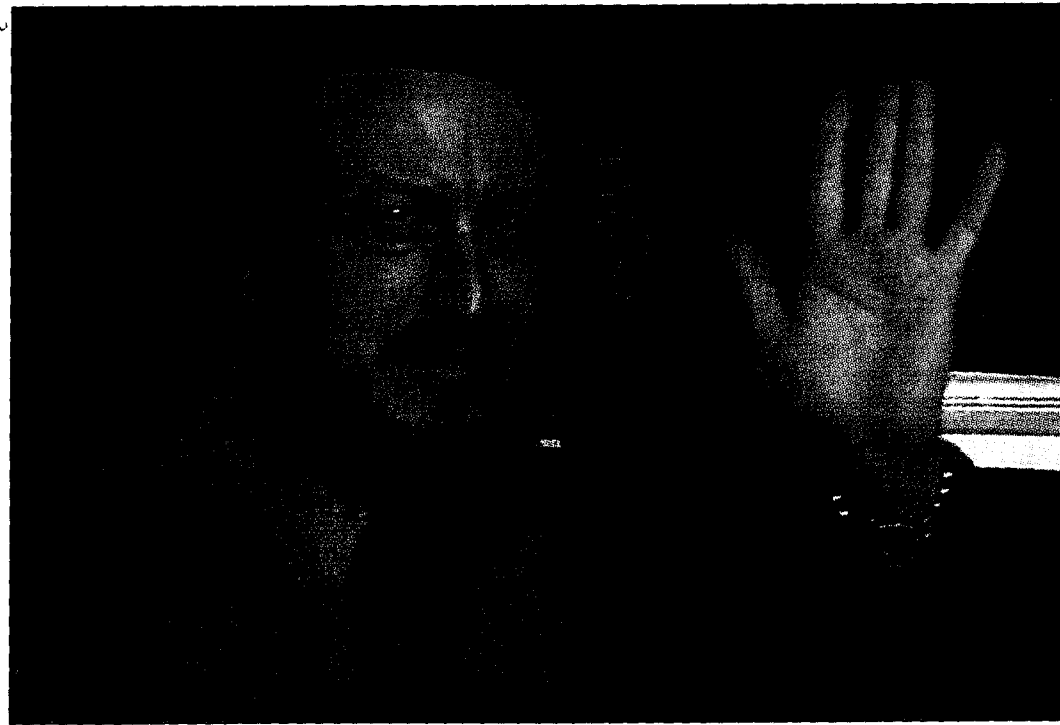
"We received a call from the local military commander in Ghazni, informing us that he had rescued the aid workers. He asked us if we could provide assistance in terms of arranging transportation or contact with their Governments," said International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) spokesman Bernard Barrett.

"Our role was to facilitate communication between the respective embassies in Islamabad and the people in Ghazni," Barret told CNN. "It was decided that the best, fastest and safest way would be to evacuate them by air and at that point we basically stepped back from the operation," he went on to say.

"It was like a miracle," Georg Taubmann, one of the eight, told reporters, on arrival in Pakistan.

The eight — four Germans, two Americans and two Australians — worked for the German-based Shelter Now International (SNI) charity. Taubmann, Afghanistan head of the aid group, told reporters outside the German embassy in Islamabad that the Taliban had taken the eight with them during their retreat from Kabul.

He said the group had been



A German aid worker, Georg Taubmann, waves from his car window as he leaves Chaklala military air base in Islamabad on Thursday.

kept in a prison in Ghazni, about 50 miles southwest of Kabul, when the area came under a heavy bombardment. The eight arrived at the Chaklala military air base in Islamabad after US helicopters swooped at night into a field in central Afghanistan and lifted them to freedom.

Ambassadors and officials of their countries then took charge of them. "US forces performed

the extraction well and the Americans can be proud of them," US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said in a statement. "The detainees seem to be in good physical condition," the Pentagon statement said. After the Taliban spirited the eight out of the capital, Kabul, as they retreated from the city late on Monday, there had been fears that the militia would use them

as human shields. Some reports said they had effectively been swapped for Taliban fighters besieged in the enclave of Kunduz, the militia's last redoubt in the north of the country.

"Today we've got incredibly good news. Our United States military rescued eight humanitarian workers who had been imprisoned in Afghanistan," President George W Bush said.

JOURNALISTS' BODIES ARRIVE IN FRANCE

THE BODIES of three western journalists killed in a Taliban attack on Northern Alliance forces in north-eastern Afghanistan arrived early on Thursday at Villacoublay air base near Versailles, local officials said.

A French Hercules C-130 military plane had taken off from the Tajik capital Dushanbe carrying the bodies of French radio reporter Pierre Billaud, 31, who worked for the RTL station, German Volker Handloik, 38, a freelance reporter who worked for the weekly Stern, and Johanne Sutton, 34, from the French radio station Radio France Internationale.

The three were killed in an ambush while travelling to the frontline in an opposition Northern Alliance tank. Relatives of Sutton and Billaud, who had flown on a special flight to Dushanbe, returned earlier and were at the air base Alo with Radio France head Jean-Marie Cavada when the military plane landed.

AFP, Versailles

He said he had been worried that the Taliban would take the aid workers to a building that could have been bombed by the US-led war in Afghanistan.

"I'm really proud of our armed forces. I'm also thankful for the folks in Afghanistan who helped with this rescue," Bush said at his Texas ranch.

Reuters/AFP

'Militia locked us in a steel container without blankets'

Islamabad, November 15

THEY ENDURED three months in captivity, a hasty evacuation from Kabul with fleeing Taliban forces, a freezing night locked in a metal container and a harrowing morning in jail under deafening artillery bombardment.

But the eight aid workers from Shelter Now International — German Georg Taubmann, Australians Peter Bunch and Diana Thomas, Americans Dayna Curry and Heather Mercer, and Germans Katrin Jelinek, Margrit Stebner and Silke Durkopf — reached safety on Thursday. The Westerners were held in Kabul through more than a month of US air strikes.

And just as their hopes were raised on Monday by the news that opposition forces were poised to take Kabul, they were flung into a fresh ordeal.

"Just before Kabul fell we were so excited to get out," said a smiling Taubmann. "And then the Taliban came in and took us away, took us in vehicles and wanted to take us to Kandahar, and we knew that if we ended up in Kandahar we would probably not survive there."

On arrival in the town of

ALL DETAINED AFGHANS REUNITED WITH FAMILIES

SIXTEEN AFGHAN staff detained by the Taliban along with eight foreigners from a German-based aid agency are all safe after breaking out of jail, one of those detained told AFP on Thursday.

Mohammad Nazir, 42, spent more than three months in jail accused of converting to Christianity and trying to spread a forbidden religion — charges he vehemently denied. He and his 15 colleagues broke out of the Poli Charkhi prison in central Kabul late on Monday as the Taliban militia abandoned Kabul. They spent the night sleeping in the desert or in mosques before being reunited with their families the next day.

Nazir, hailed the news that the eight foreign workers from Shelter Now International had been plucked to safety. AFP, Kabul

Ghazni, about 80 km southwest of Kabul, the eight workers were locked in a metal container through the chill Afghan night.

"In the middle of the night, they put us all into a steel con-

tainer. It was terribly cold and they wanted to lock the container and leave us in there till the morning," Taubmann said. "We had no blankets, nothing almost, because they said they will bring us to a nice different area, and we were freezing the whole night."

On Tuesday morning they were moved to a Ghazni jail just before opposition forces began a fierce artillery assault. "I think it was the worst place. We arrived at nine o'clock. Right when we came the bombardment started."

Around 10 a.m. there was an anti-Taliban uprising in the town and an hour later forces of the Northern Alliance flung open the prison doors, Taubmann said, adding that the aid workers initially feared it was the Taliban coming back to get them. "We were really scared," he said.

Released from prison, the aid workers received a rapturous reception from the people of Ghazni. "The people came out of the houses and they hugged us," Taubmann said.

"They didn't know there were foreigners in the prison... it was like a big celebration for all these people. The biggest day in my life."

Reuters

Bush empowers himself to order military trials

WASHINGTON: U.S. President George W. Bush has signed an order empowering himself to order military trials for suspected international terrorists and their collaborators, bypassing the American criminal justice system, its rules of evidence and constitutional guarantees.

Exercising his powers as commander-in-chief of the U.S. armed forces, Mr Bush signed the order on Tuesday citing an "extraordinary emergency".

The directive applies to non-U.S. citizens arrested in the U.S. or abroad. The President himself will decide which defendants will be tried by military tribunals.

The order gives Mr Bush the power to direct U.S. defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld to set up a military commission to try non-U.S. terror suspects. (PTI)

indiatimes.com POLL

THE TIMES OF INDIA

15 NOV 2001

Bush: No favours to Northern Alliance

SPI 15/11 Afghanistan US (10)

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, Nov. 14. — The Northern Alliance, despite its military gain against the Taliban, won't get any "preferential" treatment during the formation of a transitional government, Mr George W Bush has said.

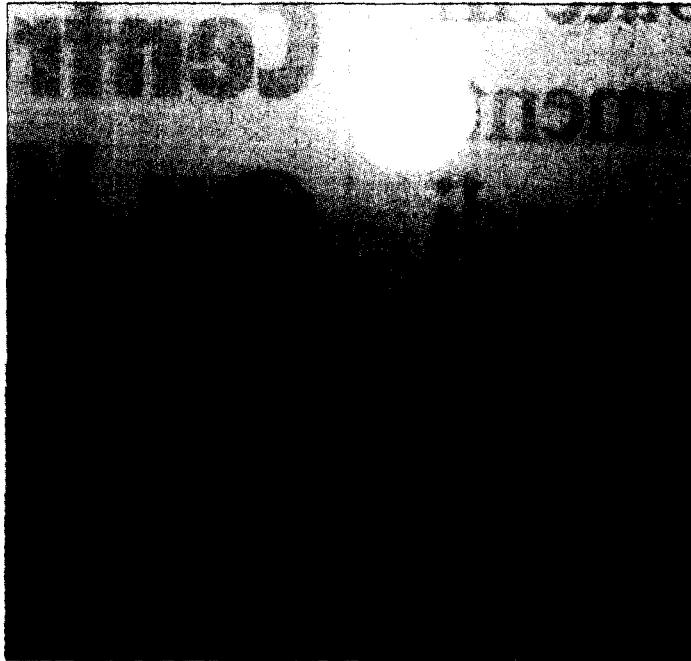
"There is no preferential place at the bargaining table. All people will be treated the same," the US President said yesterday in Washington, at a press conference also attended by Mr Vladimir Putin.

"That's what we're working on with our friends, the Russians, and that's the concept we're working on with the UN. And that's only fair. That's been the vision all along," Mr Bush said. The UN has delivered its first blueprint for a post-Taliban government in Afghanistan where the USA is continuing its military assault.

Yesterday, the UN secretary general's special envoy for Afghanistan, Mr Lakhdar Brahimi, presented a plan for a two-year transitional government to bring the country's ethnic groups under one umbrella and establish a multinational security force to guard them.

The UN security council has met today to discuss a draft resolution that will support Mr Brahimi's plan. The resolution will "encourage" countries to help "ensure the safety and security of areas of Afghanistan no longer under Taliban control."

The draft resolution, prepared by France and Britain, says "the UN should play a central role in supporting the efforts of the Afghan people to establish



A NEW DAWN: An officer signals an aircraft on USS Theodore Roosevelt in the Arabian Sea on Wednesday. — AP/PTI

urgently" a broad-based transitional government.

Mr Brahimi said he had suggested a multinational force to provide security to the transitional government because it would take a long time to raise an Afghan or UN force.

A key alliance leader, Mr Yunis Qanuni, today said a coalition of all ethnic parties must rule Afghanistan for two years, after which polls would be held, a report from Kabul adds. "We want this interim government to be broad-based, comprising all ethnic parties. Elections will be held after two years."

Musharraf: Apparently apprehensive of an anti-Pakistani

force coming to power in Afghanistan, General Pervez Musharraf today threw his weight around the former king, Zahir Shah, saying there was no alternative. "Zahir Shah may be an acceptable leader now. There is no other alternative visible..."

Rabbani: The deposed Afghan President, Mr Burhanuddin Rabbani, will return to Kabul today and announce himself the head of territories under the alliance's control, an envoy of the Afghan government-in-exile said. Mr Rabbani said Zahir Shah could return as an ordinary citizen and ruled out any role for the Taliban in the transitional government.

PM in favour of UN supervision

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Nov. 14. — The Prime Minister today said a new government in Afghanistan must be formed under the UN's supervision. Concrete suggestions on this had come after Kabul fell to the Northern Alliance yesterday, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee said.

He was speaking to journalists at his Race Course Road residence after receiving Deepawali greetings from Union ministers, MPs and other prominent people. Many suggestions, he said, had come on the formation of a post-Taliban government, but the one that spoke of UN's supervision was concrete.

He seemed happy with the initial success of the global coalition against terrorism, but stressed that the fight against terror would continue.

"Wherever terrorism rears its head in future, it would be liquidated. Terrorism and humanity can't go together."

He termed his visit to Russia, the USA and UK as "highly successful".

The impact of Kabul's fall was evident when, at a function to observe Children's Day, he said the children of Kabul were feeling happy after being liberated from the Taliban rule.

THE STATESMAN

15 NOV 2001

US, UN move fast for new set-up

S Rajagopalan & AFP
Washington, November 13

ANXIOUS TO avoid more ethnic clashes in the wake of Kabul's fall, the US along with the UN has stepped up diplomatic efforts to install a broad-based interim Government as soon as possible.

While the UN has said it would send its top official Francesco Vendrell to Kabul immediately, US Secretary of State Colin Powell has rushed his special envoy James F Dobbins to Rome to try and cobble together a broad anti-Taliban front. Dobbins will confer with exiled King Zahir Shah, projected as the titular head of the interim Government.

Vendrell is top political adviser to the UN special envoy for Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, who announced his mission to the Security Council.

In his first reaction after Kabul's fall, President Bush was "very pleased". But his administration was sceptical about the alliance's march into the capital. The White House, fearing renewed ethnic strife, had asked the rebel forces to keep off Kabul.

Washington seems to have been taken unawares by the speed with which the Taliban retreated from Kabul. A breakthrough it may be in the Afghan operation, but the State Department realises the diplomatic challenge of having to work out a quick alternative to forestall chaos.

UN special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi, who held consultations with foreign ministers in New York yesterday, plans to assemble representatives of Afghan factions and ethnic groups in the next few days to talk on an interim administration for Kabul:

US TROOPS LAND AT BAGRAM

A TEAM of US Special Forces dressed in civilian clothes and carrying M-16 assault rifles landed by helicopter at Bagram airbase north of the Afghan capital on Tuesday, a Reuters reporter said.

Four team members were shown around the airport by fighters of the Northern Alliance, who seized Kabul early in the day.

Reuters, Bagram airbase

Brahimi, UN sources said, would try to clinch a deal at the meeting expected to be held in Europe or in a neutral country regarded as close to Afghanistan. Here, State Department officials have said that the US would welcome "some kind of interim political arrangement from the

United Nations".

Hours before the first reports of the Opposition moving into positions vacated by the Taliban forces came out, Powell said it might soon be necessary to send an international "coalition of the willing" led by soldiers from Muslim nations, to secure the capital and prepare the ground for an interim Government.

"Speed, speed, speed," he said, urging foreign ministers of the six plus two group to help plan a possible deployment of peacekeeping forces in the Afghan capital. While Turkey has quickly responded to pleas to take the lead, US wants larger Muslim nations like Indonesia and Bangladesh to join in the effort.

Quick induction of peacekeeping forces under the auspices of the UN is regarded as vital to prevent a slide in the coming days.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

14 NOV 2001

Bush pleased with developments

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON, Nov. 13. — The US President is "very pleased" with the Northern Alliance's capture of Kabul but calls for its forces to shun violent retribution, the White House said today.

"The President is very pleased with the progress of the war," the White House spokesman, Mr Ari Fleischer, said. The alliance, however, must "establish a climate of respect for human life, conform to human rights norms, and be free of violence and retribution," he added.

The dilemma of how to prevent a bloodletting by the tribal fighters that will make it harder to govern Afghanistan

and to get Osama bin Laden now faces USA.

Mr Fleischer said: "This is a war and its purpose is to defeat the Al-Qaida and eliminate the Taliban who harbour terrorists."

But he added that Mr Bush believed it was "important for all parties to conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with human rights," and told reporters that message had been delivered to the alliance.

According to reports, the key US allies were shooting prisoners and looting. This revived fears of the bloody reprisals that marked Afghanistan in the early 1990s and were finally put to rest by the Taliban, much to the population's initial relief.

The key US worry is that the military victory came before

any political arrangement could be cobbled together among the country's tribes to govern Afghanistan, if and when its Taliban rulers are ousted, South Asia analysts said.

Russia: Russia today warned against installing "external forces" in a new Afghanistan government after the Northern Alliance's capture of Kabul.

The deputy foreign minister, Mr Alexander Losyukov, said the new administration must be based on a multi-ethnic government. He warned against attempts by "external forces to place their people in Kabul."

France: France called for urgency in setting up a broad-based government in Afghanistan. "A political solution for Afghanistan must be found im-

mediately", Mr Jacques Chirac told reporters in Abu Dhabi. "The transition authorities will have to find room for all ethnic groups except the Taliban", he said.

Britain: Britain urged the UN and the international community to "address the situation" in Kabul with the idea of forming a broad-based government.

"The UN and the rest of the international community needs to address the situation in Kabul, with the aim being formation of a broad-based interim government which reflects the diversity of the country", the foreign office said in a statement.

China: China hoped that the developments in Afghanistan would help resolve the issue peacefully.

THE STATESMAN

14 NOV 2001

Pressure on US: Alliance claims Herat and moves closer to Kabul

ALAN CULLISON & STEVE LEVINE
 JABAL US SARAJ, AFGHANISTAN

AS its sudden sweep through northern Afghanistan continued through Monday, the Afghan opposition appeared prepared for a concentrated offensive against the capital of Kabul despite objections from the US and Pakistan, a divergence of views that could create a diplomatic tangle Washington would find hard to undo.

(Agencies quoted the Northern Alliance as saying it had taken the western city of Herat, opening the way for a march on the Taliban's stronghold Kandahar, spokesman Ashraf Nadeem said on Monday.

"Our troops are knocking at the doors of Kabul. They are waiting for the orders of General Fahim (the Alliance defence minister) to enter Kabul", Nadeem told Reuters by satellite phone from Mazar-i-Sharif.

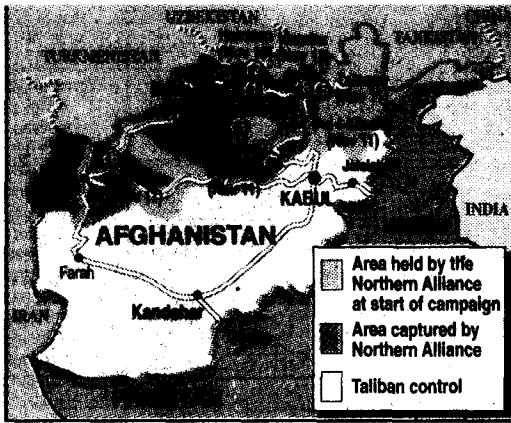
"Moments before, I spoke to (Mujahideen commander) Ismail Khan on the phone and he said his commanders had reported the whole of Herat

has fallen to forces of the United Front (Northern Alliance)

"Now our forces are heading towards Farah, Helmand and Kandahar," Nadeem said, referring to three provinces to the south and east of Herat.

Dozens of Taliban vehicles were reported leaving Kabul on Monday evening on the main highway leading to Kandahar, a Reuters reporter and witnesses said.)

Opposition Northern Alliance commanders said they are preparing a two-pronged



IE Map/B.K. SHARMA

offensive involving some 6,000 forces along the two main highways that cross the plain into the capital.

On Saturday, President Bush and Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf again

DUSHANBE: Four journalists accompanying Opposition forces were killed in an ambush by the Taliban militia in northeastern Afghanistan, Northern Alliance envoy in Tajikistan said. They said the victims were two French reporters and a German photographer; the fourth was possibly American. — AFP

urged the Northern Alliance not to enter Kabul. Both countries say the population of Kabul is hostile to the alliance, whose leaders ran Afghanistan from 1992 until 1996, when the Taliban seized power. "We will encourage our friends to head south...but not into the city of Kabul itself," Bush said during a meeting of the two leaders in New York.

The Northern Alliance is dominated by minority Tajiks, and also includes Uzbeks and Hazaras. Together, they make up an estimated 40 per cent of the Afghan population. The country's largest ethnic group is the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

from the front page

Alliance knocks at Kabul's doors, US watches warily

Pashtuns, who comprise 40 per cent of the population and dominate the Afghan south and east and also the Taliban itself.

Pakistan has a large Pashtun population and has long tried to influence Afghanistan through favored Afghan Pashtun leaders.

Asked about the remarks by Bush and Musharraf at a news conference Sunday, Northern Alliance Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah said the opposition hadn't said it intended to go into Kabul. But he then made it sound like the alliance may do just that. He made a robust defense of the Northern Alliance's capacity for ruling Kabul justly, and called talk of hostility in Kabul a "perception of the past" grounded in Pakistani policy.

"Please don't allow Pakistan to guide the foreign policy of the U.S. or other Western countries," Abdullah said.

For now, many alliance fighters say they think they have the support of the U.S. military, but

will proceed with their assault without it. Any attack on Kabul is expected to be led mostly by ethnic Tajik troops under Tajik Gen. Mohammad Fahim.

One alternative to a military penetration of Kabul being discussed by the opposition is entering the city not with troops but with 3,000 to 4,000 policemen.

In Kabul itself, there is evidence of the stress of the relentless U.S. pressure. In a video that an Afghan journalist said was taken in Kabul last Monday with a hidden camera, Taliban men use sticks to beat some two dozen Afghan women covered in head-to-toe burkas who were begging at the Afghan Red Crescent compound.

The video, viewed by *The Wall Street Journal*, shows one woman clinging to a window grating and another kneeling on the ground, as Taliban men pull them away and out of the compound amid much shouting.

— *The Wall Street Journal*

NDIAN EXPRESS

MANY TIGHT ROPES!

vs (W) 51-6 12/11
 American flip-flops can damn Musharraf

ONLY the other day, President George W Bush told visiting President Vladimir Putin that he agreed that the Taliban could not possibly be part of any new government in Kabul. Now he joins Pervez Musharraf in telling a news conference in Washington that the Northern Alliance may move south of Kabul but may not enter it. In a few days, it may be that Bush will give further traffic directions! As one would expect the news was flashed all over Pakistan and was intended to keep domestic opposition to Musharraf under control. The ostensible reason given is to avoid civilian casualties — how laudable, how humanitarian, how utterly hypocritical! On the one hand he urges his travelling salesman, Tony Blair to explain that civilian casualties are inevitable in an operation of this kind, on the other he uses this argument to appease Musharraf. vs (W)

The trouble with this kind of America-centric diplomacy is that it is likely to land friend Musharaaf in serious trouble when he returns home, if the Northern Alliance carry out their threat to ignore the unsolicited advice they have been given. American massive bombing raids and cluster bombs have been crucial in making possible the advances of the Northern alliance, but Bush should also remember that Pakistani intelligence given was doctored by ISI-inspired officers and, among other things, has landed American commando raids in deep trouble and cost the life of Abdul Haq led into a Taliban trap by Pakistani officers in league with the their drug-trafficking friends. In other words his Pakistani ally is less than reliable.

Perhaps there is a simple explanation in a rather complicated American manoeuvre. They can hardly change horses midstream and they need Pakistani bases, specially after India has refused them. Therefore play along with guest Musharraf; publicly agree with him that the Northern Alliance should not advance on Kabul which will get a good press at home in Islamabad; there will be time later to throw up his hands with a shrug of his shoulders if Northern Alliance do not respect him wishes. He should never forget however that other than the Northern Alliance there are no troops anywhere which can cope with the Taliban and if his wants Osama and Omar and the rest of the terrorists, he has no choice but to give the Alliance their head. Besides now that the supply lines from Uzbekistan are open after the fall of Mazar-e-Sharif, Russia can and is supplying tanks and ammunition more easily and so, we imagine, is India.

Bush has sought to clinch the issue in a well-trying manner by giving his Pakistani visitor another billion dollars. It is not surprising that there is no word of this in Pakistan's intimidated press. When this leaks out Musharraf will have some explaining to do especially if Northern Alliance march on Kabul. Bush is walking too many tight ropes at the same time; when some ropes criss-cross, this can spell real trouble, not so much for the United States but for their client state. There was agreement with Vajpayee that terrorism was not selective, Bush even asked the United Nations to do more than offer lip service, but there was no mention of terrorism in Kashmir, which he must have known concerned India very deeply.

What will it take for Bush to get back on the rails? If the Taliban regroup and retake Mazar-e-Sharif? We must also account for Bush's inexperience and the general need to please visitors. He gets too many. So far he has seen the Musharraf demand for a pause in the bombing in Afghanistan on the excuse of Ramzan, as a transparent ploy. The billion dollars has kept Musharaaf quiet. Bush can't do too much damage if he holds on to this position.

THE STATESMAN

12 NOV 2001

US strikes worse than Sept attacks: Chomsky

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHENNAI, Nov. 11. — The war on Afghanistan is a greater crime against humanity than the 11 September attacks, Prof. Noam Chomsky has said. He was speaking on "September 11 and its aftermath: Where is the world heading?" here yesterday.

"The clearest voice of dissent ever in American history" came out strongly against the USA, saying its war against Afghanistan was "short-sighted".

Lives of about seven-and-a-half billion Afghans are at risk because of the war. Before the bombing began, the United Nations Organisation had warned that more than seven million people would face starvation because of the military action.

The crimes of 11 September, Prof. Chomsky said, were a turning point in history, "not because of the state, but because of the choice of the target."

The USA came under attack for the first time. "For the first time, the guns have been turned on the USA. This is a dramatic change."

Calling the USA a terrorist state, he listed out its various "acts of aggression" and "sponsored terrorism" in Nicaragua, Central America, South Africa, West and South-east Asia. After all these, the United States of America's defence of its war on the Afghans seemed immoral, he said.

"It's a serious error to describe terrorism as a weapon of the weak. There's a great deal more to say about terrorism — terrorism of the weak

12/11
against the powerful and the unmentionable but far more extreme terrorism of the powerful against the weak. That both pose severe threats is hardly in doubt."

The most important development, he said, was the formulation of policies that pose the greatest immediate threat to survival — namely, commanding the means of mass destruction. "For the powerful, the nuclear weapons are the choice."

US strategists have warned that any arms deployment by Washington will have a ripple effect on China, India, Pakistan and the other countries building up and strengthening their nuclear resources.

"The Chinese resumption of nuclear tests is being quietly endorsed," Prof Noam Chomsky remarked.

On the day this was announced, the American press had reported that the administration would impose sanctions on China for allowing the transfer to Pakistan of missile parts and technologies that are essentially for weapons capable of carrying nuclear war-heads. "You can figure out what all that means without further comment from me."

On the Ballistic Missile Defence, he quoted from various sources, saying the USA wanted to dominate the globe.

He exhorted human rights groups to fight against injustice, saying the future of the "endangered (thinking) species depends on how popular forces, such as those taking up the cause of human rights and environmental issues, evolved over a period of time."

THE STATESMAN

Cracks widen in US-Britain war alliance

Washington November 9 ^{HR-9} ^{10/4}

BRITISH MINISTERS privately expressed frustration yesterday with the US prosecution of the war against terrorism, the first sign of serious differences between London and Washington since the attacks on September 11.

Tony Blair saw his quick trip to Washington this week as an opportunity to cement Britain's position as the No 1 ally of the US, but unease is growing in Whitehall. There is concern on both the military and diplomatic fronts over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the bombing strategy; perceived lack of US consultation with its allies; and insufficient US focus on the humanitarian crisis.

The British Government is intent on opposing the expansion of the war beyond Afghanistan and is horrified at elements within the Pentagon pushing for an all-out assault on Iraq.

The handling of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the main source of dispute, with Downing Street and the Foreign Office worried that dithering in Washington in its handling of the peace process risks alienating Arab opinion, which is seen as crucial in the coalition against terrorism.

Blair, who experienced the extent of Arab anger at first hand last week during a trip to the West Asia, pressed President Bush in Washington on Wednesday to apply pressure on Israel to return to peace talks.

But Blair suffered a rebuff yes-

terday when it emerged that Colin Powell would not be making a long-heralded speech at the UN this weekend in support of the creation of a Palestinian State. Even on Wednesday, as Blair was on his way to Washington, Downing Street was briefing that Powell was poised to take a firm line with Israel.

One British minister said the content of Powell's speech was not in doubt, just the timing. The minister said the Israeli Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, had acted abominably in recent weeks.

Bush is to make a speech to the General Assembly tomorrow, but Foreign Office sources said he was unlikely to use the opportunity to make the historic statement.

There is also rising anxiety within Whitehall that after Afghanistan the Bush administration may turn its sights on Iraq. Bush said on Wednesday that the bombing of Afghanistan was just the start of the war on terrorism.

One British minister said that bombing Iraq would be catastrophic because women and children would be killed and the consequences for the US and Britain in the Arab world would be unimaginably dangerous.

He warned that US and British embassies in the Arab world would have to close and British civilians would have to be advised to leave the area. He feared that moderate Arab regimes would be swept away.

The sense of frustration also applies to defence and military circles. British defence officials

INDUSTRIAL

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\$43 million terror funds frozen: USA

AGENCE FRANC-PRESSE

PARIS, Nov. 8. — The push to freeze the financing of Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaida network was stepped up today, as investigators around the world responded to a new US blacklist of suspect firms.

The US treasury secretary, Mr Paul O'Neill said that governments worldwide have now frozen \$43 million belonging to the "financiers of terror".

The US treasury yesterday added the names to 88 organisations already listed as supporters of the Al-Qaida network and federal agents raided the US offices of two international business groups.

Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Gordon Brown, said that Britain had frozen the assets in the 62 groups earlier in the week, trapping £seven million (\$10.2 million dollars) of assets. "The £ seven million of terrorist assets frozen last week is evidence that the work we are urgently pursuing to stop the financing of terrorism is hitting terrorists where it hurts," he said.

BUSH BLAIR FORECAST VICTORY

WASHINGTON, Nov. 8. — The US President and the visiting British Prime Minister took mounting criticism of US-led raids on Afghanistan head on and forecast victory in the war on terrorism.

"We both recognise that we wage a fight to save civilisation and not only must we prevail (but) will prevail," Mr George W Bush told reporters during a joint appearance in White House yesterday.

"The determination to see that justice is done is every bit as strong today as it was on 11 September," Mr Tony Blair, the US President's closest ally in the campaign, said. — AFP

UAE's Central Bank ordered all banks, finance and insurance companies to immediately freeze all funds linked to the 62 new suspect groups, a statement carried by the official WAM agency said.

Swiss authorities said they had frozen the accounts of one of the two groups, the Nada Management Organisation, an international finance group which used to trade as Al-Taqwa (Fear of God).

In Romania, authorities were reportedly probing a \$ 180 million transfer from an Egyptian-Romanian bank into overseas accounts used by "terror groups".

Bin Laden is thought to head a criminal network controlling millions — perhaps billions — of dollars in secret accounts and front businesses supporting his anti-US campaign.

But the former head of the Saudi secret service, who worked with Bin Laden when the Arab kingdom was supporting his fight against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, said his personal wealth was less than is widely believed. "Westerners have estimated it at between \$one to five billion. But we estimate it to be between \$40 and 50 million at the most," Prince Turki al-Faisal said.

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Don't target Iraq, Blair tells Bush

LONDON, NOV. 8. The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, has appealed to the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, not to widen the bombing campaign to include Iraq in response to demands from U.S. hardliners such as the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, a report said today. Britain fears such action would jeopardise the international coalition formed after September 11.

The Independent quoted a senior British Minister as saying: "There are people in Washington

who want to use this to finish off (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein. We don't think it's a good idea."

Mr. Blair also urged Mr. Bush to throw his weight behind a new push for peace in West Asia, British newspapers reported today. The move was seen as essential to retain moderate Muslim support in the war against Afghanistan's Taliban rulers and Osama bin Laden, according to reports in *The Independent* and *The Guardian*, both left-of-centre papers.

Mr. Blair made a lightning visit

to Washington yesterday to brief Mr. Bush on his efforts to maintain support within the international coalition waging war on

terrorism. In Washington, at a joint appearance on Wednesday with Mr. Blair, Mr. Bush took mounting criticism of U.S.-led raids on Afghanistan head on and sunnily forecast victory in the war on terrorism. "We both recognise that we wage a fight to save civilisation and that we must prevail, and not only must prevail (but) will prevail." — Reuters, AFP

THE HINDU

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We shall deal with Iraq next, says Powell

'US LOSING PROPAGANDA WAR'

THE US may be making progress in its military campaign against terrorism but it is losing the war of words, Russian President Vladimir Putin told ABC television.

"I would say that the US is losing not in the military but in the information," he said.

"It seems to me that on the information field, terrorists are acting more aggressively and more offensively and they're presenting opposition in terms of emotions," Putin said.

The US has stepped up public diplomacy efforts since opening air and missile strikes on Taliban for refusing to hand over Osama bin Laden.

AFP, Washington

Washington, November 8

SECRETARY OF State Colin Powell has said the United States will turn its attention to Iraq and its weapons programmes once it has dealt with the al Qaida organisation and the Taliban through its military campaign in Afghanistan.

"With respect to our activities in Afghanistan, that is our first priority. We must defeat al Qaida, we must end Osama bin Laden's terrorist threat to the world and deal with the Taliban regime who has given them haven," Powell said.

"After that ... we will turn our attention to terrorism throughout the world, and nations such as Iraq, which have tried to pursue weapons of mass destruction, should not think that we ...

will not turn our attention to them," he told reporters after talks with a Kuwaiti minister.

The United States began bombing Afghanistan a month ago in an attempt to stop the Taliban rulers protecting bin Laden and al Qaida, which Washington accuses of planning the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington that killed about 4,800 people.

The bombing is part of a war against terrorism the United States says will eventually target all terrorist organisations of "global reach" and their supporters.

Powell, standing alongside Deputy Prime Minister Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah of Kuwait, was answering a question about reports Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz had again

asserted an Iraqi claim to neighbouring Kuwait.

The Iraqi invasion and brief annexation of Kuwait in 1990 and 1991 led to the Gulf War in which the United States and its allies drove out Iraqi forces and restored the Sabah family to power in Kuwait.

"Tareq Aziz has been making these rather ridiculous and threatening statements for many years, so I take them all with a grain of salt," Powell said.

Aziz said in an interview last month that he expected the United States and Britain to launch attacks on Iraq, using the war against terrorism as an excuse to try to oust President Saddam Hussein.

Babel, the newspaper run by Saddam's son Uday, said a few days later that the attack on Iraq

could begin after the Western allies suspend operations against the al Qaida organisation and the Taliban in Afghanistan because of winter.

The State Department has Iraq on its list of seven "state sponsors of terrorism," although its annual report says Baghdad has not attempted an attack on Western interests since an alleged plot to assassinate former US President George Bush during his visit to Kuwait in 1993.

Since the September 11 attacks, some have lobbied for attacks on Iraq to make up for the past three years in which UN weapons inspectors have not been allowed to visit the country.

Under UN resolutions passed after the Gulf War of 1991, the UN inspectors were meant to dis-

mantle Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programmes and make sure the government did not try to revive them.

The UN Security Council has a chance to review UN sanctions and weapons inspections when the current UN-run oil-for-food programme expires at the end of the month.

A State Department official said on Tuesday that he expected the United States to back a six-month extension of the current system, without changes.

Earlier in the year, Powell tried to ease the restrictions on Iraqi imports of civilian goods while tightening the controls over military-related imports. Iraq and Russia opposed the proposals.

Reuters

The first month of the war

By T. Sreedhar

The first month of the U.S.-led 'Operation Enduring Freedom' has failed to change the status quo on the ground in Afghanistan.

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ANY ASSESSMENT of the U.S.-led grand alliance's month-long military operations in Afghanistan must take cognisance of three factors. The Taliban-Al-Qaeda combine's planning was not just a flash, but carefully worked out to establish a pan-Islamic empire. From the facts available now, the plan appears to have been conceived sometime in the mid-1990s, after the emergence of independent states in Central Asia. Until September 11, the international strategic community visualised only Iran, Pakistan and China as hunting for goodies from the chemical, biological and nuclear weapons sites in the former Soviet Republics. That in the mid-1990s Osama bin Laden's construction companies spread their network in Central Asia is a little known fact. Though Osama is not directly associated with them, many of his employees worked in the construction companies. Whether they laid their hands on the former Soviet Union's weapons technology is not established fully as yet. But many in Central Asia suspect that there are linkages. The linkages and the extent to which Osama succeeded in laying his hands on these weapons are still being probed.

Pakistan is a sharply divided country vis-a-vis support to the Taliban. Though the Indian strategic community highlighted this fact time and again for the last one decade, the U.S. strategic community was unwilling to accept it. It believed the Pakistani armed forces were professional outfits and in full control of the situation. This myth has been exposed more than adequately during the present operations. Even the sealing of the Pakistan-Afghan border proved superficial and people moved through freely. The Pakistani rulers expressed their helplessness in controlling those among their people who wanted to fight with the Taliban against the U.S. In fact, supplies of essential items to the Taliban continue to flow freely from Pakistan. The idea of choking the Taliban by denying it supplies banned by the U.S. through U.N. sanctions has failed to work.

The Taliban has proved to be a monolithic group. Everyone underestimated

Mullah Omar's and Osama bin Laden's influence on the militia. They not only have committed cadres but have also successfully projected that they represent the Pashtuns. Once again, the Taliban-Al-Qaeda combine has demonstrated its ruthlessness by executing those trying to stir up Pashtun dissidence. It has proved itself much better organised than its adversaries anticipated. There have hardly been any defections from the Taliban in spite of all the incentives offered by the U.S.-led alliance.

In this peculiar backdrop, the initial selective target-bombing of Afghanistan by the U.S. proved to be ineffective. Pakistan, by insisting that moderate elements of the Taliban must be included in any new Government and that the Northern Alliance should not be given a free hand, has managed to stall the progress of the campaign. This has prevented the Northern Alliance from capturing important towns such as Mazar-e-Sharif or Kabul.

In the third and fourth weeks of the military campaign, target-bombing was replaced by carpet-bombing of Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. This seems to have resulted in affecting the Taliban's capabilities to a limited extent. The damage to the civilian targets such as power houses seems to have disrupted the basic amenities for the population.

In terms of the Taliban's response to the U.S. air strikes, it is becoming increasingly clear that it has succeeded in keeping its cadres intact, at least so far. Simultaneously, the Taliban-Al-Qaeda has successfully whipped up feelings in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan and in parts of Indonesia and Malaysia that the campaign is against their faith. An issue of concern is what will happen when the bombing goes on into the holy month of Ramzan, starting around the end of next week.

The Taliban's greatest success seems to

have been in terms of territorial occupation. The anti-Taliban forces do not hold much more territory than they did at the beginning of the military operations on October 7. The first month of the U.S.-led "Operation Enduring Freedom" has failed to change the *status quo* on the ground.

Here three factors seem to have played a significant role in the Taliban's favour. Of the three fronts from which Afghanistan can be attacked, the U.S.-led coalition can do so from two, from the north — Uzbekistan and Tajikistan — and the South, Pakistan. In the North, the Northern Alliance, due to the absence of supply routes, was ill-equipped to launch any effective ground operations along with the U.S. air strikes. Even intelligence about the Taliban's position is not up to the mark. In the south, the air strikes proved ineffective because of strong fortification by the Taliban. By October 14-15, the Taliban publicly declared it would respond only when the land battles started. Though there were reports of U.S. Special Forces entering Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, this appeared to be more for gathering intelligence than for, say, capturing Osama. On the Western front, the U.S. differences with Iran have not allowed it to launch any military action.

Another factor in the Taliban's favour is that it is fighting a war on its own territory. The U.S., on the other hand, is fighting on alien soil. Like at the time of Operation Desert Storm against Iraq in 1991, the neighbouring countries' support to the U.S. operations is mixed. The local population in the neighbouring countries look upon the war as a U.S. attack against their fellow faithful. Therefore, the results of the month-long U.S. military campaign are not decisive.

Lastly, the Taliban-Al-Qaeda combine demonstrated its capabilities by inflicting damage on September 11. It was seen by

the whole world through the electronic media. The U.S. after a month-long campaign, has not achieved similar results against the Taliban. Afghanistan is a nation already ravaged by a 20-year war and there are no targets like the World Trade Center to destroy for U.S. air power. Even the U.S. objective of capturing Osama 'dead or alive' is nowhere near being achieved.

In these circumstances, the U.S. objective in the coming days will be to capture an important town such as Mazar-e-Sharif or Kabul before winter sets in to satisfy domestic opinion. The carpet-bombing around Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif clearly indicates that the U.S. wants to achieve this as fast as it can. Can it do it? The U.S. dependence on Britain, which never had any spectacular success in Afghanistan during its rule of the Indian subcontinent, and Pakistan, author of the present problem, makes many conclude that it is unlikely that America will get what it wants soon.

In these circumstances, the war is likely to prolong, probably into spring next year. In such a situation, will the ruling elite in the Islamic world continue to support the U.S.-led war on the Taliban-Al-Qaeda combine? Most of the regimes in the Islamic world are fragile, lacking legitimacy. The Taliban-Al-Qaeda's strategy of portraying the ongoing conflict as a war against Islam is bound to whip up emotions in the entire Islamic world. That is bound to complicate matters for the U.S. in sustaining its military operations. Already, the protests in Pakistan against Gen. Pervez Musharraf's policy of collaborating with the U.S. is making many question how long the Pakistan-U.S. relationship will continue. Similarly, if the volunteers from other Islamic countries start coming into Taliban-controlled Afghanistan in response to a likely appeal from Osama, matters can get further complicated.

(The writer is Senior Research Associate, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi. The opinions expressed here are his personal views.)

THE HINDU

SPECIAL AGENTS PROBING OSAMA'S RELATIVES TOLD TO BACK OFF: BBC

Bush had links with Laden family

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON, Nov. 7.— Special agents in the USA probing relatives of Saudi-born terror suspect Osama bin Laden before 11 September were told to back off soon after Mr George W Bush became President, the BBC has reported.

The BBC's Newsnight current affairs programme yesterday said that Mr Bush at one point had a number of connections with Saudi Arabia's prominent Bin Laden family.

It added there was a suspicion that the US strategic interest in Saudi Arabia, which has the world's biggest oil reserve, blunted its inquiries into individuals with suspected terrorist connections — so long as the US was safe.

Newsnight reported it had seen secret documents from FBI probe into the 11 September terror attacks, which showed that despite the reputation of Osama bin Laden as the black sheep of the family, at least two other US-based rela-



Mr George W Bush



Osama bin Laden

tives are suspected of links with a possible terrorist organisation.

The programme said it had obtained evidence that the FBI was on the trail of Bin Laden family members living in the USA before, as well as after, the terrorist attacks.

Newsnight said Mr Bush made his first million 20 years

ago with an oil company partly funded by the chief US representative of Salem bin Laden, Osama's brother.

Mr Bush also received fees as director of a subsidiary of Carlyle Corporation, a little-known private company which in just a few years since its founding has become one of America's biggest defence contractors,

and his father, Mr George Bush senior, is also a paid advisor, the programme said.

The connection became embarrassing when it was revealed that the Bin Ladens held a stake in Carlyle, sold just after 11 September, it added. Newsnight said it had been told by a highly-placed source in a US Intelligence agency that there had always been "constraints" on investigating Saudis, but under President Mr George W Bush it had become much worse.

After the elections, the Intelligence agencies were told to "back off" from investigating the Bin Laden family, and that angered field agents, the programme added.

The policy was reversed after 11 September, it reported.

The former head of the American visa bureau in Jeddah from 1987 to 1989, Michael Springman, told Newsnight: "In Saudi Arabia I was repeatedly ordered by high-level State Department officials to issue visas to unqualified applicants.

THE STATESMAN

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Terror a threat to freedom: Bush

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, Nov. 6. — The US President today planned to warn leaders of Eastern European nations, once under the yoke of Soviet domination, that "freedom is threatened once again" by terrorism.

Mr George W Bush will appear live in a Warsaw videoconference with Presidents and other officials from Poland and 16 other states for a debate on boosting security in Europe's less stable regions after the 11 September attacks.

"For more than 50 years the people of your region suffered under repressive ideologies that tried to trample human dignity. Today, our freedom is threatened once again," Mr Bush planned to say, according to aides. "Like the fascists and totalitarians before them, these terrorists try to impose their radical views through threats and violence," he will say.

Mr Bush is expected to thank his European allies for backing the anti-terror drive and to encourage trans-Atlantic partners to continue backing the US-led war in Afghanistan.



A pair of navy F-14 Tomcats fly past a spinning radar dish of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt stationed somewhere in the Arabian Sea as they prepare to land on Tuesday. — AP/PTI

"We are making good progress in a just cause. Our efforts are directed at terrorists and military targets because unlike our enemies, we value human life," the US President will say in his Warsaw speech.

The Presidents or other officials from Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Re-

public, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine and Yugoslavia will also participate in the videoconference.

East Europeans are keen to project their loyalties to Washington. They hope that their resolution will win support for

further Nato expansion in the region and backing for their European Union membership drive.

Mr Bush's appearance is part of a bid this week to bolster allied support for the US war on terrorism. He is to meet the French President, Mr Jacques Chirac, on Tuesday and on

Wednesday will meet Mr Tony Blair.

On Thursday, Mr Bush will reach out to Americans, rattled by government warnings that more attacks could be carried out on US soil. The White House spokesman, Mr Ari Fleischer, said the President will address the nation on "signs of progress" in administration efforts to secure America from anthrax and other threats. He will also meet leaders from Kuwait and Yemen later this week.

On Saturday, he will visit New York to give a speech to the UN General Assembly and meet General Pervez Musharraf, who has been criticised in Pakistan for supporting the USA actions in Afghanistan.

US disclaimer: The man who died in Taliban custody was not an American citizen, the US embassy in Islamabad said today, adds PTI from Islamabad. "The body is not that of an American. We have made that determination," an embassy spokesman said a day after the Taliban reported the death of an "American" in a hospital in Kandahar.

Indonesia to freeze Osama accounts

ANTARA

JAKARTA, Nov. 6. — The Indonesian Attorney General's Office has asked the country's central bank to freeze 28 bank accounts believed to be owned by Osama bin Laden's business companies, an AGO spokesman said.

"We made the request in a letter on 24 October as a followup to a request by the ministry of foreign affairs which, in turn, received the information from the United Nations," the Attorney General's Office's information service chief said yesterday.

He declined to give more details about the 28 bank accounts, saying only that the UN's request for the freezing of Osama's assets had not been addressed to Indonesia alone but to all United Nations member-countries.

Bin Laden's terror will outlast him, says Straw

PHILIP WEBSTER & RICHARD BEESTON
THE TIMES, LONDON

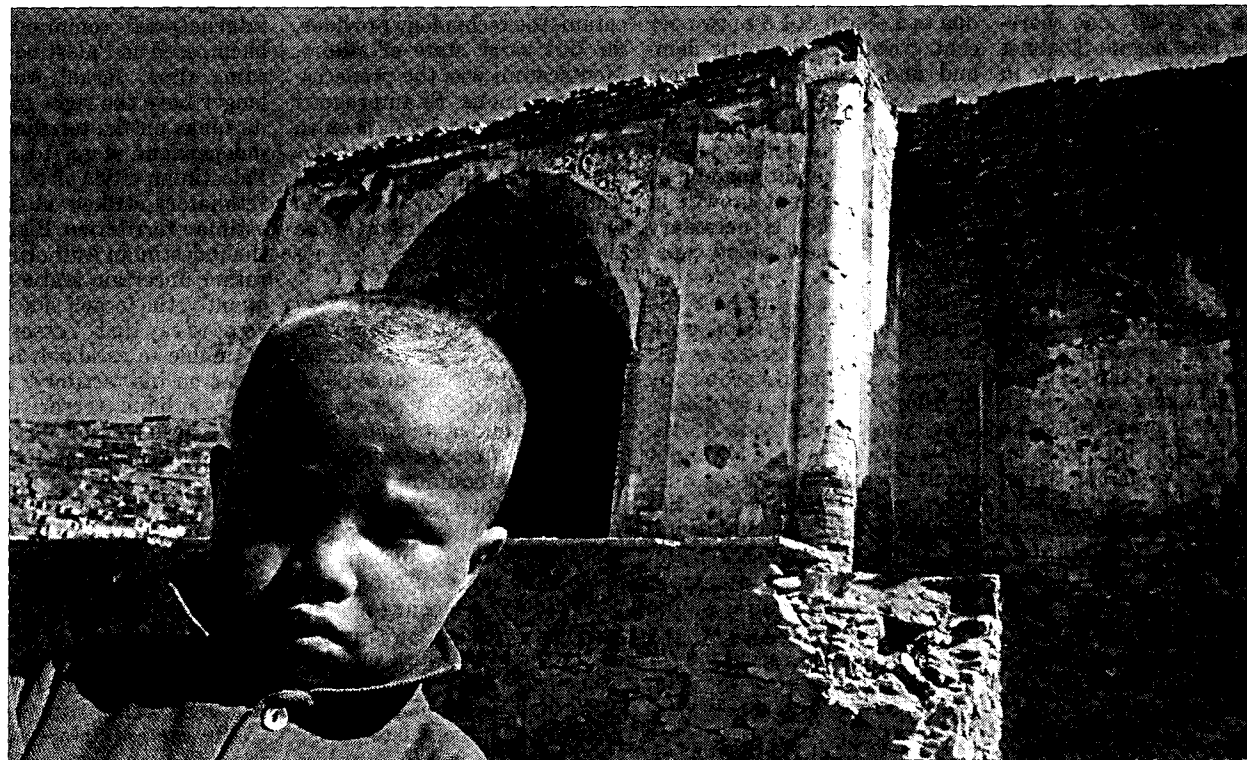
LONDON, Nov. 6. — Mr Jack Straw, the foreign secretary, today warned that terrorist atrocities could be carried out in the name of Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaida even after he is captured or killed.

In remarks believed to reflect fears in Western Intelligence organisations that Bin Laden will have given orders for further attacks in the event of his being captured or killed in Afghanistan, Mr Straw said he has always worked on the basis that terrorist cells operating under Al-Qaida's umbrella would continue for a period after the destruction of the network in Afghanistan.

The foreign secretary has thus opened up a new front against Bin Laden in an interview with The Times, declaring that Bin Laden's only religion is terrorism, and not Islam. It marks the start of an offensive to attempt to demolish Bin Laden's claim that he is fighting a holy war.

In a clear recognition that Western propaganda efforts have not done enough to target Bin Laden's personality, Mr Straw calls him psychotic and paranoid, and says the way the network is so focused on him is "similar to the Nazi phenomenon".

Mr Straw's interview comes as another



Ahmed Ahmedzai (3), who helps his father tend the ruined tomb and gardens of Mughal emperor Babur on the southern edge of Kabul. — AP/PTI

frantic week of diplomatic activity gets under way. General Pervez Musharraf, the Pakistani President, will

make an unexpected visit to Britain on Thursday, a sign that discussions on the future shape of a successor regime

to the Taliban are reaching a crucial stage. He will see Mr Tony Blair hours after

the Prime Minister returns from a short visit to Washington for talks with President George W Bush on the war and the West Asia peace process. King Abdullah of Jordan will also be in London on Thursday.

Mr Straw will next weekend address the United Nations General Assembly at a meeting postponed from late September because of the attacks on America. Saying that the UN's time has now come, he will urge it to play a strengthened role in establishing the political future of Afghanistan, a reconstruction programme for the country, and the counter-terrorism programme.

Declaring that Bin Laden "will get caught in the end", Mr Straw admits that there were danger signs two or three weeks ago that the West was losing the propaganda battle. That had changed because of improvements in the West's performance and mistakes by Bin Laden, notably the weekend video in which he claimed that the UN was against Muslims, the foreign secretary says.

The video, Mr Straw says, shows a "degree of hatred of humankind that is impossible to avoid". It shows the mindset of someone "whose theology is terror". He adds: Bin Laden's "religion is not Islam. His religion is terrorism. It is the religion of terrorism with which we are in conflict."

European allies reaffirm support to USA

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON, Nov. 5. — Key European leaders reaffirmed their support for the US-led war on terrorism and also called for a resolution to the West Asia crisis at a hastily planned informal summit here late yesterday.

Eight national leaders and the European Union's foreign policy supremo had two hours of talks over dinner in Downing Street hosted by the British Prime Minister, Mr Tony Blair. They discussed the ongoing military campaign against the Taliban, the deteriorating humanitarian situation there and diplomatic efforts to shore up the anti-terror coalition.

Downing Street said the talks had been "very useful" and there had been "absolute solidarity" on the combined strategy pursued by the US-led coalition, as well as on the need to revive the West Asia peace process.

The meeting fuelled speculation in British newspapers that ground forces could soon be deployed, especially after Mr

Blair's office said he wanted to meet the "five major military contributors" to the coalition.

After the summit, the French President, Mr Jacques Chirac, highlighted the importance of finding a lasting political solution for Afghanistan and easing the "enormously critical" humanitarian situation.

"We reaffirmed our solidarity with the Americans while taking into account that the essential military action is not the only way to fight international terrorism."

On West Asia, Mr Chirac said they were unanimous on the need for Israeli and Palestinian leaders to return to the negotiating table immediately and on the creation of a Palestinian state "as quickly as possible".

The Dutch Prime Minister, Mr Wim Kok, said the attacks could continue even during the month of Ramzan.

He said: "No one wishes to have military action longer than necessary, but it depends on future developments and bombings will continue during Ram-

'WE ARE SETTING IN FOR LONG HAUL'

WASHINGTON, Nov. 5. — The US-led war on terrorism would take "a long time" to complete, the chairman of the Pentagon's joint chiefs of staff, General Richard Myers, has warned.

Talking to NBC television, Gen. Myers, said: "We know this conflict is going to take a long, long time. We're prepared for that ... we're setting in for the long haul."

"The Taliban has a substantial force left but at this point in the campaign that is exactly what we expected," he said.

The US military has done "a pretty good job" of meeting initial goals — destroying Taliban warehouses, air defenses, and ammunition supplies, and hampering their ability to resupply their forces and communicate, he said.

The USA is again providing Afghan opposition forces with food, blankets and cold weather gear, as winter sets in, Gen. Myers said. — AFP

zan if necessary."

The summit was originally billed as a quiet three-way affair involving only London, Paris and Berlin. However it soon mushroomed into a hustle for invitations as the guest list grew almost by the hour yesterday.

By the time the talks began, the gathering had grown to eight leaders plus EU foreign policy chief, Mr Javier Solana.

The German Chancellor, Mr

Gerhard Schroeder, Prime Ministers Mr Lionel Jospin of France, Mr Jose Maria Aznar of Spain, Mr Silvio Berlusconi of Italy and Mr Guy Verhofstadt of Belgium also participated in the summit.

Portugal was one of the unhappy EU members. "Initiatives of this type do not contribute to the anti-terrorist coalition nor to European unity," a source close to the Portuguese Cabinet said.

RECEIVED

7 NOV 2001

Don't panic about Pak nukes, says Rumsfeld

Indo-U.S. relations set to take a big leap forward

Times News Network
NEW DELHI: U.S. defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Monday allayed fears that Pakistan's nuclear assets were not secure and may fall into the hands of extremist elements.

Mr Rumsfeld, who arrived here after a trip to Islamabad, said, "I personally do not believe that there is a risk with respect to nuclear weapons. The countries that have nuclear weapons have a healthy respect for the power and lethality of these weapons and the dangers they pose. They take steps to ensure they are managed and handled in a responsible manner."

After a two-hour-long discussion with defence minister George Fernandes, he said Indo-U.S. military-to-military ties were poised to take a big leap forward. Indo-U.S. defence ties would be sharply boosted in the coming days, with U.S. under secretary of defence for policy Douglas Feith and Pacific Command chief Admiral Dennis Blair scheduled to visit New Delhi soon.

Mr Rumsfeld said the State Department and the Indian government would soon discuss "the status" of the few sanctions still in place against New Delhi. These sanctions, imposed after the 1998 nuclear tests, deal with prohibition regarding technology transfer for

nuclear and missile programmes. He also reassured India that America's war against terrorism was going to be a global one. The Taliban regime, Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaida network were just the clear and present danger, he said. Although Mr Rumsfeld sidestepped specific questions on

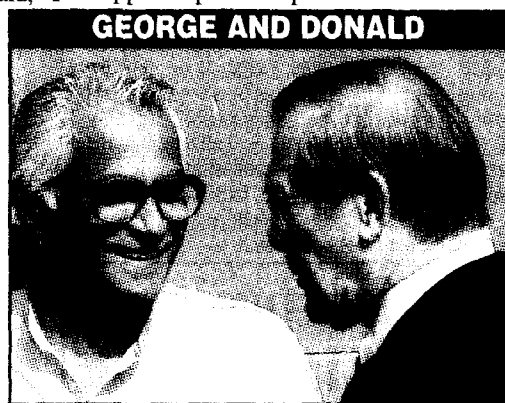
because they could kill thousands more, he said.

On being asked if the presence of terrorist camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir had come up during the discussions with Mr Fernandes, he said, "We talked of terrorism in a broader sense, which has affected both our countries, the concerns we share and the importance of dealing with that problem."

Mr Fernandes, who was invited by the American defence secretary to visit the U.S., said the two countries looked forward to establishing a long-lasting strategic relationship. "We discussed some specifics about our defence partnership, including certain items we need to acquire and collaborations we can have," he said.

Regarding the strikes against the Taliban regime, Mr Rumsfeld said that with the presence of American personnel on the ground to direct aircraft, the "effectiveness of the bombing was improving day by day. It is very focused and precise".

Mr Fernandes and Mr Rumsfeld also discussed the kind of development they visualised in Afghanistan in the post-Taliban era and how to tackle the emerging situation. They agreed on extending humanitarian assistance on a war footing to the Afghan people after the conflict was resolved.



U.S. defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld speaks with defence minister George Fernandes in New Delhi on Monday.

Pakistan's role in abetting cross-border terrorism in India, he emphasised that U.S. efforts would target terrorist networks wherever they existed once the Afghanistan campaign came to a logical end.

"President Bush has been very clear that the effort against terrorism is a global one," he said. Although the fight against terrorism was "much bigger than just Afghanistan", those responsible for the September 11 attacks would have to be tackled first

increasingly significant

11-10 **Mission America** 11

Thanks to the post-September 11 shift in focus to Afghanistan, the Central Asian-Indian subcontinent region has emerged as the number one spot in the itinerary of visiting foreign diplomats — the latest to do the rounds being US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Mr Rumsfeld's five-nation tour to Russia, Pakistan and India, besides Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, is essentially a scouting mission aimed at providing inputs to his president before the latter meets the leaders of the first three countries next week. Some days ago, Mr Rumsfeld had painted a rather pessimistic picture of the American war effort in Afghanistan, indeed, going as far as to admit that Osama bin Laden was proving to be an elusive figure. The operations have since moved to a new stage — from softening up the Taliban command and control, logistic, infrastructural, communication and air defence capabilities to direct aerial attacks on the well-dug-in Taliban forces north of Kabul. There are also reports that Washington has deployed a limited number of ground troops inside the country. Success in this phase is crucial for the Northern Alliance forces to be able to advance south. Indeed, with winter fast closing in on Afghanistan, the US cannot afford to lose any more time, which is why despite General Musharraf's obvious discomfiture, Mr Rumsfeld has made it clear that bombing will continue through Ramzan. And yet, the US has also to take into account criticism that the aerial bombardment has led to avoidable collateral damage. The objective of the special forces teams on the ground will be to contain such damage by pinpointing ground targets with laser designators. However, only the coming days will show whether or not the US assessment that most Taliban communications have been disrupted is valid.

Mr Rumsfeld's visit to Pakistan had the two-fold purpose of commending its support to the war and to ensure that General Musharraf will stay the course in the alliance with the US. In India, there has been a feeling that the US hasn't sufficiently responded to the government's offer of support. In the event, Mr Rumsfeld communicated the American appreciation of the Indian stand, besides assuring the government here that the fight against terrorism was much bigger than Afghanistan; further that terrorist networks will be pursued wherever they are. Already the Harkat-ul Mujahideen, the Laskhar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad, all based in Pakistan and operating in Kashmir, have been notified as international terrorist organisations allied to the Al-Qaida. Experience tells us that the US pursues its self-interest to the exclusion of all. In other words, we've got to wait and see whether the US acts on its solemn promises. Mr Rumsfeld mercifully left Kashmir alone, unlike Colin Powell and Tony Blair who found themselves having to walk the tightrope on that ticklish subject. Mr Rumsfeld confined himself to war and military issues, including hinting at the lifting of pending technology sanctions in respect of high-tech arms. It is an indication of the rift in Washington that Mr Rumsfeld along with vice-president Dick Cheney, national security adviser Condaleeza Rice and deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage have been following a harder line on the anti-terrorism war than secretary of state Colin Powell. To what extent the former are able to exert their influence will become clear when president Bush shortly meets the Indian prime minister and General Musharraf.

U.S. pounds Taliban front lines

KABUL/WASHINGTON: The U.S. struck Taliban front lines on Sunday as the air campaign entered its fifth week after Osama bin Laden made his strongest appeal to Muslims to join a holy war and condemned U.N. "crimes".

Fears of bio-terrorism spread in the U.S. with anthrax being discovered at a third postal facility in New Jersey and President George W. Bush calling the mail scare "a second wave of terrorist attacks".

With no clear U.S. victories, Mr Bush urged Americans to be patient with the campaign to punish the Taliban for sheltering Bin Laden and vowed to get the man Washington blames for the September 11 attacks.

In Afghanistan, the morning was quiet around Kabul, but U.S. jets pounded the Taliban front lines in the north. Taliban officials reported major gains on the ground south of the strategic northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif, near the border with Uzbekistan, but there was no independent confirmation from an area where fighting has raged since the start of the U.S.-led bombing on October 7.

The Northern Alliance has been struggling to advance on Mazar-i-Sharif, but Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum has made little progress in the past six weeks

in his attempts to recapture his stronghold.

An opposition spokesman said on Saturday that 700 Taliban fighters had deserted the fundamentalist movement and joined the Northern Alliance. However, that report could not be verified and the Taliban has denied any defections.

Pak Jamaat leader under house arrest

PESHAWAR: Qazi Hussain Ahmed, leader of the fundamentalist Jamaat-i-Islami, was placed under house arrest on Saturday, ahead of a planned anti-U.S. protest rally, his supporters said.

Police personnel were posted outside his house on Saturday night with orders to prevent him from leaving, his party said. (AFP)

Looking pale and becoming emotional towards the end of a televised statement, a defiant Bin Laden appealed on Saturday to the world's 1.2 billion Muslims to join him in a religious war against the "infidel" Christians and Jews. He was in military fatigues with an AK-47 assault rifle by his side.

"The leaders of the region are shunning and shying away from supporting their brothers," the Saudi-born militant said in a state-

ment broadcast by the Al-Jazeera satellite television channel. "This war is primarily a religious war."

White House spokesperson Anne Womack dismissed the statement as an act of desperation, saying: "This is more propaganda that shows how isolated Bin Laden is."

Bin Laden's comments were laced with Koranic verses and the sayings of Mohammed and he widened his attack to include the United Nations.

"The United Nations is a crime tool. Are any of our tragedies not the making of the United Nations?" he asked.

"Those who claim to be Arab leaders and are still with the United Nations are infidels in the eyes of the message of Mohammed — God's blessings and peace be upon him."

Mr Bush has been at pains to maintain support among moderate Muslims by assuring them that the U.S. is hunting down Bin Laden and the campaign in no way represents a war against Islam.

Pro-Western Arab leaders are anxious to counter such talk of religious war against the West. They are trying to keep close ties with Washington while containing Muslim militants among their populations who sympathise with Bin Laden. (Agencies)

THE MILLIONS FROM SIERRA LEONE'S BLOOD STONES

THE TIMES OF INDIA

5 NOV 2001

USA bans Lashkar, Jaish

AGENCIES ^{WS} ^{SP1} ^{4/11}

WASHINGTON, Nov. 3. — The USA has fulfilled a long-standing demand of India, declaring Lashkar-e-Taiyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammad "foreign terrorist organisations". The action carries the same legal consequences as a ban.

The secretary of state, Gen. Colin Powell, yesterday accepted a recommendation by the attorney general, Mr John Ashcroft, to designate 46 groups as "foreign terror-

ist organisations". The list includes the LTTE.

The US move is a rebuttal of Gen. Pervez Musharraf's stand that ultras in J&K are "indigenous freedom fighters".

(Mr LK Advani said the "ban was a step in the right direction", while Mr Jaswant Singh congratulated Washington for showing determination to tackle terrorism, a report from Delhi adds.)

The Pakistan-based outfits have refused to react to the move, saying they were yet to

receive any official communication. The Pakistani foreign office too took the same line.

Britain has frozen the assets of 22 organisations, including the Lashkar, two Sikh militant groups and LTTE. The Sikh groups are the Babbar Khalsa and International Sikh Youth Federation.

War: The Taliban today said it had shot down a US copter

■ See BAN: page 12
■ Editorial: Blair did nothing to help, page 8

THE STATESMAN

4 NOV 2001

Afghan refugee women, mostly widows, queue up for food in Kabul on Saturday.

Fresh anthrax scare in USA

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, Nov. 3. — The anthrax scare in USA burst out anew on Friday with another finding in New York and reports for the first time of the bacteria in Pakistan, a key ally in the anti-Taliban war.

Baffled US investigators said yesterday that despite 1,000 plus leads, they were still to find those responsible for the deadly bio-terror mail attacks that started after the 11 September.

Reflecting the alarm, the health and human services secretary, Mr Tommy Thompson,

said officials were trying to acquire doses of British and Russian anthrax vaccines to resist the germ warfare weapon.

The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention said, it had sent a team to Phoenix, Arizona, site of this weekend's premier sports event, as a precaution against possible anthrax attacks during the sixth baseball game of the World Series today, said Dr Bradley Perkins, a CDC anthrax expert. He said, there has been 22 confirmed or suspected anthrax cases. Seven confirmed skin anthrax, five suspected skin anthrax and 10 inhaled anthrax cases, the more se-

vere form of the disease, which has killed four people.

Mr Thompson added, the only US anthrax vaccine maker, Bioprot Corp, is waiting for the Food and Drug Administration clearance to ship its vaccine. Bioprot had 5.4 million doses ready to go if the FDA gives the approval, he said. He also admitted that efforts were on to obtain additional supplies from English and Russian vaccine makers.

Meanwhile, possible new findings of the bacteria keep coming in. A suspicious package that initially tested positive for anthrax was found in

a car in a Maryland suburb of Washington on Friday. The U.S. Treasury also closed a mail facility near its main building in Washington after a suspicious letter was found, bearing a Trenton, New Jersey postmark, where investigators are concentrating their search for the source of the anthrax. Tests will be conducted on the letter this weekend. In the latest case in New York, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said

on Friday an editor at the *New York Post* newspaper had become the 17th person in the USA to be infected with the rare anthrax bacteria.

The unidentified employee, an editor of the tabloid's editorial page, is being treated with antibiotics and is expected to recover fully from the infection, officials said.

In Pakistan, a government minister said tests confirmed at least one letter received contained anthrax spores. "Four letters were sent to three places in the last 10 days — to a national newspaper, a computer company and a bank," the Pakistani scientist, Mr Atta-ur-Rehman said. "One case has been confirmed officially by a government laboratory."

THE STATESMAN

4 NOV 2001

USA
BAN: SF-12
4/11

(Continued from page 1)
near Kabul last night, killing about 50 soldiers, a report from Islamabad said. "You can see the bodies of the Americans on board the helicopter with their uniforms," a Taliban official said. The Pentagon has, however, refused to react to the Taliban claim.

US jets today launched strings of strikes in and around Starqash village, 40 km from Kabul. A journalist said two F-18s dropped at least 16 bombs between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. Another 10 bombs were dropped on Taliban positions.

The Taliban envoy in Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, said the militia had recaptured the key Aq-Kupruk district, 70 km south of Mazar-i-Sharif, from the Northern Alliance. The district fell into the alliance's hands earlier in the day after 800 Taliban fighters reportedly changed side during the three-hour war.

Osama: Osama bin Laden has been seen in Kandahar, a paper said today. He was in the city to "boost the people's morale," the Pakistan Observer said. In a statement broadcast by Al-Jazeera TV, Osama said the UN was a "tool of crime" against Muslims and Arab leaders cooperating with the world body were infidels.

Scribe released: The Taliban has released French journalist Michel Peyrard in Jalalabad today, Afghan Islamic Press said. Peyrard had entered the country illegally.

US stand: The USA has reposed faith in General Pervez Musharraf and said if the Taliban was still getting military supplies from Pakistan, those were being provided by some private individuals.

"We're confident that President Musharraf's government is fully committed to the global coalition against terrorism," the state department spokesman, Mr Richard Boucher, said. He was reacting to media reports that quoted US officials as having said that some elements in the Pakistani government, including the ISI, were helping the militia.

THE STATESMAN

U.S. turns the squeeze on LeT, Jaish funds

By Chidanand Rajghatta
Times News Network

WASHINGTON: The U.S. on Friday moved to tighten the financial squeeze on more terrorist organisations, including the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammed, to demonstrate that its fight against terrorism is not restricted to Al Qaida and Afghanistan.

Adding to a welter of executive decisions, the State Department, on the recommendation of the Justice Department, announced that it was extending the financial dragnet to 22 more terrorist organisations, including Hamas and Hezbollah. The omission of the two West Asian outfits from the original lists had caused a furore within the Israeli lobby.

The addition of the Pakistani groups to the list, on the eve of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's visit to Washington, appeared largely symbolic, since they have very little by way of U.S.-related financial transactions.

But under a presidential executive order issued in September, the Treasury Department can impose the American assets of anyone who is suspected of provid-

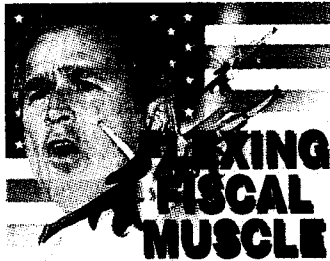
ing aid or financial services to Al Qaida and its direct supporters, for which category the Pakistani groups would qualify.

So, if a foreign bank, like say Pakistan's Habib Bank, declines to cooperate with the Treasury's order, the administration could seize that bank's assets in the U.S. Two other Pakistani entities, the Rashid Trust and the Al Qifa, are also mentioned in the directive.

The State Department, which has large reserves of pro-Pakistan sentiments, had to be coaxed into acting against the groups following a "request" from Attorney General John Ashcroft, who has fewer political and diplomatic concerns than Foggy Bottom.

The mandarins of the State Department, who have long canvassed the view that Islamabad is an indispensable ally and that Gen Pervez Musharraf should not be needlessly pressured, only reluctantly disclosed that Pakistani groups were included in the list.

The financial crackdown has its weaknesses because the organisations can easily change their names and their modus operandi.



- ▶ State Dept. adds 22 more names to list of terrorist groups
- ▶ Hamas and Hezbollah added under influence of Israeli lobby
- ▶ Indian ambassador to U.S. Lalit Mansingh welcomes decision

US (W)
HP-11
38 11

U.S. diluting Pak. importance

By Atul Aneja

NEW DELHI, NOV. 2. With the focus of the United States campaign shifting to northern Afghanistan, Pakistan may lose importance as a frontline state in the war against terrorism.

Government sources here say that several factors are in play which explain why the U.S. may begin to distance itself from Pakistan.

Contrary to the expectations of the U.S. and Pakistan, the air raids against the Taliban strongholds are not leading to the splintering of the militia. So the U.S. may review its tactics by taking more interest in the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, which has its strongholds in northern Afghanistan, sources maintained.

They, however, point out that there are other grounds which have generated an unease in U.S.-Pakistan equations. The execution of Abdul Haq, a pro-U.S. commander, by the Taliban, may have created friction between Washington and Islamabad. It was now widely established that Pakistan intelligence compromised Haq's security by leaking information

on his whereabouts to the Taliban.

The assessment was that Pakistan wanted to signal to the U.S. not to bypass Islamabad in its search for new Pashtun leaders who could be accommodated in a post-conflict government in Kabul. The U.S. intelligence, which had cultivated Haq for long without intimately involving Pakistan, has not taken kindly to this affront by Islamabad, the sources said.

The Pakistani refusal to give the U.S. access to its nuclear weapons was also seen as a factor in undermining the warmth in the relationship. While the Pakistanis agreed to take advice for making their nuclear weapons more secure, they refused to allow the U.S. any physical access to its nuclear wherewithal, the sources observed.

Friction over U.S. demand for two more Pakistani bases may also have been a factor which encouraged the U.S. to reach out to Russia, Turkey and the Northern Alliance in the fight against the Taliban. The U.S. was looking for the bases of Shurkat and Mianwali, apart from the existing four for the anti-Tali-

ban campaign. Incidentally, Mianwali is close to the Pakistan's nuclear facility in Chashma.

Finally, the beginning of Ramadan later this month is also seen a factor encouraging the U.S. to lower its dependence on Pakistan. The U.S. may not be inclined to undertake heavy bombardment from the south as this could further inflame passions among Pakistani radicals.

Sources, however, caution that the distancing between the U.S. and Pakistan, given the latter's geographical location, may not be permanent. The assessment here is that the U.S. continues to believe that the Pakistan President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, is the best bulwark against Islamic radicalism in that country. In fact, Pakistan, under its present dispensation, is likely to benefit from external economic aid and commercial incentives. While Pakistan's economic bailout may be on the way, the achievement of its larger geopolitical objectives of creating a sphere of influence in Afghanistan through the Taliban may not materialise.

More US troops ready to enter Afghanistan

AGENCIES

US (W) 5/1 8/11

WASHINGTON/RABAT, Nov. 2. — The US defence secretary has said more special forces are ready to enter Afghanistan. Bad weather and heavy firing had prevented some of the teams from landing on Afghan soil recently.

"It's just a matter of having the right kind of equipment to get them there in the landing zones ... where it's possible to get in and get out, and we expect that to happen," Mr Donald Rumsfeld said yesterday. The Pentagon is planning to deploy JSTARS planes to track ground forces over hundreds of miles.

B-52 bombers today carpet-bombed Taliban frontlines north of Kabul as the Northern Alliance prepares to take on the militia. Two bombs were dropped near the Kabul airport late tonight.

Alliance commander Mustafah, whose base is close to the front-line, said he had seen flames and smoke rise from positions used by the Taliban to shell the Opposition-held Bagram air base. "The attacks are spot on," said another alliance commander, Ballozai.

The Taliban said the bombing had claimed lives of 1,500 Afghans, while 70-100 US soldiers had been killed.

The Northern Alliance, which controls about 10 per cent of Afghanistan, has urged Washington to step up strikes before it launches attacks on Taliban positions.

Washington has been trying to form a broad alliance that'll include the Northern Alliance, Pashtuns (who form the Taliban's support base), and other ethnic groups. The effort suffered a major setback after the Taliban caught and executed a veteran "mujahid", Abdul Haq. He had entered Afghanistan to wean away Pashtuns from the Taliban.

The Kandahar Governor said the Taliban would survive even if the USA killed its chief, Mullah Mohammed Omar. "We are Muslims, we are an organisation. These things do happen, but one person can be replaced by others," said Mullah Hasan Rehmani.

He was speaking to foreign journalists who have been invited by the Taliban to see the destruction caused by the US bombing.

Threat: The California Governor, Mr Gray Davis, said yesterday that he had "credible" information that the state's major suspension bridges — including San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge — could be bombed in a rush-hour attack between today and Wednesday.

Turkey's support: Turkey, the only Muslim country to have pledged troops to back the US campaign in Afghanistan, today said the holy month of Ramzan couldn't be an obstacle to military operations, a report from Ankara adds. "Terrorism doesn't respect holy values, festivals or Ramzan," a spokesman for President Ahmet Necdet Sezer said.

Osama safe: The Taliban consul-general in Karachi today said Osama bin Laden and Mullah Mohammed Omar were safe, a report from Doha adds.

Jihad: Arab militants today vowed at a rally in Damascus to fight a "jihad" against Israel, two days after Mr Tony Blair urged Syria to restrain extremists.

■ More reports on pages 5 and 8

THE STATESMAN

3 NOV 2001

Blair's shuttle diplomacy to West Asia has more to it than meets the eye

By Rashmee Z. Ahmed
Times News Network

LONDON: Playing the rather unglamorous role of "chief American envoy" to West Asia, British Prime Minister Tony Blair has been discussing global terrorism with a succession of difficult interlocutors, including Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian Authority, in a mammoth public relations exercise for the U.S.-led, British-backed "war on terror".

The visit, the fourth shuttle-diplomacy tour undertaken by Mr Blair since the September 11 attacks on America, was officially meant to quieten the rising Israeli-Palestinian tensions and enable the Western allies to continue war on Afghanistan unhindered.

But the visit coincided with fresh violence in the Palestinian territories, which commentators read as yet another sign of the futility of Mr Blair's mission to resuscitate a peace process that is all but dead.

There is mounting speculation, however, that Mr Blair's West Asia tour is an advance-warning party sent by U.S. President George W. Bush to the region to signal that Washington is preparing a new initiative to bring Israelis and

Palestinians to the negotiating table.

In Jerusalem, Mr Blair said he had discussed a new initiative for West Asia with "allies", adding that it would be "unhelpful" to go into detail. Downing Street officials have repeatedly stressed that Mr Blair was not carrying any new blueprint for West Asia on his latest tour.

Analysts say Mr Blair's visit has been given considerable weight by most governments in the region, with Israeli prime ministerial officials unashamedly telling the British media that they would listen to Mr Blair carefully because he was "the first rung of the American coalition against terror" and had the unofficial backing of Mr Bush.

Mr Blair himself downplayed a barrage of bad headlines in the British press from his unprecedented visit to Damascus and Jerusalem. "All these positions (contrasting views on terrorism) were already established," he said on Thursday, prompting questions about why he decided simultaneously to tour arch-rivals Syria and Israel if it was not to garner some less-public gains from backroom manoeuvring.



Tony Blair

The Telegraph

SATURDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2001 VOL. XX NO. 115

STATE OF THE WAR

5-12
28/11

A war, by definition, is unpredictable. It is impossible to foresee eventualities and the nature of resistance to aggression. Thus the best laid plans and the best conceived strategies go haywire in the course of a campaign. History is replete with such examples. The disaster that was Operation Barbarossa — Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union — and the fighting power of the Vietnamese peasants surprised all commentators including the generals of the Third Reich in the Forties and the American soldiers in the Sixties. When the United States of America went on the offensive against the taliban in Afghanistan, it did so with a very well-formulated plan. The declaration of war against terrorism with Mr Osama bin

Laden as the first and immediate target had the support of a global coalition which had within it most of the powerful nations of the world, including some of the Islamic ones. The US took time — from September 11, when the terrorist attacks took place, to October 7, when the first bombers flew over Afghan skies — to build up this coalition. The diplomatic initiatives of this longish preparatory phase involved, *inter alia*, the brokering of a peace between Israel and Palestine, the winning over of Pakistan and the mustering of support from China and Russia. The diplomatic moves were capped by the moving in of the formidable US war machine into strategic positions in the region. One can only guess at the intelligence network that buttressed the offensive. The show of power was, to say the least, awesome.

The fruits of this display, however, belie expectations. The US planes won the battle of the sky in a matter of days. This was according to script. From then on, bombers have pounded Kabul, Kandahar and other places of strategic importance to the taliban. The expectation was that following such heavy bombing and the consequent

devastation, US ground troops would move in to capture Mr bin Laden in a series of commando-type operations. Now, as winter is about to set in and Ramadan about to begin, such an operation appears unlikely. The war against the taliban seems to have entered a stalemate phase. The bombs appear to be purposeless, if not useless. Public opinion, which after the September 11 attacks was overwhelmingly in favour of a US intervention, is now ever so slowly turning and beginning to question the need for further bombing. The coalition, so deliberately and so painstakingly formed, is also feeling the strain. The peace in west Asia is over. Temperatures are rising on the India-Pakistan border. There is growing suspicion that the Pakistan govern-

ment, despite Mr Pervez Musharraf's protestations to the contrary, is not offering full cooperation. The present impasse in the campaign does not promise an early resolution of the war in Afghanistan.

It is true that Mr George W. Bush, the US president, has repeatedly emphasized that this is going to be a long and arduous war. Nobody doubts that the eradication of terrorism across the world will be a long and possibly, thankless task. But there is no explanation why the capture of Mr bin Laden, a very limited and short term goal, should take this long. There is no explanation why a campaign carried out by a superpower with the best military hardware and the most sophisticated technology at its disposal should produce such tardy results against an army whose sole strength is its faith. These are questions on the minds of everyone. Nobody likes a war, and a stalemate like the present one signals that the war will probably last even longer than what even Mr Bush expected. From an Indian point of view, all this means that the entire region will remain tense and prone to provocation for some time to come.

The US had a clear plan and a supportive coalition in the first stages of its war. But the continued bombing with few results is beginning to cause discomfort

THE TELEGRAPH

NOV 2001

96-7 2/11 W3011
US, Britain step up PR efforts in response to Taliban claims on casualties

WAR OF WORDS

KAREN DEYOUNG
WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER 1

CONCERNED that they are losing the war for international public opinion, particularly in the Islamic world, the US and Britain have launched a public relations effort to aggressively counter Taliban claims of massive civilian deaths and destruction from US bombs in Afghanistan.

The two governments have established round-the-clock information centres, staffed by US and British officials, at the White House and at British Prime Minister Tony Blair's residential office at London's No. 10 Downing Street. A third centre, staffed by diplomatic, defence and communications officials from both countries, is scheduled to open soon in Islamabad. The objective is to provide a rapid, authoritative coalition response to Taliban claims of casualties, collateral damage and other issues — such as Wednesday's assertion in a Pakistan news conference that 1,500 civilians have been killed since the bombing began on Oct 7 — without waiting for Washington to wake up 10 time zones and a full news cycle away.

"There's a recognition that rapid reaction means a lot," one administration official said. "The Taliban is trying to wage war with terror and militarily but they're also trying to lay out information that is simply not true. We have to set the record straight and we need to have this globe-spanning network tied together by the Internet and television." At the same time, Washington and London hope to better coordinate and disseminate what they see as their positive messages on humanitarian aid, efforts to establish a representative government in Afghanistan and repeated assurances that the anti-terrorism war is not being waged against Islam or the Afghan population. The new operations will also try to stagger



Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair (right) with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad at the Omayyad Mosque in Damascus on Wednesday. Reuters photo

speeches, news conferences and other public remarks by senior coalition officials here and in Europe so that they can dominate TV news around the world and round the clock.

The effort springs most immediately from worries brought to the White House early last week by Blair emissaries. In a meeting with presidential counsellor Karen Hughes, senior Blair advisor Alastair Campbell outlined what one official present at the meeting called a "big news management issue" that left unrebutted Taliban allegations headlined in electronic and print news media throughout West Asia and Persian Gulf region, where both public opinion, and publicly expressed political opinion, are increasingly opposed to the continued bombing.

The campaign to win public support for the anti-terrorism effort is viewed as at least as important as the military assault against the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda organisation, as supportive Arab governments contend with increasingly large anti-American demonstrations.

Many of those governments have found it politically convenient to condemn the ongoing air assaults and to allow increasingly harsh criticism in State-controlled media.

The closest US allies in the Arab world, including Egypt and Saudi Arabia, are seen by the administration as walking a narrow ledge between support for the coalition anti-terrorism campaign and bowing to public pressure. —LATWP

Arabs offer Blair little support for Afghan bombing

AGENCIES
RIYADH, NOVEMBER 1

BRITISH Prime Minister Tony Blair, struggled to justify the US bombing of Afghanistan to Arab leaders on Wednesday but appeared to win little sympathy for the three-week-old military campaign. Also, in his speech to the Saudi Arabian advisory council or Shura, he renewed his call for a viable Palestinian state, while praising Saudi assistance in the war against terrorism.

Blair, on the second leg of a West Asia tour, came face to face with Arab disquiet at the West's response to the attacks on the US.

"I think people understand that when thousands of people are slaughtered in cold blood in the way they were, that we have to bring to account those responsible," he said in Riyadh, the Saudi Arabian Capital. "I also think people want us to do everything we can to minimise civilian casualties in the action we take. And we do."

He stressed that the war in Afghanistan was not against Islam but part of a fight against terrorists. "This is a struggle between the forces of order and those of anarchy, and the latter cannot be allowed to prevail," he told a closed session of the 120-member council, which advises the government but can not legislate.

"Terrorism puts at risk the lives and economic well-being of people in countries all over the world," said the Prime Minister.

Blair was speaking in between separate talks with King Fahd and his half-brother Crown Prince Abdullah, who handles the kingdom's day-to-day affairs.

US, Opp launch first joint attack, Taliban claim win



AGENCIES
KABUL/WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER 1

AFGHANISTAN'S Taliban rulers said on Thursday they had arrested several US citizens but the announcement shed no light on who they were or what they were doing. "We have a few American citizens with us. They have been arrested," Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef said.

Some media reported that the Americans had been captured when Afghan mujahideen commander Abdul Haq, who crossed secretly into Afghanistan to raise rebellion, was seized by Taliban forces and summarily executed last week. There was no independent confirmation of those reports. The Taliban had said on Saturday they were searching for a man believed to be an American, who had been travelling with Haq.

In Kabul, the hardline Muslim militia said they repulsed the first joint air and

US Navy flight deck crewmen on the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson on Wednesday. Reuters photo

ground attack by US and Opposition forces in the north but lost a hydropower plant to US bombing in the south. All power installations at the 33-MW Kajaki plant had been destroyed, he said, although the Kajaki dam itself had not been damaged.

The air raids blacked out Afghanistan's second city, Kandahar, which is the powerbase of Taliban Supreme Leader Mullah Mohammad Omar.

A Taliban Information Ministry official said the Northern Alliance Opposition had launched three attacks with US air cover overnight, including on Dara-I-Suf, but were repulsed. Senior Opposition leaders could not be reached for comment. One Alliance source said an attack had taken place but a spokesman sought to play down its importance. The Opposition is led in Dara-I-Suf in Samangan province by ethnic Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum. While the US has been bombing the Dara-I-Suf area for two weeks, the Taliban defences remain intact, the Pakistani-based Afghan Islamic Press has reported.

There were no reports of overnight bombing in Kabul or along the Taliban front-

lines north of the capital, which were carpet-bombed for the first time on Wednesday by a giant B-52 bomber. The US also warned of more such attacks in the days to come. The fierce bombing indicates that the US has concluded that military operations should not wait for flagging political efforts to assemble a post-Taliban government, a senior administration official said on Wednesday.

As the attempt to cobble together a broad opposition coalition proves increasingly frustrating, Bush administration officials have uncoupled the dual tracks of their Afghan strategy, giving wider latitude to the Defence Department to accelerate the American battleplan, he said. "It's just not feasible or realistic to think you're playing an organ where you're doing politics with the left hand and military with the right," the senior official said. Rear Admiral John Stufflebeem acknowledged for the first time that B-52 bombers were carpet-bombing the frontline Taliban troops.

Meanwhile, the US denied that a Red Crescent Society hospital in Kandahar had been bombed in yesterday's attacks. The Taliban had said 11 people had died in the hit.

Knights from

EXTRA

2 NOV 2001

U.S. begins carpet bombing near Kabul

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

Joint Staff Director of Operations of the

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31. The United States has begun carpet bombing Taliban positions near Kabul in what is seen as a major escalation of the ongoing operations.

The heavy B-52 bomber, well-known for this carpet bombing role in the heydays of the Vietnam war, is said to have attacked Taliban positions at two locations near the Bagram airport.

The Pentagon has for the first time acknowledged that a small number of American troops are on the ground working closely with the opposition Northern Alliance.

The Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, who has been wary about letting out operational information to the media, said on Tuesday that 80 per cent of the American strikes were now focused on the frontlines. He also spoke of the impact of having the Americans physically on the ground inside Afghanistan.

The Pentagon says there could be a substantial increase in the presence of U.S. troops; and at the same time is pointing out the increased risks. "We're taking an element of risk in putting combat forces on the ground, but it's a measured risk. It's a risk that is a part of a plan," remarked Rear Admiral John Stufflebeem, Depu-

Hospital hit

An AP report from Kandahar in Afghanistan, quoting witnesses, said U.S. jets struck before dawn on Wednesday near this southern city and badly damaged a hospital. Air attacks also pounded Taliban positions north of Kabul and near the strategic northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

A doctor, speaking in the presence of Taliban officials, said 15 persons were killed and 25 others severely injured in the attack on the hospital, located about 2 km northeast of the city centre.

Western and other foreign journalists were taken by the Taliban to the hospital, operated by the Afghan Red Crescent, the Muslim equivalent of the Red Cross. They saw some of the injured but no bodies.

The Taliban-escorted media tour was the first to this city since the U.S.-led air raids began Oct. 7.

In Islamabad, the Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Abdul Salam Zaeef, today claimed that a total of 1,500 people had been killed so far in the assault on Afghanistan, now in its fourth week. The Pentagon has accused the Taliban of inflating civilian casualties and denies civilians are intentionally targeted.

SECRET

1 NOV 2001

ASSAD-BLAIR MEET / DIFFERENCES TO THE FORE

West asked to define terrorism

By Kesava Menon

MANAMA (BAHRAIN), OCT. 31 The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, arrived in Saudi Arabia today on the second leg of his second tour of West Asia since the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism began. Mr. Blair was in Damascus earlier in the day where he held discussions with the Syrian President, Dr. Bashar al Assad.

In Damascus, Mr. Blair got the first blast of the consensual Arab trumpet call that the West must be clear about its definition of terrorism even as it goes about its promised long-term campaign against this phenomenon. Dr. Assad told the British leader that in particular, the West must refrain from applying the label of terrorism to the Palestinian struggle for independence and the establishment of a sovereign state.

At the same time, the Syrian leader also decried the tendency to project West Asia as the breeding ground of terrorism. He also deplored the action of certain groups which had hijacked Islam or the Arab cause to promote their own agendas.

Mr. Blair is likely to hear more of the same, plus strong words against the killing of innocents in Afghanistan, when discussions with his Saudi hosts begins later in the day. Mr. Blair also begins his Saudi visit under a diplomatic cloud since his earlier attempt to visit the Kingdom had fallen through. Both sides have denied reports that the Saudis had snubbed Mr. Blair by asking him to not bother to visit. But there has not been a enough explanation for Mr. Blair not touching down in the Kingdom while visiting other allies on his earlier tour.

AP reports:

Dr. Assad gave no indication he



The British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, and the Syrian President, Dr. Bashar al-Assad, at the latter's palace in Damascus on Wednesday. — AP

was prepared to restrain violent Palestinian groups that operate from his country. Syria has long argued Palestinians have the right to use force in opposing Israel's occupation and it is on the U.S. State Department's list of states sponsoring terrorism. "Resisting occupation is an international right," Dr. Assad told a news conference with Mr. Blair following their private talks at the presidential palace. "An act of resistance is different from an act of terrorism," Dr. Assad said. He also criticised the military campaign in Afghanistan, where Britain so far is the only nation to join the U.S. in its bombing campaign. "We cannot accept what we see on the screen every day, hundreds of innocent civilians dying," Dr. Assad said.

Despite Dr. Assad's uncompromising words, British officials pronounced themselves satisfied with the first official visit to Syria by a British Prime Minister.

"This is a candid dialogue, but I would like to think that it is a dialogue that can be pursued," Mr. Blair said at the news conference.

He said Britain was seeking a lasting cease-fire in the Israeli-Palestinian fighting to create a base of calm for serious peace negotiations.

THE HINDU

1 NOV 2001

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A different kind of war: Bush

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 29. — Mr George W Bush today said his campaign against those responsible for the 11 September attacks would be waged "wherever terrorists hide, run, or plan." "We did not seek this conflict, but we will end it. America will act deliberately and decisively, and the cause of freedom will prevail."

With international attention focussed on the huge US military deployment around Afghanistan, Mr Bush, in his weekly radio address, said "this will be a different kind of war." "Our war on terror will be much broader than the battlefields and beachheads of the past." "This war will be fought wherever terrorists hide, or run, or plan. Some victories will be won outside of public view, in tragedies avoided and threats eliminated. Other victories will be clear to all."

Mr Bush was expected to hold a videoconference with his national security advisers on the status of efforts to punish Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaida followers.



READY FOR TAKEOFF: Mr Bush addresses American Airlines workers at Chicago's O'Hare airport. — AP/PTI

The USA has deployed ships, troops and planes in areas around Afghanistan, where Bin Laden and his group are believed to be hiding. Secret special operations teams are reportedly scouting staging areas for US operations inside Afghanistan.

THE STATESMAN

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Pak. orders closure of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen offices

30/9

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 29. The Pakistan Government is believed to have sealed the offices of the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen — one of the 27 organisations declared a terrorist outfit by the U.S.

The action has come within hours of the United Nations adopting a resolution, endorsing the U.S. decision to go after the terrorist outfits and organisations aiding and abetting those behind the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pen-

tagon. A Harkat spokesman had said on Friday that the decision of the Musharraf Government to freeze its accounts would not affect the ongoing struggle in Kashmir. The Harkat had faced bans and its accounts were frozen earlier also. But it continued its "legal and principled struggle" and said would do so till the "Indian forces withdraw from Kashmir."

The spokesman, Mr. Ameeruddin Mughal, had said that by freezing the Harkat's accounts, the Pakistan Government wanted to appease the U.S. On the one

hand, Pakistan was claiming that it was extending moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris but, on the other, it had frozen the accounts of the outfit on the orders of 'infidel forces.'

AP reports from Muzaffarabad:

Several Harkat members were seen removing their belongings from their main office here — capital of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Mr. Attique-ur-Rehman, a commander, vowed to resist the order. "Any Pakistani ruler who will go against us won't stay in power for long." Another com-

mander, Mr. Sajjad Shahid, said "the (Pakistan) Government has ordered us to close because of American pressure."

The Harkat is one of the largest militant organisations operating in Kashmir and was declared a terrorist organisation by the U.S. years ago. The group also has strong ties with Afghanistan and many members were trained there. Afghanistan is the base of terrorist mastermind, Osama bin Laden, sought by the U.S. in the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Two key leaders of the Harkat, Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman Khalil and Mr. Farooq Kashmiri, went into hiding soon after the attacks. Both of them fought with Afghan resistance forces against the Soviets in the 1980s.

U.N. clamps down on terrorist outfits

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 29. The U.N. Security Council acted with unprecedented speed on Friday when it approved a U.S.-sponsored resolution that mandates the 189 member-nations to deny support and sanctuary to terrorists and their networks. The resolution forces member states to make "wilful" financing of terrorism a criminal offence. It calls for the immediate freezing of terrorists' funds and preventing movement of individuals and groups suspected of having terrorist connections.

For now the focus of the resolution is on actions by member-states to come to terms with terrorism. The Council has not threatened violators of sanctions, but the expectation is that the resolution will be fully implemented. The U.S. has said that it will work hard to ensure that.

What must be especially gratifying to the Bush administration is that the resolution was drafted, debated and passed unanimously in just a day. The Republican Administration and other Western members were looking for quick action before the General Assembly started a debate on terrorism on Monday.

The new American Ambassador to the world

body, Mr. John Negroponte, called it an "unprecedented resolution against terrorism in the work of the United Nations". The consensus among the Western members is that aside from the resolution being historic, there was this urgency by way of an increased danger to international security. It is significant that for the first time the world body has not named any country or even a group of people. Rather the focus was on an issue that has now come to challenge the international community.

Further, the Council has not got itself involved in the process of defining who a "terrorist" is. The British Ambassador, Mr. Jeremy Greenstock, while acknowledging that there may be differences as to who is and who is not a terrorist remarked, "... for most of the time, if something looks like a terrorist and makes noise like a terrorist, it's a terrorist."

Though there has been some apprehension over the fashion and speed with which some in the Permanent Five sought to work on the resolution, there is also the realisation that if nations were looking for a "comprehensive" document, that would literally take months. The accent was on the kind of international action that was needed immediately.

No foreign troops: Taliban

PESHAWAR, SEPT. 29. The Taliban today dismissed reports that foreign troops were present in the areas controlled by the Islamic regime, saying they were "false" and a "propaganda ploy."

"Neither American nor Pakistani or other foreign troops have entered Afghanistan," the Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaef, told the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press news agency. "It is wrong propaganda at defaming the Taliban."

The reports were aimed at creating the impression that the hardline Taliban regime was ready to strike a deal on the Saudi dissideant, Osama bin Laden, wanted in the U.S. for the September 11 terror attacks in New York and Washington. "The Islamic Emirate (of Taliban) is fully alert to defend the homeland," Mullah Zaef said. — DPA

More reports on Pages 8 & 12

'U.S. plane was on a limited mission'

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 29. The Government today sought to clear the air surrounding the landing of a U.S. military aircraft on Friday by stating that the plane was engaged in a very limited mission: it transported six American personnel for duty with the U.S. Embassy here. While acknowledging that the plane, a U.S. Air Force C-130, had refuelled here, the External Affairs Ministry pointed out that this was a routine courtesy extended under the circumstances.

A U.S. Embassy spokesman, when contacted, confirmed that the aircraft had indeed landed six military personnel to reinforce the defence attache's office as well as to fill in some vacancies.

He added that for now there were no plans to land more U.S. military aircraft.

Government sources here said that the U.S. plane had arrived at the Palam air force base from Paylebar, near Singapore. They pointed out that since the September 11 event, senior U.S. Government personnel routinely have taken to utilising the C-130 as their transport vehicle.

Under attack by the Left parties and having mustered only conditional support from the Congress, the official statement sought to dispel the view that the plane's arrival was linked to possible action against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The C-130 transport aircraft, it said, had arrived from Singapore and "as is the usual

practice with aircraft turn-arounds, the U.S. military aircraft refuelled in New Delhi for its return journey". The plane, the statement added, had landed after seeking permission from the Government "in accordance with the prescribed procedure".

Earlier in the day, the Congress leader, Mr. K. Natwar Singh, had rung up the Prime Minister, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, to ascertain the facts about refuelling and the final destination of the plane. Mr. Singh was encashing the blank cheque the Prime Minister had given to the Opposition at the last all-party meeting where he had told the leaders that he could keep in touch with him to clarify any development instead of relying merely on media reports.

Within an hour, the Prime Minister called him up to assure him that the landing of the U.S. military aircraft had nothing to do with the proposed action in Afghanistan. The Prime Minister also informed him that the aircraft had returned to Singapore after dropping the Embassy staff. A similar assurance was given to Mr. Singh by the Prime Minister's Principal Secretary, Mr. Brajesh Mishra.

Offering limited support to the Government, the Congress had said that it had no objection to refuelling of U.S. military aircraft because "this has been permitted in the past. Nobody will have objection to the use of Indian airspace and refuelling facilities for fighting international terrorism".

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Will the long arm of the law strangle freedoms?

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IN THE aftermath of the horrific events of September 11, there is anticipation in America. On the one hand, about how the Bush administration will handle the military operations in and around Afghanistan; some in the administration also want to expand the net and go after Iraq. On the other hand, millions of Americans, Americans of foreign descent and foreigners are keeping their fingers crossed for a different reason. No one in the country — citizen or immigrant — has any use for terrorism and terrorists; yet there is widespread anxiety that in the rush to tackle terrorism, civil liberties may be curtailed.

The fear is well founded and not confined to "foreigners" who are so suddenly feeling the weight of the siege. But to say that those who are keen on capitalising on the environment for quick changes to the law are fascists would be stretching things. If the administration is in a "hurry", it is because of the feeling that the nation has paid dearly for the long delay. Republican law-makers, for the most part, tend to agree.

The Attorney-General, Mr. John Ashcroft, certainly has a point when he says the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Justice Department have more tools to fight organised gambling mafias than terrorists and their networks. But in asking for sweeping changes, Mr. Ashcroft and his allies have caused considerable unease on Capitol Hill, especially among Democrats and civil rights activists.

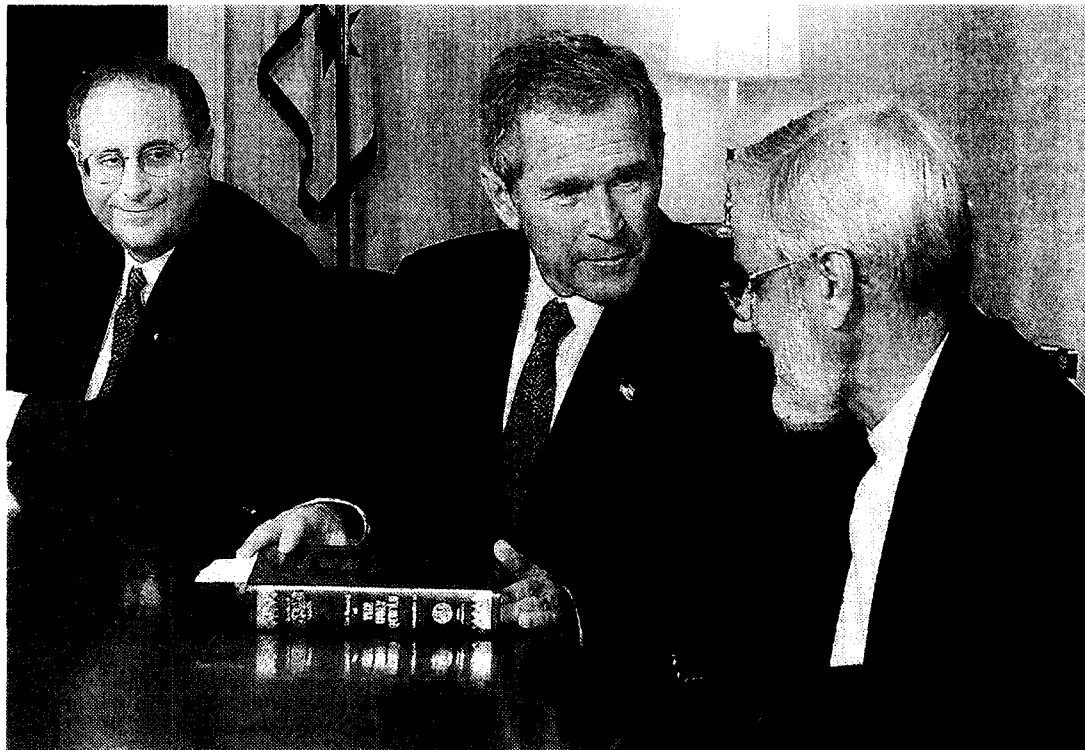
No one is talking about what the Justice Department's "wish list" will finally look like; and there is no doubt that there will be legal challenges along the way. After all, America is a nation of laws, not persons, as so many people point out so very often. The fear, of course, is that giving up freedom in the name of going after an enemy might end in a losing proposition on both counts.

Sceptics in Congress and civil rights activists are not, for instance, overly worried about the tightening of laws on wiretapping. Many believe the present laws are outdated given the developments in communications technology. Some also question the rationale

of getting a court order for a wiretap on an instrument as opposed to a person owning several of them on a national basis.

For instance, the Justice Department and the FBI want permission to monitor cell phone and e-mail communication between suspected terrorists as also over landlines. These so-called "roving wiretaps" are said to be widely used in criminal investiga-

There is widespread anxiety in the U.S. that in the rush to tackle terrorism, civil liberties may be curtailed, says Sridhar Krishnaswami.



Mr. George W. Bush with American Muslim leaders... reaching out.

tions but not in terrorism-related cases. Senior members of Congress do not seem to have much objection on this aspect.

But what has woken up some members of Congress are sweeping surveillance, detention and deportation laws, particularly pertaining to non-Americans, that the Justice Department is seeking. Democrats are more than just a "little" uncomfortable with the idea of non-Americans being picked up, not to be heard from for days by even their lawyers. And the thought that America would actually stoop to the level of throwing out a person without presenting valid reasons in court is unbelievable to many.

Left to many Conservatives, the time is right to make the "right" changes and shut down the loopholes in immigration laws. But to many liberal and left-of-centre politicians, this is a troubling phenomenon. In the last two weeks, it has become almost routine for the White House to get "anything" it wants, and sometimes even more, from Capitol Hill.

The pursuit of tough anti-terrorism laws and hunting down terrorists is one thing; but infringing on the rights, civil and human, of individuals, even of non-citizens, is a different ballgame in the U.S. And there are enough law-makers who would not be afraid to speak up. As this quiet debate

unfolds, politicians are not even talking about the "unconstitutionality" of some of the proposed measures. Many are simply "troubled" by what is unfolding.

Meriting some special attention in the House of Representatives and the Senate are provisions in the planned Anti-Terrorism Bill that seeks to enhance the powers of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS). In particu-

Edward Kennedy, who is the Chairman of the Immigration Sub-Committee of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

However horrific the events of September 11 may have been, there has been another side to the developments that has also attracted some attention in the official establishment — the intimidation, harassment and even killing of people who appeared out of sync with the so-called mainstream. The physical abuses and profanities by even enforcement agencies aside, several persons have been thrown out of aircraft on account of their looks.

What is surprising to many is that in the last two weeks there has not been even a murmur about the intelligence failure on the part of the FBI and the Central Intelligence Agency. The feeling is that this is not the "right" time to be pointing fingers. And law-makers who started off being critical of the leadership of the intelligence agencies have backed off to a very large extent. Now does not seem to be the time to enquire into intelligence lapses. Now is the time to close loopholes.

In normal times, tightening of laws would have caused an uproar and a subject such as the immigration policy is a highly contentious one on account of the ethnic mix of the population and its political underpinnings. But these are extraordinary times in which even law-makers are reluctant to say or do anything for fear of being accused of not falling in line in a time of crisis.

For the most part, the White House and the administration will get away; and the saddest commentary would be that all this is being done in a fashion that smacks of exploiting a troubled and emotional environment. Many Republicans want the Anti-Terrorism Bill out of the way by October 5, the target adjournment date for this session of Congress. The White House led by the Vice-President, Mr. Dick Cheney, has been lobbying for an early legislation, but some Republican law-makers such as Senator Arlen Specter find some things troublesome, especially permission to detain non-citizens "without evidentiary basis".

Pak & Saudi offer air bases to US

HT Correspondent & agencies
Islamabad/Washington/Kabul,
September 28

THE US forces looked poised for a strike on Afghanistan today, after Pakistan's last-ditch attempt to persuade the Taliban leadership to hand over Osama bin Laden failed. A team led by ISI chief Lt Gen Mehmud Ahmed travelled to Kandahar today only to return empty-handed.

While US officials confirmed that they were in touch with Northern Alliance leaders regarding a possible joint operation, the *USA Today* reported that American Special Operations troops have entered Afghanistan.

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Pentagon, however, refused to confirm the incursion into Afghanistan. The groups, three to five member strong, have been told to nab or kill bin Laden. And if that isn't possible to pin him down in an area until US air strikes can be launched.

As fighting between the Taliban and Opposition forces intensified after a two-day lull, Burhanuddin Rabbani, head of the Northern Alliance, today said: "Osama has been moving around too much these days and we need logistical support from the US." He refused to either confirm or deny that Western forces were fighting with his men.

Fuelling speculation that a

war would break out soon, reports from Islamabad said that a Pentagon team that visited Islamabad recently asked Pakistan to allow US war planes use of three forward operating bases. The team, led by Brigadier-General Chilton, discussed with Pak Army Generals the use of Shamsi air base in Baluchistan, Rajanpur in Punjab and Kohat in the NWFP. The Saudis too offered its bases to US fighter jets.

In a statement that seemed to confirm that the US had moved close to striking at Afghanistan, US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said that Islamabad would snap ties with Kabul soon. "Pakistan might

have to chose soon enough."

British scribe held: The Taliban today said they had arrested a British journalist who had entered the country illegally. The journalist was identified as Yvonne Ridley, London-based correspondent for the Sunday Express. Ridley was held with two guides some 15 km from the Pakistani border, near Jalalabad. **PM cancels trip:** Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee today cancelled his trip to Australia and Singapore, following the cancellation of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Brisbane.

More reports on Pages 9, 10 & 11

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 SEP 2001

Now a threat of bacteria, virus rain

HT-41 29/9

London, September 28

FOR THE first 10 days we worried about commercial aeroplanes being hijacked and used as missiles. Now, the American people are worried about a new, even more deadly threat: bacteria and viruses raining from the sky over populated areas, infecting and killing millions of people.

The FBI reports that several hijackers had made a number of visits to a facility in Florida housing crop-duster planes. According to the proprietors, the hijackers asked questions about the load capacity and range of the planes. Universities, including the University of

Michigan, Pennsylvania State, Clemson and Alabama, have barred aircraft from flying over their stadiums for fear of a bio-warfare attack. Policy makers are scurrying to catch up, by allocating funds to stockpile antibiotics and vaccines, and upgrading emergency procedures at hospitals and clinics.

Unfortunately, to date, politicians, military experts and media have skirted a far more troubling reality about bioterrorism. Unlike nuclear bombs, the materials and tools required to create biological warfare agents are easily accessible and cheap, which is why this kind of weapon is often referred to as the "poor man's nuclear bomb". A state-of-the-art biological labo-

proposal to strengthen the biological weapons convention. The stumbling block came around verification procedures that would allow Governments to inspect US biotech companies laboratories. The companies made it clear they would not tolerate monitoring of their facilities for fear of theft of commercial secrets.

Biological warfare involves the use of living organisms for military purposes. Biological weapons can be viral, bacterial, fungal, rickettsial, and protozoan. Biological agents can mutate, reproduce, multiply, and spread over a large geographic terrain by wind, water, insect, animal, and human transmission.

Once released, many biological pathogens are capable of developing viable niches and maintaining themselves in the environment indefinitely. Conventional biological agents include Yersinia pestis (plague), tularemia, rift valley fever, Coxiella burnetii (Q fever), eastern equine encephalitis, anthrax and smallpox.

In a 1995 study, the CIA reported that 17 countries were suspected of researching and stockpiling germ warfare agents, including Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria, North Korea, Taiwan, Israel, Egypt, Vietnam, Laos, Cuba, Bulgaria, India, South Korea, South Africa, China and Russia.

The Guardian

Fighting dirty Chemical weapons
Potential toxic agents for use in warfare

Agent	Impact
Irritants tear gas, sting gas	Tears, itching
Vesicants sulphur mustard, lewisite	Burns, blisters (eyes and throat)
Toxins cyanide	Attacks respiratory system, causes heart failure
Pulmonary agents phosgene	Pulmonary lesions, circulatory and renal problems
Nerve agents sarin, tabun, soman, GF, VX	Nausea, weakness, seizures
Biological weapons	
Bacterial anthrax, bacillus	Respiratory infection, fever, internal and external lesions
Ebola virus	Fever, delirium, bleeding from orifices, convulsions
Botulinum bacteria	Nausea, diarrhoea, respiratory paralysis
Bubonic plague bacteria	Fever, Delirium, respiratory failure
Chemical weapons	
Incipit	Fatal

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

29 SEP 2001

✓
'COMMANDOS SEARCHING CAVES AND BUNKERS' ✓

U.S. forces on hunt for Osama in Afghanistan

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WASHINGTON, SEPT. 28. The U.S. special forces have been in Afghanistan for two weeks searching for Osama bin Laden, prime suspect in the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the *USA Today* reported today.

Citing unidentified senior U.S. and Pakistani officials, the newspaper said the U.S. commandos arrived in Pakistan on September 13 and began moving into Afghanistan with orders to capture or kill Osama or pin him down until the U.S. launched air strikes.

The Pentagon spokesperson, Ms. Victoria Clarke, refused to comment on the report. The Pentagon was not making any comment on the operations, she said. Officials have said the war on terrorism, declared after the attacks in which nearly 6,500 people are dead or missing, would be an unconventional one in which commandos could play a key role.

The newspaper, citing Pentagon officials and Pakistani military officials with direct knowledge of the operations, said the U.S. forces landed in the Pakistani cities of Peshawar and Quetta.

Teams of three to five soldiers, supported by Black Hawk Mh-60K helicopters based outside Afghanistan, began moving into the country to locate Osama,

concentrating their searches in caves and bunkers in southwest Afghanistan near Kandahar, the newspaper said.

It also said the elite troops were having trouble in spotting Osama and had asked other nations for intelligence help.

Quoting U.S. officials, the report said several elite military units were involved in the effort to find Osama, including the Ar-

my's Green Berets, Navy Seals and the British Army's Special Air Services. — Reuters

In hot pursuit, says Bush

AFP reports:

The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, today said the United States was "in hot pursuit" of the authors of September 11 terror strikes on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

"Make no mistake about it: we're in hot pursuit," he said amid news reports that U.S. Special Forces had been searching for Osama bin Laden, whom Mr. Bush has blamed for the attacks, in Afghanistan. "We are going to be patient and diligent and determined to bring people to justice and to root out terrorist activity around the world," he said as he met the Jordan King.— AFP ✓

U.S. plane halts in Delhi for refuelling

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 28. An American military transport aircraft landed at the Palam Air Force base here today. Though officials were willing to confirm the news, no one was prepared to speculate on the mission.

The Hercules C-130 plane is described as useful for airlifting in rough terrain and is a prime transport used by the U.S. Armed Forces for air-dropping troops. The plane arrived at the Palam 'permanent air base' of IAF at 12.30 p.m. from Paylebar near Singapore and left for an 'undisclosed destination' three hours later.

This is the first time in 10 years, after the Gulf War of 1991, that an American military

aircraft has landed in India amid speculation whether it was a dry run for refuelling operations prior to possible strikes on Afghanistan. But some official sources suggested that it landed on the request of the U.S. Government to bring in reinforcements for their Embassy here.

Senior Defence Ministry sources said the aircraft's arrival was "nothing new or startling". A request to this effect was understood to have been made by the American Embassy a few days ago. The aircraft was extended landing facilities under the 'Air Mobilisation Command Movement' that provides for semi-automatic overflight and landing rights to

military aircraft of friendly countries. The permission was given in accordance with the well-laid down procedures of the Ministries of External Affairs and Defence, they suggested. "This is a normal drill. There may be nothing extraordinary about refuelling, if it took place."

The 'Air Mobilisation Command Movement' is given when military assets of a friendly Government have to be shifted from one theatre to another.

Official sources declined to comment on the destination of the aircraft on grounds that its arrival and departure had been accorded "a very high security grading".

THE HINDU

29 SEP 2001

Does US have a plan at all?

R W Apple Jr
Washington, September 27

TWO WEEKS after the devastating attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the question of the hour is: Does the Bush administration have a well-defined plan of action in what it calls the war against terrorism, or is it groping its way toward a plan?

The plan seemed clear enough when President Bush addressed Congress last week, announcing an US-led global assault on terrorism and saying he had called the armed forces to alert for a reason: "The hour is coming when America will act and you will make us proud."

The rhetoric was rousing, but what form of military action to take appears to be an increasingly awkward issue.

For the moment, people in Washington who usually have a pretty clear notion of what the government is up to — including Senators, senior Diplomats and national security specialists — express doubts. Perhaps, several said in recent days, the seeming confusion is all part of a design to keep the enemy in the dark, but perhaps it is something else.

One broad hint that no dramatic attack is imminent came on Tuesday from Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said: "This is not something that begins with a significant event or ends with a significant event." He spoke instead of "incremental steps."

A seasoned Republican military strategist said: "Afghanistan is obviously the initial target, but it isn't easy to decide exactly what to do. There is always the danger of going off half-cocked. It's crucial that we make the first attack an effective one, and I suspect that we don't have enough reliable intelligence yet to make key decisions."

That, in effect, is what the US told its European allies in Brussels today. According to European participants in a closed meeting, American officials cautioned against expectations of any early attack and appealed for help in gathering information on which to base eventual action.

The talk in Brussels was less of any early military action than of trying to break terrorist networks through other means, such as enhanced and better coordinated intelligence gathering.

The US is still undecided about its plan of action.

The Defence Department rushed long-range B-1 and B-52 bombers to the region almost at once. But they have no obvious targets. Bombing Kabul might only create more refugees, who would most likely pour into Pakistan, potentially destabilising a



An airman works on an engine of an A-10 Thunderbolt II at Pope Air Force Base near Fayetteville, North Carolina, on Wednesday.

country on whom the US is heavily dependent for intelligence.

"We could do a lot more harm than good," said a State Department official. "Remember, we didn't get anything out of the carpet-bombing the B-52's did in Vietnam, and we had a lot better target information there than we're ever likely to have in Afghanistan."

Another potential plan, involving action by Afghan dissidents against the country's Islamic Taliban rulers, ran into difficulty almost as soon as it was publicly discussed. The best way to bring those responsible for the September 11 attacks to justice, Bush said, was "to ask for the cooperation of Afghanistan citizens who may be tired of the Taliban."

That seemed like a reference to the Northern Alliance, a loose anti-Taliban coalition that controls only about 10 per cent of Afghanistan. Bush said Washington was "not into nation-building," or building a post-Taliban Afghanistan under a new government, but Pakistan protested just the same.

The biggest debate within the administration — over whether the US should attack Iraq as another supposed sponsor of this month's attacks — appears to have been set aside for the moment, pending the completion of phase one. But the strongest advocates of this option inside

the government, led by Paul D Wolfowitz, the Deputy Secretary of Defence, continue to argue for it, and they have picked up support on Capitol Hill among conservative Republicans.

President Bush, enjoying a 90 percent approval rating, appears to have ample time to unfold his strategy. There is "no blood just in the country at the moment," as a prominent Republican put it.

But eventually he will have to show Americans real progress in the campaign, and pressure for that would mount if another major attack took place here.

The New York Times

US warns against travel to Indonesia

Washington, September 27

THE US State Department on Wednesday advised Americans to put off any plans to travel to Indonesia, citing safety concerns following the terror strikes.

The department authorised the evacuation of non-emergency US Government staff and family members. "The September 11 terrorist attacks in the US have added to concerns about the security situation for American citizens resident in or travelling through Indonesia," the State Department said in a statement.

"All Americans in Indonesia are urged to consider their personal security and to take those measures they deem appropriate to ensure their well-being, including leaving the country," it said.

Bangla warning

THE US on Wednesday warned Americans to keep a low profile in Bangladesh as voters in one of the world's poorest and most populous Muslim countries go to the polls on Monday after a bloody election campaign.

Reuters

Afghanistan's Taliban regime

Command Structure

Supreme Shura
The movement's founders, gathered around Mullah Omar based at Kandahar

Ministerial Shura
Government, ministerial cabinet based at Kabul

Military Shura
Led by Mullah Omar, comprises the main military chiefs

Council
Several leaders sit on all three Shuras

The key figures

- 1) Mullah Mohammad Omar
Commander of the Faithful
Supreme chief
Kabul
- 2) Mohammad Hassan
Deputy president of the government
- 3) Mullah Mohammad Hassan Rahmani
Governor of Kandahar
- 4) Mullah Ubaidullah
Defence Minister
- 5) Mullah Nuruddin Turabi
Justice Minister

Lonely time for militia's sole ambassador

Islamabad, September 27

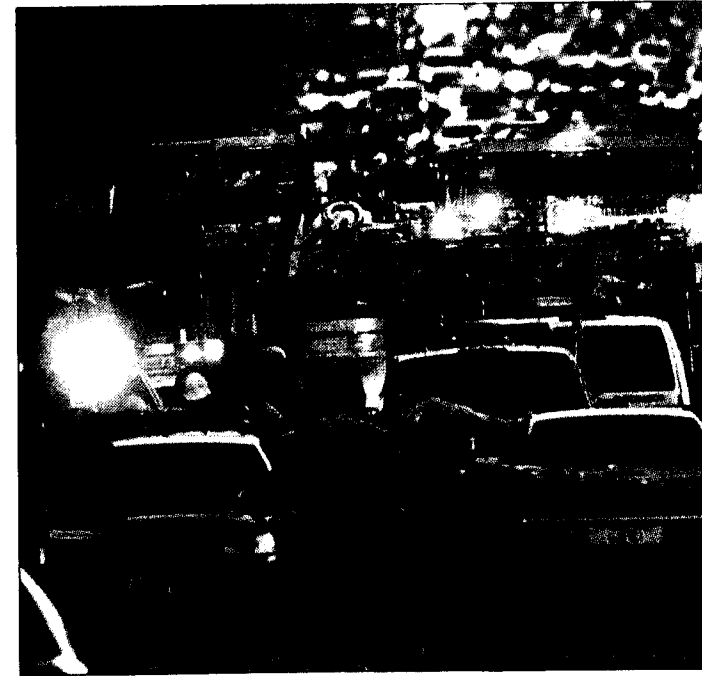
LIFE FOR the last Taliban Ambassador is becoming decidedly lonely. Before the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington blamed on Afghanistan's "guest" Osama bin Laden, US diplomats in Pakistan occasionally met Abdul Salam Zaeef, Ambassador for Afghanistan's ruling Taliban. Not now.

When US Ambassador Wendy Chamberlin arrived at a dinner on Wednesday night, she chatted to everyone at the party. Except Zaeef. Chamberlin slid by the Ambassador without even a glance in his direction — quietly asking photographers to not have both of them in the same frame. An aide to Zaeef said earlier he would try to talk with the US envoy if she came to the dinner, hosted by a Pakistani politician. Instead the Afghans sat at a separate table and left early.

Reuters

Toxic fume alarm at Los Angeles subway

Los Angeles, September 27



Police and fire vehicles block a subway after passengers complained of dizziness and itching in eyes and throats in Los Angeles on Wednesday.

LOS ANGELES authorities evacuated the city's busiest subway line on Wednesday after passengers complained of dizziness and itching eyes and throats, but found no signs of hazardous chemicals or biological materials.

It was the first time that the city's entire Metro Red Line system was shut down and evacuated for a possible emergency and officials said they were prompted in part by the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

"We spent more than an hour sweeping the entire Metro Red Line Station with sophisticated instruments, checking every square inch and after the search we determined that there was no evidence whatsoever of any known hazardous material, chemical, biological or nerve agents," said Los Angeles City fire department spokesman Brian Humphrey.

Two Los Angeles police officers and a woman in her 70s were

taken to local hospitals for tests and treatment, but authorities later reopened the subway line. An adjoining subway line, the Metro Blue Line, was also partially closed in the scare and later reopened.

Humphrey said officials did not consider the incident "mass hysteria" but acknowledged that it was possible the affected passengers had reacted to a relatively harmless substance. "It could be as simple as perfume with very strong perfume or someone who accidentally released pepper spray," Humphrey said. "It could be somebody with a rotten sandwich in their lunch pail. These are things we've responded to in the past." The fire department spokesman added: "We can offer total reassurance that the station and system remain free of any hazardous agent."

More than two dozen people complained of some symptoms during the incident, but most were examined at the scene and released, authorities said.

Reuters



Jackson considers Taliban's peace delegation invite

Washington, September 27

CIVIL RIGHTS leader Jesse Jackson today said he was considering whether to accept an invitation from Taliban to lead a peace delegation to Pakistan.

The White House was urging him not to go.

Jackson, indicating he may try to help free two US relief workers, said he had talked today to the parents of Heather Mercer and Dayna Curry, who are being held along with six other foreign aid workers by the Taliban for allegedly preaching Christianity. "There is nothing to be gained by holding them as trophies of this war," Jackson said on *The Early Show* on CBS.

Jackson said he received an invitation yesterday from a Taliban spokesman and immediately notified Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice.

Powell's deputy Richard Armitage was asked on NBC's *Today* whether he would encourage Jackson to make the trip.

"I wouldn't," Armitage replied. "It seems to me they (the militia) are trying to delay making a decision on their own. Secretary Powell informed the Rev Jackson that the demands laid on the Taliban by our President are not negotiable."

AP

Osama's nuclear lab and Russian mafia links

Washington, September 27

OSAMA BIN Laden and his terrorist group, al-Qaida, are acquiring components for weapons of mass destruction from the Russian mafia, *The Washington Times* reports.

Bin Laden, the key suspect in the September 11 terrorist attacks, is also believed by US intelligence to have a secret nuclear weapons laboratory inside Afghanistan, officials said on condition of anonymity.

There is no hard evidence that bin Laden or al-Qaida have actually produced chemical, biological

or nuclear weapons. A CIA spokesman declined to comment on this issue.

A US official said contacts between bin Laden and the Russian mafia could not be ruled out because of Afghanistan's porous borders, *The Times* reports. The official suggested that the reports about the contacts could not be confirmed independently by US intelligence agencies.

US intelligence agencies have information that bin Laden is operating a nuclear weapons laboratory in Afghanistan, reports *The Times*. The laboratory is believed to be where bin Laden

associates are working on developing nuclear or radiological weapons. Radiological weapons are bombs that kill by spreading radioactive material. This is believed to be one of the sites

PAK NUKE WARNING

RUSSIAN DEFENCE Minister Sergei Ivanov has said Pakistan's nuclear arsenal may fall into the hands of Islamic extremists who are against Islamabad's support to US-led coalition against terrorism.

PTI, Moscow

sought for US military strikes.

A recent foreign intelligence service report stated that the al-Qaida has obtained some type of nuclear device, but US intelligence officials said they could not confirm that report. The new intelligence report on bin Laden's contacts with the Russian mafia provides new details on al-Qaida's efforts to obtain weapons of mass destruction.

Intelligence officials say classified analysis of the types of chemicals and toxins sought by al-Qaida indicate the group is trying to produce the nerve agent Sarin, or biological weapons

made up of anthrax spores.

The FBI has obtained specific threats since the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon that terrorists plan to retaliate for any US strikes on Afghanistan or terrorists around the world by using chemical or biological weapons, officials said.

Russian crime groups also have provided bin Laden's extremists with small arms, the US intelligence officials say. They also are believed to help bin Laden launder the proceeds from drug trafficking.

USA Today

Air Control Squadron One personnel in Yuma, Arizona carry out a drill over Camp Pendleton in California.

U.S., Pak teams will sleuth jointly to track down Osama

ISLAMABAD: American and Pakistani intelligence experts have agreed to work together to track down Saudi renegade Osama bin Laden even as the Pakistani police launched a nationwide hunt to track down people with possible links with the mastermind of the September 11 attacks in the U.S., Pakistani sources said on Thursday.

The accord was reached after three days of talks between a visiting U.S. defence team and its Pakistani counterpart.

In a related development, the CIA has proposed a joint intelligence team comprising sleuths from Pakistan, Russia, the U.S. and Tajikistan to trace Bin Laden and to coordinate possible U.S. attacks on Afghanistan, according to media reports. However, there was no official confirmation.

The sources also quoted a senior official as saying that the Pakistani police had detained several persons suspected to be connected with Bin Laden. "They have been picked up for interrogation and are likely to provide vital information about Bin Laden," the official was quoted as saying.

But no one had so far been formally arrested, said Syed Kamal Shah, inspector-general of police

in Southern Sindh province.

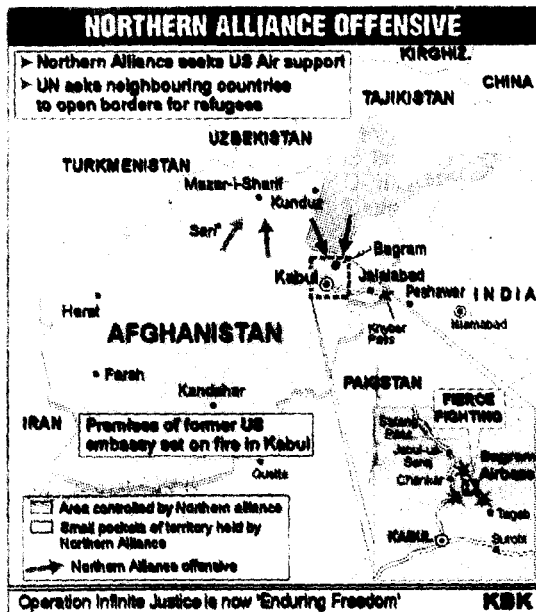
With a military strike seeming imminent with the Taliban's refusal to hand over Bin Laden, Pakistan has sent a delegation of pro-Taliban Islamic leaders to prevail on the ruling militia for a

e-Ulema chief Sammi-ul Haq and Jamat-e-Islam leader Moulana Fazlur Rehman, will meet Taliban leader Mullah Omar on Friday in another effort to prevent a war.

The *Daily Nation* reported that the delegation had the official stamp of approval as the three leaders met Gen Pervez Musharraf on Wednesday. Although officials denied the meeting, well-informed sources confirmed it and said that the delegation had since left Islamabad.

Meanwhile, General Fahim, military commander of the Northern Alliance, said the opposition was prepared to work with anyone who wanted to see peace in the war-ravaged country, including the deposed king, Zahir Shah. "If any Afghan group or individual wants to work for peace in Afghanistan, we are prepared to work with them," he told the BBC.

Abdullah Abdullah, another top opposition figure, said the Northern Alliance had sent a delegation to Rome to meet the former king to discuss convening a council with all ethnic groups that could appoint a provisional government. "It is about the future political set-up, post-Taliban arrangements," he said of the mission to Rome. (Agencies)



peaceful solution even as moves to build a post-Taliban government in Afghanistan got under way on Thursday despite insistence by the U.S. that it was not out to topple the Islamic fundamentalist regime.

A team of Pakistan's Islamic party leaders, including Jamat-e-Islami chief Qazi Hussain, Jamat-

U.S. sensitive to Pak. allergy to Northern Alliance

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 26. The Bush administration is sensitive to the political compulsions of Islamabad, vis-a-vis the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan; and the point being made here is that any reference to the Northern Alliance is strictly in the context of "terrorism."

On Tuesday, when asked if the Northern Alliance would be encouraged to occupy more areas in Afghanistan, restricting the space of the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, the White House spokesman, Mr. Ari Fleischer, said, "the U.S. welcomes the efforts of the Northern Alliance and anybody else to put an end to those who sponsor terrorism and to fight those who sponsor terrorism."

In the context of Pakistan's concerns over any outside effort to "instal" a regime in Kabul, the

administration has been quite careful on defining the post-Osama phase. Militarily, it is keen on propping up the Northern Alliance and has welcomed the Russian offer of equipping these forces as well.

At the same time, Washington is aware of the operational limitations and the concerns voiced over the Northern Alliance, especially those pertaining to drug-trafficking. The Pentagon is said to be weighing the options. "It is a little like a billiard table trying to figure out exactly how it might happen," the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, said.

A State Department official said the Pakistan Foreign Minister, Mr. Abdul Sattar, was correct when he expressed concern over the imposition of a Government in Kabul from outside, especially one that was hostile to the interests of Islamabad. There are no easy an-

swers to Afghanistan and there is the realisation that backing the Northern Alliance has its share of problems. "The Northern Alliance is not a silver bullet," has been the refrain in official quarters. Even within the political establishment, there are definite qualms about backing it, given the Alliance's historically close ties with the Russians. Both Washington and Moscow will be viewing each other with suspicion in this business.

On the one hand, the State Department acknowledges that the administration officials have been in "close contact" with the leadership of the Alliance and, on the other, there is the standard response of what the political landscape in Afghanistan should look like — a "broad-based government"; and a regime that has little patience for terrorism or gives any quarter to extremist outfits.

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27 SEP 2001

27 SEP 2001

How a tower turned into a cloud of dust

WARREN E. LEARY

LITTLE is left but rubble and dust. The degree of destruction at the World Trade Center after the terrorist attacks seems almost beyond comprehension. But understanding the natural forces that contributed to the disaster can help explain the destruction of the twin towers, why they came crashing down the way they did and why enormous clouds of dust erupted from site, experts say.

The buildings contained more than 200,000 tons of steel, 425,000 cubic yards of concrete and 600,000 square feet of glass in 43,000 windows. Each floor, a reinforced concrete pad on a metal deck supported by steel cross beams, was about one acre in area and weighed about 4.8 million pounds.

Experts said the size and weight of the concrete floor pads, and the way in which they collapsed onto one another, contributed to so much of the mass of each building being smashed into small pieces and to the formation of huge clouds of dust and ash. Demolition engineers said that as each concrete floor in a falling building pancakes into the one below it, their combined weight grows so large that they and everything in their path break into pieces, and the pieces are pounded smaller and smaller until mostly dust and small rubble remain.

Dr. Frank A. Moscatelli, a professor of physics at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, calculated that the total energy released in the disaster was equivalent to the explosion of 600 tons of TNT. This energy discharge, which takes into account the weight of the airplanes that struck the buildings, their speed at impact, the jet fuel and the mass of the buildings, is about one-twentieth of that released by the 10 kiloton atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima, he said.

Engineers believe that the steel framework of the buildings buckled from the heat of the fire, causing the upper floors to collapse, which initiated an unstoppable chain reaction like the process often used intentionally by demolition experts who bring down buildings with the strategic placement of small explosive charges.

Once the mass of the upper part of a building begins to fall, Moscatelli said, it gains momentum that adds to the force the structure below has to resist. "If the rest of the building can't do it, everything begins to fall straight down," he said.

Jon D. Magnusson, chairman and chief executive of Skilling Ward Magnusson Barkshire in Seattle, a structural engineering company that worked out the original Center design, said the enormous energy released in the collapse was enough to pulverize the 110-story towers and their contents.

As the buildings fell, large plumes of dust billowed from the structures in what appeared to be high-speed jets. Engineers said compression of the buildings' air propelled the dust. "People don't think about it, but there is a large amount of air in a structure," said James Redyke, president of Dykon Blasting, a demolition company in Okla. "A building is like an accordion, and when it collapses the air has to exit someplace. It exits at a pretty good volume, carrying all the dust from concrete, sheetrock and other things inside."

An initial analysis of the Center disaster released last week by Risk Management Solutions of Newark, Calif., a company that analyses catastrophes for the insurance industry and others, estimated that the pancake collapse of the tower floors produced a major airborne "debris surge". This cloud, which it said initially spread at more than 50 miles per hour, dumped significant deposits of dust more than a half mile from the site and small amounts up to two miles away.

Larry Gilmore, president of Controlled Blasting, a demolition company in Norcross, Ga., said the large cloud of dust coming from the fall of a tall structure was from more than the displacement of air inside. Watching tapes of the New York disaster, he said he noticed another phenomenon seen during controlled demolitions. "As a building falls, it pulls the atmosphere down with it, creating a vacuum behind it," Gilmore said. "Air rushes into the space that has been evacuated above and cre-

ates a downdraft that hits the debris below, pushing even more dust out with great force."

Magnusson and others said they were initially surprised that the buildings went straight down without sliding to the side or toppling, which would have greatly increased the loss of life and damage to the surrounding area. Pictures of the collapse indicate that the buildings' outer support structures may have helped guide the falling floors, he said.

The buildings had a so-called metal tube structure design, which consisted of hundreds of steel columns spaced around the outer face of each tower to give the structures stiffness and to support much of their weight, including the floor pads. This outer ring was connected by steel trusses to a cluster of metal columns in the center that supported core components such as elevators and stairs, as well as part of each concrete floor. Magnusson said the outer tubes of the buildings seemed to keep the concrete floors aligned as they fell. "As you look at the videotape, it seems that as the building frame peels back, it stays long enough for the floors to pass," he said. The reason the buildings stood and the reason they went straight down was that strong exterior tube.

(The New York Times News Service)



TEHERAN OPPOSES WASHINGTON'S MOVES

Abandoned U.S. embassy in Kabul stormed

ws (10) 10/1 2/19

KABUL, SEPT. 26. Shouting "Long live Osama!" and "Death to America!" protesters burned American flags and an effigy of the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, then stormed the U.S. Embassy compound in the Afghan capital, torching old cars and a guardhouse and tearing down the U.S. seal above the entrance.

The demonstration, organised by students of the Kabul University, was the largest anti-American protest since the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

The old embassy compound, abandoned since 1988, was guarded by a few Afghan security guards, who were no match for the crowd. Smoke billowed into the sky after about five vehicles were set afire on the embassy compound, and several men used hammers to remove the large circular U.S. seal above the front entrance. Taliban authorities eventually dispersed the protesters and extinguished the car fires.

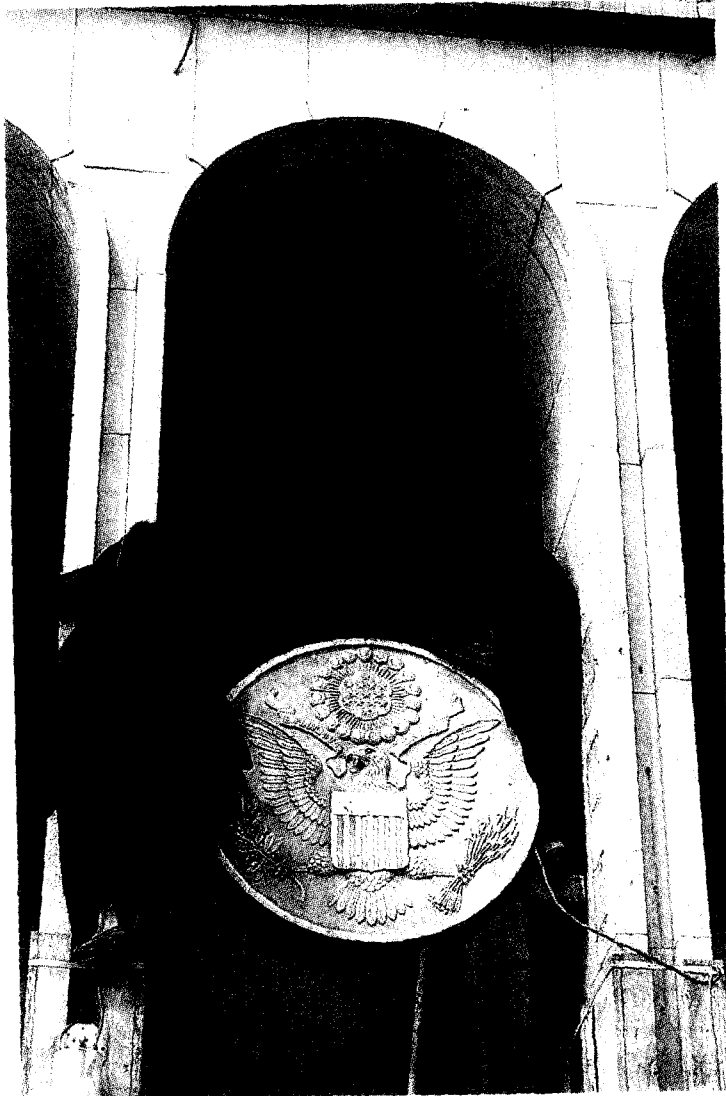
In northern Afghanistan, where the opposition Northern Alliance is fighting troops of the Taliban Government for key territory, heavy new fighting was reported.

Radio Kabul quoted unidentified Afghan Government officials as saying Taliban forces pushed back opposition troops in the Razi district of Badghis province in northwestern Afghanistan.

U.S., Pak. reach agreement

In Islamabad, senior Pakistani officials said Pakistani and U.S. defence and intelligence officials had reached a broad agreement on an anti-terror programme that included some provisions for possible attacks on terrorist bases in Afghanistan, but that some sticking points remained.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the officials said both



Two Afghan protesters trying to remove the emblem of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul on Wednesday. — Reuters

sides wanted to minimise the use of ground forces in any strike. They also said some differences emerged during talks that began on Monday between high-rank-

ing Pakistani officials and an American delegation that includes senior defence and intelligence representatives.

The points of disagreement in-

clude whether the U.S. or other outside parties should lend support to the opposition alliance, something Pakistan — the only country that still has diplomatic ties with the Taliban — has expressed strong misgivings over.

Other points of contention: what action is warranted against Pakistan-based militant groups, and whether or not the U.N. should approve any operation against Afghanistan.

Pro-Govt. rally attacked

On Wednesday, attackers threw a grenade and opened fire on hundreds of people gathering in Karachi for what would have been the first public meeting supporting Gen. Musharraf. At least 12 people were injured, police and witnesses said.

Meanwhile, opposition to a possible U.S. strike against Afghanistan gained momentum, with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, terming the U.S. "disgusting" and vowing that his country would not cooperate with any U.S.-led attack on Afghanistan.

In a state-run television address to the nation, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said the U.S. administration was "over-expectant" in wanting the whole world to help it following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"Iran will not participate in any move under U.S. leadership. Iran will not extend any assistance to the U.S. and its allies in attacking the already suffering Muslim neighbouring Afghanistan," Ayatollah Khamenei said in an address to families of soldiers killed in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

China, which has called for a dominant role for the United Nations in the fight against terrorism, seems reluctant to authorise a U.S.-led military strike.

There are reports that religious extremists in Indonesia have taken to the streets and are even "searching" hotels in Jakarta in central Java for Americans. — AP

Pak cries away from hostile action

US embassy in Kabul torched; Dostum 'dead'

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 26. — Pakistan today said that though it supported the global coalition against terrorism, it wouldn't take part in any "hostile action" against Afghanistan.

Thousands of Afghans stormed the abandoned US embassy compound in Kabul today, setting fire to vehicles and ripping down the large medal seal on the front of the chancellery. They torched the building too.

The Pakistani foreign office spokesman, Mr Riyaz Khan, said: "Pakistan can't and can never join any hostile action against Afghanistan or its people."

He said Islamabad was "deeply conscious that destinies of the two peoples and the two countries are intertwined", but hastened to add his government was part of the global coalition against terrorism.

As the US-led campaign against the Taliban gathers pace, Mr Khan said Islamabad favoured formation of a broad-based government in Kabul to end Afghanistan's internal strife. He said all Afghans, regardless of their orientation, should unite.

On the foreign minister comment yesterday that foreign powers shouldn't side with anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan, he said what Mr Abdul Sattar meant was that no government could be foisted on the Afghans.

On Osama's whereabouts, he said: "We don't have any information about him or about leaders of Al-Qaida."

Before attacking the embassy building, the protesters marched through the streets shouting "Long live Osama," and "Down with America." They burnt an effigy of the US President and an American flag.

'Dostum dead': In its renewed fighting with the Taliban, the Northern Alliance has reportedly lost one of its key commanders, Abdul Rasheed Dostum. He's said to have been killed near Mazar-e-Sharif town, RIA-

Novosti said from Teheran. However, the Afghan embassy in Moscow and Northern Alliance headquarters in Khoja Bhaautdin denied the report.

The Alliance has reportedly captured three strategic heights in Takhar province, clearing that way for launching an offensive to liberate the key town of Imam Sahib captured by the militia last year. The TV RTR said hundreds of Taliban and Pakistani men have been taken prisoners.

Pakistani regulars have reportedly abandoned positions in north Afghanistan as opposition forces advanced. Pakistani army units holding Taliban front on Kokcha river have retreated without posing any resistance to Alliance forces, ORT TV said.

IMF loan: The IMF today approved the final tranche of Pakistan's \$596 million stand-by loan. The third and final tranche of the loan, which was set to expire on 30 September, is around \$130 million.

'No toppling game'

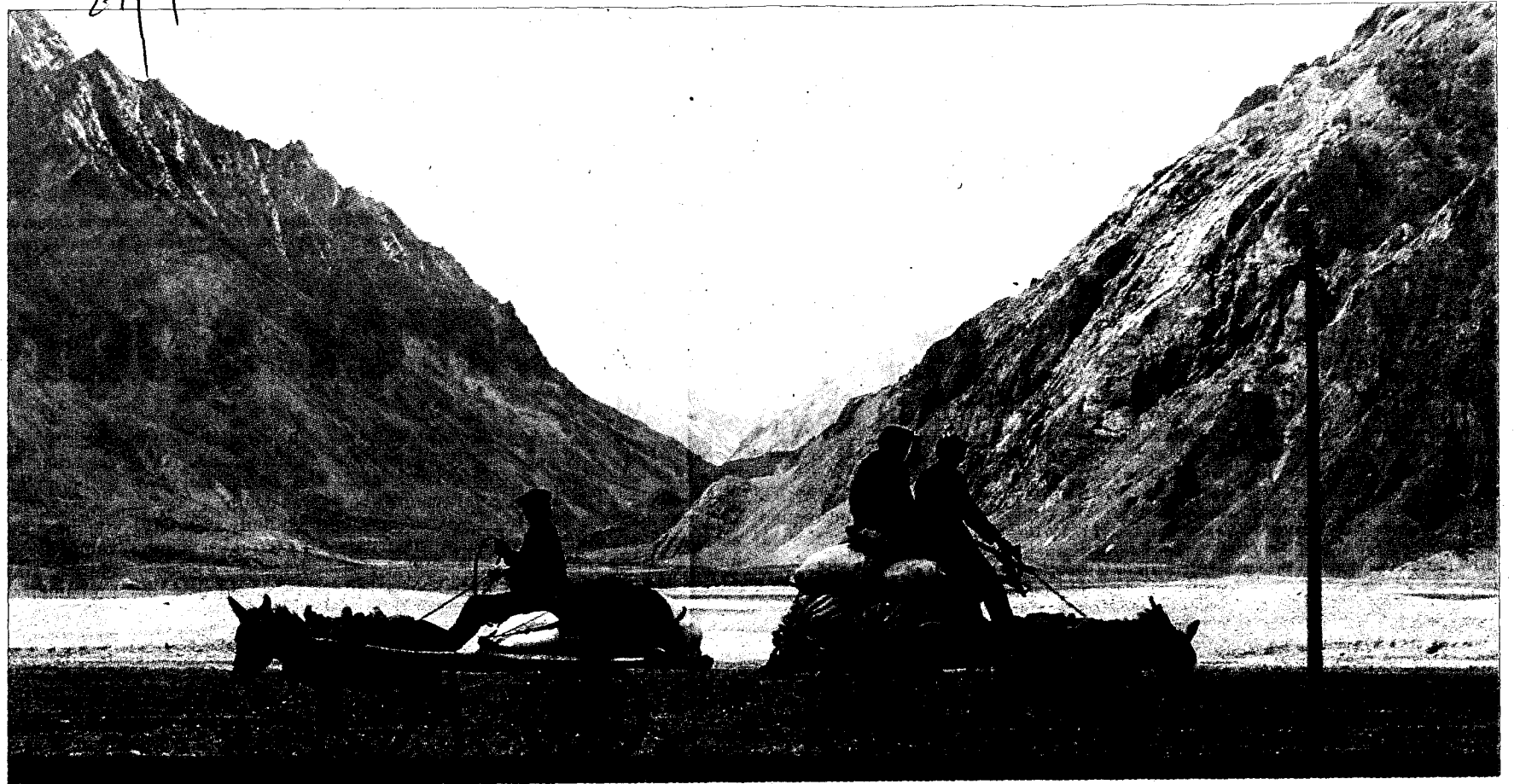
The USA has said it wouldn't topple the Taliban, but target it for harbouring and supporting terrorists, a report from Washington adds.

"You're assuming the objective here is to remove a regime," the White House spokesman, Mr Ari Fleischer, said yesterday when asked whether the administration was planning to set up a UN protectorate in Afghanistan.

Mr George W Bush today preached religious unity, in a bid to quell any anti-Muslim backlash after the 11 September attacks and preempt charges that the war on terrorism is a battle against Islam.

Mr Bush met Sikh and Muslim leaders at the White House and said: "We're all Americans."

- Editorial: Of God and war; page 6
- More reports on pages 5 and 8



Chinese Tajik farmers pass each other on the Karakoram highway, leading to Pakistan, in Xinjiang province on Tuesday. The pass behind them leads to the Chinese border with Afghanistan. — AP/PTI

NORTHERN ALLIANCE OFFENSIVE

UN asks neighbouring countries to open borders for refugees

Operation Infinite Justice is now 'Enduring Freedom' KBK

USA shifts focus to Central Asia

SNS & Agencies

NEW DELHI, Sept. 26. — The US military efforts could now depend on naval operations from the Gulf and former Soviet states in Central Asia with Pakistan refusing to participate in joint action against Afghanistan. The USA is also not satisfied with Intelligence inputs from Pakistan.

Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are already being used as launchpads. Afghan dissidents, General Dostum, an Uzbek, and the supporters of late Gen Ahmed Shah Masood, a Tajik, operate from these countries.

The two US carriers, *USS Enterprise* and *USS Carl Vincent*, are within striking range, 150 km south-west of Karachi. The *USS Roosevelt* should be in its appointed place in about 48 hours. That would ensure enough aircraft—probably, the F-18E Hornet—to strike targets in Afghanistan. Refuelling in mid-air would be easy. The carrier battle-groups have guided missile ships of the Aegis and Los Angeles class, carrying the Tomahawk cruise LAM-C missile, usually used against conventional targets.

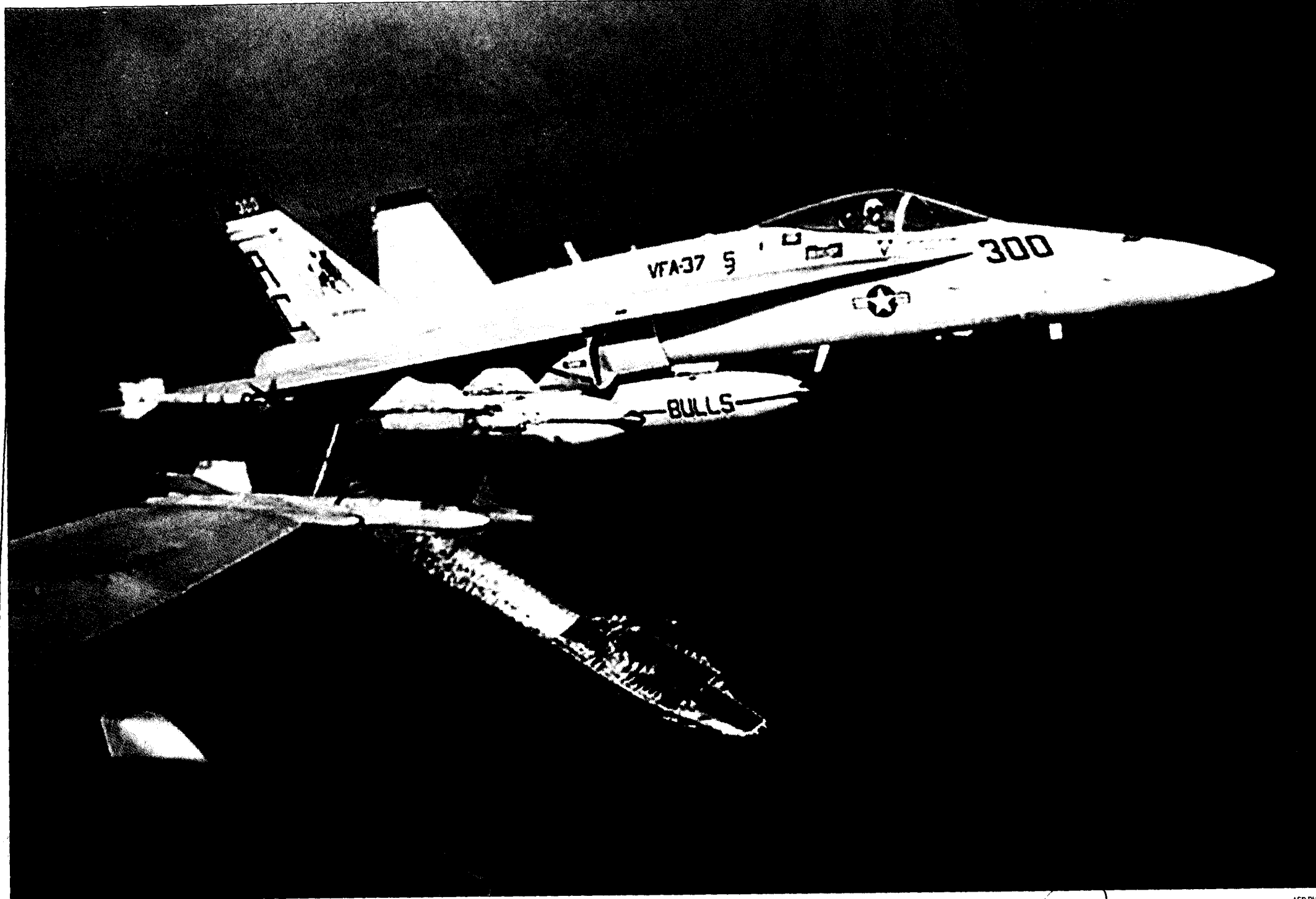
Defence sources said the US military delegation, led by a brigadier-general has returned from Pakistan, not entirely happy with Intelligence inputs from Pakistan. "All is not hunky-dory there. The Americans are realising that," an official said.

The Central Asian option becomes important since Pakistan today said it can join the global coalition against terrorism, but can never be part of any action against Afghanistan.

"Pakistan can't and can never join any hostile action against Afghanistan or Afghan people," the Pakistan foreign office spokesman, Mr Riaz Muhammad Khan, said.

"We are conscious that destinies of the two people and two countries are intertwined," he said, adding that Pakistan and USA had not made any specific plans of hitting the Taliban regime. Pakistan, despite withdrawing diplomatic staff from Afghanistan, has not broken off ties with Kabul.

The US forces in Central Asia have built up to a great extent and if they are moving helicopters there, it's possible small groups of special forces may be used



An F/A-18C Hornet of strike fighter squadron three seven (VFA-37), The Raging Bulls, passes over the carrier USS Enterprise.

Taliban to lift opium ban if US attacks

Luke Harding
Islamabad, September 25

IN A dramatic and little-noticed reversal of policy, the Taliban have told farmers in Afghanistan that they are free to start planting poppy seeds again if the Americans decide to launch a military attack.

Drug enforcement agencies last night confirmed that they expect to see a massive resumption of opium cultivation inside Afghanistan, previously the world's biggest supplier of heroin, in the next few weeks.

The Taliban virtually eradicated Afghanistan's opium crop last season after an edict by Mullah Mohammad Omar, the Taliban leader.

In July last year he said that growing opium was "un-Islamic" and warned that anyone caught planting seeds would be severely punished.

Taliban soldiers enforced the ruling two summers ago and made thousands of villagers across Afghanistan plough up their fields. Earlier this year UN observers agreed that Afghanistan's opium crop had been completely wiped out.

Last night Bernard Frahi, the head of the UN's drugs control programme (UNDCP) in Islamabad, confirmed that the price of opium had suddenly plunged. Existing opium stockpiles had fallen in value because of the prospect of new cultivation. "Our sources tell us the price has decreased," he said.

Farmers were also ready to exploit the fact that no new post-Taliban administration was likely to be in place in Kabul before next spring. "All the ingredients for illicit cultivation are there: war, continuing poverty and a breakdown in law and order. We could see a huge resumption in cultivation," Frahi said.

The farmers are expected to begin planting poppy seeds in the next few weeks. The traditional planting season is from mid-October to late November or early December.

Although opium grows across Afghanistan, the main area of cultivation has been the fertile Helmand valley in the south, and around Jalalabad in the east.

Opium has flourished in Afghanistan since the time of Alexander the Great, when it was used as medicine. But under the Taliban production increased

spectacularly, to the point where Afghanistan supplied 80 per cent of Europe's heroin. In the year before Mullah Omar's edict, some 82,000 hectares of land were planted with poppy.

Last night one Afghan trader, who had just fled from Afghanistan, said the price of opium per kilo had now fallen from 50,000 Pakistani rupees (£525) to 10,000 rupees (£105). Everybody was trying to offload existing stocks, he said.

"Almost all Afghans will cultivate poppy as it is their only cash crop. They can't cultivate other crops as the soil is fit only for poppy cultivation," he claimed.

Mullah Omar's now defunct ruling caused deep resentment among impoverished Afghans in rural areas, who were forced last year to plant wheat instead.

Previously, farmers with a few acres of land were able to make up to £350 in a good season from growing opium, a small fortune in a country where the average monthly salary is only £3. The crop is known locally as hashar.

"We don't have anything," Rashid, a farmer in the village of Hadda in eastern Afghanistan, lamented in March. "All the young people have gone to Pakistan. Ninety per cent of this area used to be cultivated with poppy. How much money can you make from wheat?"

Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the Taliban's foreign affairs spokesman, complained earlier this year that the international community had not rewarded Afghanistan for wiping out opium — an "epic task", he said. "The response to this tremendous achievement was unexpected. They imposed more and more sanctions on us," he added.

With Afghanistan's borders now officially closed it is not clear how any new crop will be shipped out of the country after harvesting early next year.

Most observers, however, believe dealers will make use of existing smuggling routes, via Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan's lawless northern neighbours, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

The UNDCP last night said it had lost touch with its local staff inside Afghanistan following the Taliban's edict to hang anyone found using a satellite phone.

Taliban officials in Islamabad were unable to confirm that Mullah Omar's edict had been abandoned.

Pakistan unlocks border to Afghan refugees

Quetta, September 25

PAKISTAN ON Tuesday reopened a southwestern border to allow the entry of Afghan refugees fleeing possible US attacks against the Taliban, an immigration official said.

"Yes, formally the border opened this morning at Chaman and Afghan families waiting in Weesh have started entering Pakistan," an officer at the border said by telephone.

The border was closed last week to Afghans without valid visas amid fears that Pakistan would be overwhelmed by a flood

of refugees. "Refugees arriving at the Chaman border are being shifted to a new Afghan refugee camp at Boghrah," the immigration officer said. The new camp has been set up about 10 km from the border town.

Determined to control the latest influx of refugees and to prevent clashes with local residents if the US strikes Taliban with Pakistani support, security measures for the camp were tight.

It had been surrounded by barbed wire to restrict movement of refugees and all arrivals would be disarmed.

Hundreds of tents had been set

up in the camp and other arrangements were being made to help refugees, he said. Some Afghan families were allowed to slip over the border late on Monday after authorities said they planned to relax the entry ban.

The UN warned on Monday that Afghanistan was plunging into a crisis of "stunning proportions" after Taliban crippled humanitarian relief projects there.

"We urge a world wounded by the September 11 attacks to protect civilians, especially millions of children and women," six UN agencies with aid projects in Afghanistan said. Reuters

Relieved Kabulis return home

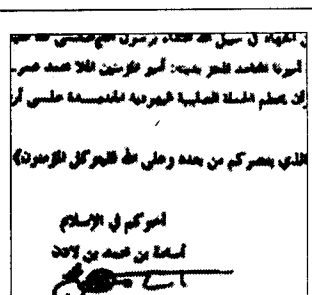
MANY KABUL residents who had fled the city for fear of a US attack are returning to the capital in the belief that residential areas will not be targeted.

After several days during which the city was tense and sombre, the mood today seemed to be lighter with more people out and about and more shops open.

"We went to Logar (the province south of Kabul) but we decided to come back," Abdul Haq, a 42-year-old Kabuli said.

"At the beginning people believed that the United States would attack Kabul and that residential areas would not be spared but now it does not seem so sure that will happen," he said.

Ajmal Jamal, 28, said the fact that the United States had not struck back at Afghanistan in the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington had encouraged optimism that its response would be measured. AFP, Kabul



A COPY OF OSAMA'S STATEMENT

The sign of an egoist

THE SIGNATURE on Osama bin Laden's statement urging resistance to "American crusader forces" shows a giant ego with a large libido and a thirst for vengeance, said British handwriting experts.

A team of graphologists quoted on

26 SEP 2001
THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

Landmark: Straw meets Kharrazi

REUTERS

TEHRAN, SEPTEMBER 25

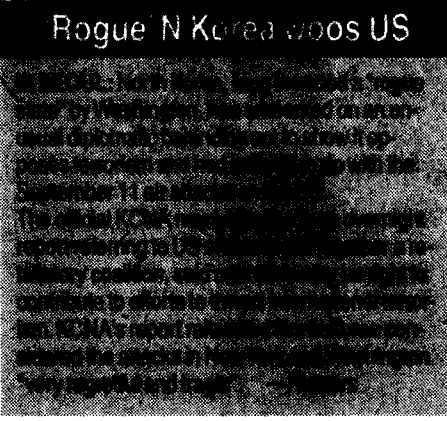
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BRITISH Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, on the first visit to Iran by a British Foreign Minister in over 20 years, met his counterpart Kamal Kharrazi on Tuesday to discuss this month's deadly attacks in the US.

Straw told mediapersons on arrival that he was not bringing a message from Britain's close ally the US about the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon that killed thousands. "No," he replied when asked if he was delivering a message from US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Straw, making the first visit by a British Foreign Minister since Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution, made no comment as he began his meeting with Kharrazi. He is also due to meet President Mohammad Khatami to discuss closer Iranian cooperation in the fight against "terrorism" after the suicide-hijack assaults.

Washington wants Afghan-based Islamic mil-



itant Osama bin Laden "dead or alive" for what it sees as his guiding hand in the attacks. Bin Laden has denied any role.

Some reports, denied by Iran, had suggested Straw might be carrying a message from Washington to try and secure Tehran's help, or at least acquiescence, in US strikes in Afghanistan.

Rogue N Korea woos US

Iran was quick to condemn the attacks, a reaction which pleased many in the West and gave rise to hopes of new cooperation with Tehran. But many conservative Iranians see possible US action in Afghanistan as evidence that Washington aims to expand its influence in the region, at the expense of Muslims.

Iran has welcomed a war on terrorism, but says it must be under the umbrella of the UN and not a unilateral action. Tehran fears a flood of Afghan refugees if the US launches retaliation strikes against neighbouring Afghanistan.

Iranian police arrested 20 people taking part in a demonstration outside the British embassy on Monday in protest against the visit, a senior Iranian official said. The protests were the first sign of internal opposition to any Iranian decision to join the West against Afghanistan.

"Death to America, death to Britain," the small group of hardline protesters chanted. "The US cannot do a damn thing," said one banner, quoting the architect of the Islamic Republic, the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Vietnam

INDIAN EXPRESS

26 SEP 2001

WS (W)

Uzbek-U.S. deal over base

HQ-13
26/9

By Atul Aneja

MOSCOW, SEPT. 25. Uzbekistan, which straddles the northern end of the Afghan border, is in the process of positioning U.S. planes on its soil. These aircraft, along with other aviation hardware for surveillance, are being landed at the Tuzel military base, not far from Tashkent. While the U.S. is looking at Pakistan to counter the Taliban in the south, Uzbekistan is becoming its foremost regional ally in the north.

The unmanned spy plane, which the Taliban has shot down in Afghanistan, was launched from the Central Asian republic of Uzbekistan, and not Pakistan.

The assessment here is that the Uzbek government, led by the President, Mr. Islam Karimov, has struck a deal with the U.S. over base facilities without taking Russia into confidence. Russia, which zealously guards its Central Asian backyard

against external interference, has taken notice of Mr. Karimov's "defiance". But Moscow, which has enormous leverage over Uzbekistan, is unlikely to act in a hurry. Its assertion is expected to come later and at a time when domestic opposition in Uzbekistan against Mr. Karimov's decision mounts. Moscow is aware that any turmoil in Uzbekistan will force the U.S. to recognise it as the foremost power broker in the region.

Sources pointed out that the U.S. recourse to Uzbekistan as a staging post was reinforced by the reluctance of Tajikistan — another Central Asian republic on Afghanistan's northern frontline — to hand over its bases for air attacks against the Taliban.

Tajikistan, which shares a 1,500-km-long border with Afghanistan, is a close ally of the Russians. In fact, its national security depends on the pres-

ence of around 30,000 troops, which Russia has positioned on its soil. Apart from the Russian leverage, the anticipation of extreme internal political dissent is discouraging it to give the U.S. access to its air bases.

Turkmenistan is the third country in the region which borders Afghanistan for 744 km. It is, however, unlikely to provide facilities to the U.S. as it has signed a treaty with Russia, which virtually makes Moscow the custodian of its defence.

Tajikistan's fears that the U.S. access to bases would trigger unacceptable resistance is mainly on account of the presence of a fragile coalition of pro-Russia "secularists and Islamists", which presently governs the country. A power-sharing accord in 1997 has drawn the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) into a coalition with the government, headed by the President, Mr.

Emomaly Rakhmonov.

While Russia will carefully monitor the initial phase of the U.S.-Uzbek military engagement from the sidelines, it is likely to intervene after dissent in Uzbekistan grows. Internal resistance to Mr. Karimov's gamble of drawing in the U.S., presumably to shore up his uncertain political future, is expected to be mounted by the IMU. This confrontation between Uzbekistan's secularists and extremists is expected to grow enormously, in case the U.S. pushes its ground forces into Afghanistan from the Uzbek flank.

Russia's capacity to tighten the screws on Uzbekistan cannot be under-estimated. Uzbekistan, for instance, is crucially dependent on Russia for its economic survival. Russia also exercises considerable influence over its nearly 30 per cent Russian population which resides in Uzbekistan.

THE HINDU

Pak warns US on topple bid

OUR BUREAU

Sept. 25: A potential point of conflict between US and Pakistani interests emerged today, casting a shadow on President George W. Bush's plan of action for Afghanistan.

Alarmed at the possibility of the US-led international coalition installing an unfriendly regime in Afghanistan, Pakistan today warned against meddling in the internal politics of its next-door neighbour.

The caution came a day after Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee told his British counterpart that the world should look at a post-Taliban Afghanistan and Russian President Vladimir Putin announced an offer to arm the opposition Northern Alliance.

Foreign minister Abdus Sattar said "foreign powers", trying to instal a "puppet regime in Afghanistan", should keep in mind that those who tried to do so in the past had to pay a heavy price.

The Northern Alliance is the best bet for the US in its effort to unseat the Taliban. Secretary of state Colin Powell has said the US would try to split the Taliban movement. But, after Pakistan's caution, Bush said the US was not interested in engaging in "nation-building", suggesting he was not looking to topple the Taliban.

Sattar's warning was voiced amid reports that forces opposed to the Taliban were regaining territory near Mazar-i-Sharif and inching towards Kabul.

He expressed concern over

moves to arm the Alliance. "We fear any such decision on the part of foreign powers to give assistance to one group or the other is a recipe for great suffering for the people of Afghanistan."

After Saudi Arabia today snapped diplomatic links, Pakistan remains the only country to recognise the Taliban regime. It said it would keep its ties to the Kabul government intact.

The majority of Afghans are Pushtoo speaking, and the Northern Alliance, made up largely of minority Uzbek and Tajik Afghans, has been opposed to Pakistan. Realising that the Alliance would not be an acceptable substitute for the Taliban, efforts are being made to build up former king Zahir Shah as the rallying point for opposition Afghan factions.

US officials met Shah today at his Rome residence. A Northern Alliance delegation is slated to meet him shortly.

The active position taken by India in putting together an anti-Taliban force is also a cause of worry for Pakistan.

National security adviser Brajesh Mishra was in Moscow last week and help for the Alliance figured prominently in his talks there. Mishra will visit Paris tomorrow where he will try to elicit French support for efforts to strengthen the Alliance, with which India's links are close.

In New Delhi, the foreign ministry said: "We would like to see a multi-ethnic, broadbased government in Afghanistan."

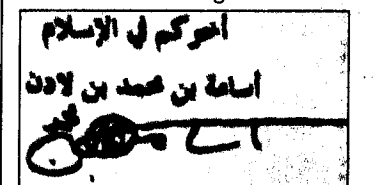


Russian soldiers on a tank near the Tajik-Afghan border, 300 km from Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe. (Reuters)

Signature signals

London, Sept. 25 (AFP): The signature on Osama bin Laden's statement urging resistance to "American crusader forces" shows a giant ego with a large libido and a thirst for vengeance, according to British handwriting experts.

Graphologists quoted today by the *Daily Telegraph* said it revealed his motivation for sponsoring terrorism, a rampant ego compensating for possible perceived childhood slights.



"He's obviously got a huge ego. He may suffer from an inferiority complex and is over-compensating through aggression and violence," said Caroline Murray, a graphologist. "He seems to have a wish or vengeance against society which he may believe has treated him unfairly."

The signature (above) was at the bottom of a statement faxed to Qatar's al Jazeera TV station. "From what we can see from the faxed copy, he seems to have an above average libido," she said. "The fact that he has to charge this energy if he is not allowed to release it and he may go into frenzy."

9B-8

Ending sanctions...

259

and beginning stronger economic ties with the US

THERE are two kinds of messages in the US decision to lift sanctions against India and Pakistan. In India's case it is the result of an on-going process of reorientation in Washington's policies in Asia and was expected. The sanctions regime has been gradually eased over the last two years in tandem with a better appreciation of India's economic potential. The Bush administration's intention to remove sanctions entirely was alluded to quite early by several officials, including deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage, who said last month they were about to end. Once all sanctions, including all those on dual-use technology go, the way will be cleared for building a stronger economic and political relationship between the two countries. It looks as though the air force's troubles with the light combat aircraft will be over soon and the navy too will be able to resume joint projects. Some high-tech military purchases may be considered but it is hard to see a major shift in the military procurement pattern in the foreseeable future. For one, India will need some guarantees against political disruptions in supply in the future.

With Pakistan there was no such clarity on sanctions before Black Tuesday. Indeed, the outlook was uncertain enough to cause concern in Islamabad about the perceived bias towards India. The rapidity of the decision now to remove all nuclear-related sanctions against Pakistan, including those imposed in 1978, 1990 and 1998, and make possible the resumption of arms sales, shows how Washington's war against terrorism is rearranging its policy priorities in South Asia. For the time being, the so-

called democracy sanctions of 1999, which came into effect after Musharraf's October coup, remain in place and may restrict the kind of US-Pakistan military relationship that existed in the past. Nuclear and missile proliferation has not been as high a priority in any case for George W. Bush as it was for Bill Clinton. Therefore, the continuing export of missile components and technology from China to Pakistan, as reported recently, has not been treated as a serious problem. If there was no strong urge earlier to show evenhandedness in dealing with South Asia sanctions, it was because Pakistan did not appear relevant to American interests and its importance lay in negative factors such as its acute economic and political crises and the rise of religious fundamentalism within the country and its vicinity.

All that changed after Musharraf's pledge of "unstinting" support to Washington. Multilateral and bilateral economic assistance will flow more easily and may well rise to generous levels if Pakistan's policy-makers do the right thing. There is the prospect of increasing foreign investment once the appropriate policies are in place. It is the first big opportunity in years for something more than crisis management of the economy. But if Islamabad goes back to the excessive military expenditures of past years, which are a direct cause of its present economic plight, it will gain little from the new relationship with the US. The military is bound to have a long shopping list and to exert pressure. However, meeting the demands of the infrastructure, of schools and hospitals for Pakistan's army of poor people, is far more urgent.

INDIAN EXPRESS

25 SEP 2001

U.S. forces within striking distance of Afghanistan

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 24. Amid reports that special U.S. and British forces are already on the ground in Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Bush administration is going no further than saying that its forces are "within" striking distance of the targets in the Taliban-controlled country.

The U.S. is also making it known that Afghanistan could be only its first target in the strikes against terrorism. Amid growing pressure from within the administration to strike Iraq also, senior law-makers here have taken the position that Afghanistan should be only the first priority.

In continuing to keep the pressure on the Taliban, senior administration officials said on Sunday that it was up to the fundamentalist group to end the "second foreign occupation" of its country; and several Cabinet members have scoffed at the suggestion that the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, is "missing" from Afghanistan. (The Taliban said on Sunday that it could not "trace" Osama to deliver an edict asking him to leave Afghanistan voluntarily).

'They know where he is'

"The Taliban is going to have to begin to understand that it has a very tough choice to make," the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush's National Security Adviser, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, has said. The administration is not prepared to accept the Taliban's "softened stance" that it is willing to rid the country of Osama but the prob-

lem is it cannot "find" him to serve a notice. "They (Taliban) know where he is," the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, has said.

The U.S. is convinced that Osama and his Al Qaeda were behind the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, which left nearly 7000 people dead or presumed dead. And it is willing to present evidence linking Osama and his organisation to the attacks.

"... In the near future, we will be able to put out a paper, a docu-

ment, that will describe quite clearly the evidence that we have linking him to this attack," the U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, has said.

Mr. Bush returned from Camp David on Sunday, after attending a ceremony that put the American flag back at full-mast. (It was flying at half-mast since September 11). Politically, the Republican President is seeing approval ratings not seen for the last sixty years — 90 per cent of the Americans approve of the manner in which he is handling the crisis.

Osama's assets frozen

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 24. To choke the financial lifeline of the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, and his Al Qaeda network, the Bush administration has frozen his assets and instructed the Treasury department to take stringent action against foreign establishments having any connection with the entity. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, issued an executive order on the freeze this morning. The order also barred transactions with persons or groups suspected of committing terrorist acts. As many as 27 entities and individuals, including three non-governmental organisations, have been identified.

Harkat too on the list

Besides the Al Qaeda or the Islamic Army, the order involves the Pakistan-based Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, the Abu Sayyaf group, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Army of Aden. And heading the list of specific individuals is Osama. At the Rose Garden, flanked by the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, and the Treasury Secretary, Mr. Paul O'Neill, Mr. Bush said his order included terrorist organisations, individual terrorist leaders, a corporation that serves as a front for terrorism and non-profit organisations.

"Just to show you how insidious these terrorists are, they often times use nice sounding non-governmental organisations as fronts for their activities," Mr. Bush said, stressing that if banks, financial institutions and nations around the world did not cooperate in the crackdown, the U.S. would take severe action.

LTTE still on old list: Page 11

SEP 24 2001

25 SEP 2001

Afghan Opposition welcomes US bombs

Ian Traynor
Bagram (Afghanistan), Sept 24

IN A country bombed and beaten long ago into a state of raw nervousness and medieval squalor, Abdurazek yesterday toyed with his Soviet vintage cannon 22 miles north of Kabul and looked for salvation in America.

In a dugout of reinforced mud and straw surrounded by dozens of spent shell casings, the 23-year-old farmer and fighter sat on the frontline of Afghanistan's civil war, his old gun trained on the enemy Taliban a few hundred yards away.

Around him bunched his retinue of grinning teenage fighters, their Kalashnikovs at the ready. In front of him a vineyard and a cornfield and a deserted village. Beyond that the fanatical fighters of the Taliban.

"There's shooting every night," he said. "We had a big gun battle four nights ago. They're always trying to take this post. We're always pushing them back."

But now Abdurazek, his young fighters, and the entire population of the opposition stronghold Panjshir valley north-east of Kabul think their fortunes have shifted for the first time in the seven years of the Taliban's inexorable takeover of more than 90 per cent of this country.

The reason is the earth-shattering events in New York and Washington. America's declaration of war has focused global attention on Afghanistan. Afghans in turn are looking outward. The air of expectation is palpable.

"America is our friend. We want America to bomb the Taliban. And then only Allah knows what will happen," said Abdurazek.

But the key sources of trouble as perceived here, repeated by people over and over again, are not so much the Taliban as the outside powers, in this case Pakistan and "the Arabs" who are generally seen to control and fight for the Taliban.

"It's not the Taliban that's the problem, it's the Pakistani troops. Afghanistan belongs to our people, not Pakistan, not the Arabs... America was our enemy



Pro-Taliban Afghans protest against the US in Kabul on Monday.

AFP PHOTO

Now it's not our friend. But it wants to get the terrorists," said Zuwair, 27, a former Kabul medical student.

If the Americans decide to put troops on the ground in Afghanistan, they will be landing on another planet. To arrive in Afghanistan is to travel back centuries to a world of relentless grime and crushing poverty where transport is by donkey or on foot, there is no electricity, water is hauled in pails from unclean rivers. Isolated terracotta villages are carved out of the stunning dun-coloured mountainsides.

The helicopter from Tajikistan to the north crosses the river Pyandzh and alights on a biblical scene of hundreds of people squatting in tents by the water-side beneath the raised town of Hoji Bahauddin, constructed entirely of khaki wattle hovels.

The people are all refugees from Taliban-seized villages on the frontline an hour away to the west, merely the latest of the 6 million refugees.

Tutinisa a 50-year-old mother of five, said the Taliban had "destroyed everything, fired everything" in her village. "We were busy with their killing. They burned our children's books. And if we stay here we'll

never last the winter. We'll end up eating one another."

But the refugees say they were among the fortunate ones, that the elderly or the sick were butchered.

We are taken to the sprawling Bagram air base north of Kabul, which offers one key to any US attempt to flush the Taliban out of the capital and install a new administration.

The air base is a demolition yard of wrecked aircraft, rusting equipment, roofless buildings, and shell-blasted barracks built by the Russians for their ill-fated attempt to occupy this battered country.

This is a base, held by the Taliban until they were driven back two years ago that could happily accommodate the biggest transport aircraft the US might need. But if the Americans are contemplating setting up base here, there is no evidence of any preparations for a new invasion. And before any US deployments were possible, the Taliban forces would need to be driven out of range and probably bombed off nearby hills from where they can currently target the air base.

Colonel Malang said he has 2,000 men who could supply the ground contingent to secure the base before setting their sights

'Osama near Jalalabad, waiting to lead Taliban'

Moscow/Kabul, September 24

OSAMA BIN Laden is shuttling between his numerous secret hideouts in Jalalabad in Afghanistan, close to border with Pakistan, and may take over the command of Taliban forces in case of US attacks on Kabul, Russian media reported today.

Russian news agency Itar-Tass quoting intelligence sources said bin Laden has set up several secret command centres in Jalalabad for controlling Taliban militia forces. He is likely to take over the command of Taliban in case of a US attack on Afghanistan, the agency said.

The Taliban said today it had still not found bin Laden to deliver a request that he leave the country. "I do not know exactly where he is," Taliban's ambassador to Pakistan Abdul Salam Zaeef said in Islamabad. "There is an effort to locate him. He may be in Afghanistan and he may be hiding."

Taliban's say it does not know whereabouts of bin Laden has been dismissed by the US saying it is "not going to be deterred" by such reports. Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar today said terrorism could only be defeated if the US withdrew its forces from the Gulf, the AIP reported. "The US should not harbour any misunderstanding. It cannot come out of the current crisis if it kills me or Osama," he said.

"If America wants to end terrorism it should withdraw its forces from the Gulf and end its partiality on the Palestinian issue." The reclusive Taliban leader's comments reflected the stated mission of bin Laden—to drive US forces out of the Islamic holy lands.

Omar said current US preparations for war were an attempt to overthrow the Taliban regime and take Islam "hostage". "It should free Islam which it has made its hostage and stop interference in the affairs of Islam."

Agencies

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

25 SEP 2001

America plans a siege from within

Michael R Gordon & Eric Schmitt
Washington, September 24

THE US has begun speaking of splitting the Taliban ranks as it builds an internal coalition in Afghanistan against Osama bin Laden and his Taliban supporters. Such a coalition could collect crucial intelligence, provide political support and cooperate militarily in the war on terrorism.

Today, Defence Secretary Donald H Rumsfeld indicated the US was trying to encourage defections within the Taliban and that those people could be part of a new governing structure for Afghanistan. "Some of the Taliban say, 'Well, it could get uncomfortable supporting those people, so I think I'll shift sides,'" he said.

The US has stepped up contacts with the Northern Alliance, a coalition also known as the United Front. Officials said there were plans for the US to provide it with financial support. Recognising the complex ethnic mix of Afghanistan, the US has also initiated contacts with the Pashtuns.

Forging an internal coalition of ethnic groups that could increase pressure on the Taliban is just as crucial, though the effort to meld together different tribes and factions could be very complex.

One reason for the effort is military. The US needs allies inside Afghanistan who can help track bin Laden and those Taliban leaders who harbour him, and can provide information on possible attack targets, as well as a possible base of operations in the country for American forces. They could also do some of the fighting.

There are key political reasons as well to build a coalition inside Afghanistan. The administration is trying to counter the impression that the fight against bin Laden is a war against Afghanistan or Islam.

A plan for bringing stability to Afghanistan is also needed to attract help for the US military campaign. To encourage that cooperation, Washington wants to offer the groups a role in governing Afghanistan after the conflict. A plan for bringing stability for the nation is also important to persuade Pakistan and other neighbours to cooperate. The last thing Washington wants is a chaotic situation that creates a haven for terrorists.

Efforts to form a grand coalition involve the 86-year-old former King of Afghanistan, Mohammad Zahir Shah, who lives in Rome. The exiled king is a Durrani Pashtun. It is believed he could serve as the symbolic head of a broad

group that would include other Afghans who are not Pashtuns.

Mostapha Zahir, the 37-year-old grandson of the King, said in a telephone interview from Rome that the king was willing to serve as a rallying point for the Afghans but had no intention of trying to re-establish the monarchy. He said the king planned to meet in Rome this week with commanders of the Northern Alliance and other groups.

There are, however, many obstacles to the effort to form a grand coalition, including tensions among the ethnic groups. Dr Abdullah Abdullah, foreign minister of the Northern Alliance, recently blamed Pakistan for regional instability. Pakistan has close ties to the Pashtun tribes that would supposedly be in the grand coalition.

John Moore, who until last year was the chief Middle East analyst at the Defence Intelligence Agency, said: "People have talked about this as a great alliance, but that's going to be a subject to fractious politics."

Influential lawmakers here have been briefed on the administration's emerging strategy to encourage the creation of a pan-Afghan coalition to combat the Taliban Government.

"It could be very useful if it can

and cooperation," said Senator Levin, a Michigan Democrat who heads the Armed Services Committee. "In the past, there have been such differences among the groups, it's been difficult. I'll take a special effort, and I'm glad the administration is looking at it."

Dr Abdullah and the Northern Alliance's new military chief, Muhammad Fatun, also met in the Tajik capital, Dushanbe, with the head of the Russian general staff, Gen Anatoly Kvashnin.

As for relations with the Americans, Muhammad Eshaq, the Washington representative of the Northern Alliance, said there had been intense contacts with the Bush administration. The administration plans to offer financial assistance, officials say, but Eshaq said it had not yet done so.

Nonetheless, the Pentagon seems to be counting on the Northern Alliance's help. Rumsfeld has talked openly about a military collaboration with the alliance.

"These folks, they know the lay of the land," Rumsfeld said on Friday, referring to the Northern Alliance. "They know, in some cases, some targets that are useful, they have ideas about how to deal with the Taliban. I think that one has to say that they can be useful in a variety of ways."

There was concern in the administration that Rumsfeld's commitments could complicate Washington's dealings with other factions, including the dominant Pashtun group, which has close ties to Pakistan. So today Rumsfeld made the point that opponents of bin Laden might also include "tribes in the south."

A coalition would help the United States balance the interests of its outside partners. The Iranians and Russians, for instance, are supporting the Northern Alliance. The Iranians also have ties to the Hazaras, another minority.

"There is a coalition dimension to this, so we want to make clear that we are working with several groups," a United States official said. "We are not only reaching out to the Pashtun leaders; there are tribes and leaders reaching out to us."

A final reason for the administration's attempts to forge relations with disparate groups inside Afghanistan is its desire to portray the impending military campaign as a fight against terrorism, and not against the Afghan people or against Islam. It is not only a public relations consideration, but also a factor in picking targets and devising the war plan.

The New York Times



Supporters of Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam, a pro-Taliban party in Pakistan, on their way to an anti-US rally on the border on Monday.

AFP PHOTO

Riyadh feels pain of supporting US

Patrick E Tyler
Washington, September 24

THE AMERICAN announcement that it would use Saudi Arabia as a headquarters for air operations against Afghanistan has further strained relations between Washington and the conservative rulers in Riyadh. But senior administration officials said on Sunday that they remained confident that the Saudis would agree to provide critical bases for offensive operations.

Saudi leaders continue to voice public support in the struggle against terrorism, but are showing extreme sensitivity to launching military operations against another Muslim state from their territory, as they did during the Persian Gulf war in 1991.

Members of the Saudi royal family are also taking seriously threats against their rule from Osama bin Laden, an outcast from one of Saudi Arabia's most prominent families. From exile he has called on Muslims to overthrow the monarchy for allowing in "infidel" forces. Several terrorists who struck the United States carried Saudi documents, though many may be forged.

Some officials say that the Saudis have privately offered millions of dollars to the Taliban rulers to expel or turn over bin Laden. The current crisis has caught the United States without a seasoned ambassador in the Saudi capital. Former Senator Wyche Fowler Jr, who served President Clinton, has departed, and the White House candidate to replace him, Robert W Jordan,

an oil industry lawyer and Bush family friend from Houston, was hastily nominated on September 12, the day after the attacks.

In the decade that has followed the war to roll back Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the Saudi royal family has become disenchanted with American mediation in the Arab-Israeli dispute and with American actions toward Iraq, where civilian suffering has stirred the emotions of many Arabs.

In recent days, Secretary of State Colin L Powell and Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Washington, Prince Bandar bin Sultan — old friends from the gulf war — have been in contact by telephone, yet a significant level of uncertainty remains over the level of Saudi participation in the American-led military campaign. "They will do almost anything we ask them to do as long as we help to minimise the damage from their extremists," said one specialist.

The Pentagon announced last week that it was dispatching a top Air Force commander, Lt General Charles F Wald, to Saudi Arabia to oversee air attacks against Afghanistan from a command post at the Prince Sultan Air Base at Al Kharj, about 70 miles outside Riyadh.

The public announcement may have preceded any direct negotiation with the Saudis, several officials and specialists said. "I don't want to say," said one senior Defense Department official, "but my understanding is that it is still an open question."

The New York Times

Powell denies Saudi resistance

Washington, September 24

US SECRETARY of State Colin Powell has denied a report that Saudi Arabia was resisting a request for US warplanes to use a major Saudi air base for military strikes against terrorist bases.

"The article is incorrect," Powell told NBC TV yesterday, responding to a report in *The Washington Post*.

The newspaper quoted unnamed defence officials as saying Saudi Arabia, the closest US ally among Arab nations, was reluctant to let US forces use its Prince Sultan air base, 110 km southeast of Riyadh, in line with a decade-old policy.

The post said Powell had telephoned the Saudis to try to change their minds, while US officials sought to establish a command headquarters in another country in the region.

"There were no such phone calls," Powell refuted yesterday, adding "I have been in daily touch with Saudi officials, and they have been very responsive to all of the requests we have placed on them." He refused to elaborate further.

Saudi Arabia's decision to allow a permanent US military presence on its soil since the 1991 Gulf war has been floated as among possible reasons prime suspect Osama bin Laden has mounted his terror operations against US and Saudi targets.

Bin Laden said to consider the Western bases as a desecration of Saudi Arabia's Islamic holy sites, is blamed by Washington for last week's attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon by 19 hijackers, several of whom were said to have been of Saudi descent.

AFP

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

25 SEP 2001

Pakistan pulls out diplomats from Afghanistan; USA says don't sever Kabul link

Osama seeks Pak as partner

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 24. — Osama bin Laden has urged Pakistanis to fight "American crusaders" attacking Afghanistan as Islamabad withdrew its diplomatic staff from Kabul and other Afghan cities citing "abnormal situation".

The USA has, however, reportedly urged Islamabad to continue its diplomatic ties with the Taliban to ensure a "link" with the isolated country.

Qatar's *Al-Jazeera* satellite TV today quoted Osama as having urged Pakistanis to fight any strike on Afghanistan by "crusader Americans".

"We incite our Muslim brothers in Pakistan to deter with all their capabilities the American crusaders from invading Pakistan and Afghanistan," the channel quoted Osama as having said.

The statement, faxed to *Al-Jazeera*, was typed in Arabic and signed "Osama bin Laden" in typed letters and "Osama Mohammad" in long-hand.

The Pakistani foreign office spokesman, Mohammed, Riaz Khan, said Islamabad has pulled out its staff from missions across Afghanistan "in view of the abnormal situation. They're withdrawn over the weekend. They are all in Pakistan."

The *Frontier Post*, quoting a senior official, said the USA had not asked Pakistan to snap ties with the Taliban like the UAE. Instead it wants Pakistan to maintain contacts with the militia.

The USA came to know about the militia's policies because of the Taliban envoy in Islamabad, the newspaper said. "If he was not there, no one could expect authentic information," the *Post* quoted the official as having said. "We're still a sort of a mediator, we've been talking to them and have communicated to them that the only way out was to support the international anti-terrorism drive."

A US team, comprising state department and Pentagon officials, is in Pakistan to discuss the help that Islamabad could offer during a military strike on Afghanistan. The team reviewed the situation in Quet-

ta and Peshawar and will meet Pakistani military and government officials, CNN said.

The secret meetings are expected to take place throughout the week. The channel said the officials are likely to inspect military facilities in Pakistan and evaluate whether they can be used during the strike against Afghanistan.

On the team's visit, the US embassy spokesman, Mr Mark Wentworth, said: "I can confirm their presence, but I won't go into any details."

Pak appeal: Islamabad has asked the Taliban to obey UN resolutions and hand over Osama for trial by an appropriate authority. It told the USA that any decision to use force should be mandated by the UN Security Council.

"We've conveyed this to the Afghan government. It's in the interest of the Afghan people that UN resolutions are imple-



Troops of Britain's Royal Air Force First Squadron fight a mock battle in Oman on Sunday. The copter drills were part of Britain's preparations for a possible US-led attack on Afghanistan. — AP/PTI

BLAIR CALLS VAJPAYEE FOR HELP

NEW DELHI, Sept. 24. — The British Prime Minister, Mr Tony Blair, tonight called Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, and sought India's help in working out an international strategy against terrorism. The two also discussed the possibilities of forming a non-Taliban government in Afghanistan.

Mr Vajpayee said the international community should now focus on setting up a post-Taliban structure in Afghanistan, which should be "truly representative".

A PMO spokesman said Mr Blair expressed desire to work with India on the latter's draft Convention on Terrorism.

"We strongly support India's initiative for a Comprehensive Convention against International Terrorism," Mr Blair said during the 10-

minute talks. "And when the Convention is concluded, we would like to sit with you and work out a strategy for its effective enforcement."

Mr Blair said the European Union summit last week passed a resolution lauding the draft Convention. The draft has been moved in the UN General Assembly.

Both the leaders reportedly agreed that the world should pay attention to Afghanistan's reconstruction. — SNS

Britain wants a democratic regime in Afghanistan, a Downing Street spokesman said today, AFP adds from London. "It has always been our intention and our wish to see a democratic regime in Afghanistan."

The spokesman said the impending military strikes could lead to the Taliban's removal.

mented," the foreign minister, Mr Abdul Sattar, said.

"Our utmost desire will be that the decision should be based on the principles of law and justice which remained the corner-

stone of our foreign policy. If there is a dire need to use force, it should be used under the UN mandate," Mr Sattar said. No US troops are in Pakistan.

On the Afghan clerics' decision

asking Osama to voluntarily leave the country, Mr Sattar said: "I think some progress has been made by the Afghan government. Afghans are fiercely independent people and

they don't accept any foreign intervention or dictation".

Iran and Saudi stand: Iran and Saudi Arabia have cautioned the USA against any hasty action endangering "the defenceless" Afghans and urged the Taliban "not to sacrifice" their nation for Osama, a report from Dubai says.

"Any hasty reaction which may jeopardise the lives of defenceless and oppressed people of Afghanistan can bring about bigger problems" and worsen the situation, the Iranian President, Mohammed Khatami, told the Saudi Crown Prince, Amir Abdullah, yesterday. Prince Abdullah said: "Taliban should... not sacrifice a nation for a criminal."

■ **Editorial: India loses advantage, page 6**

■ **Osama may take over Taliban, page 9**

■ **More photographs, reports on pages 5, 8 & 9**

Dead trail: FBI's former terror expert died in WTC

By ROBIN POGREBIN
New York Times Service

New York, Sept. 23: John P. O'Neill, who left the FBI last month to become chief of security for the World Trade Centre, died in the collapse of the centre on September 11. He was 49.

O'Neill spent the last several years heading major investigations of the Saudi exile Osama bin Laden, a prime suspect in the attacks at the trade centre and the Pentagon. He also investigated the bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. In 1997, when he was head of the FBI's counterterrorism division in New York, he warned at a conference on terror-

ism that militant terrorist groups were operating quietly within the United States. "A lot of these groups now have the capability and the support infrastructure in the United States to attack us here if they choose to," he said at the time, adding that there was a particular danger from Islamic militants.

On September 11,

O'Neill saw his warnings materialise. In his career with the FBI, O'Neill proved to be one of the shrewdest counterterrorism officials and one of the most controversial. Associates have said that he sometimes chafed at the bureau's restrictive rules and that his single-mindedness occasionally irritated colleagues in the bureau, at the CIA

and at the state department. Last month, FBI sources confirmed that O'Neill was under investigation after he left a briefcase containing classified information unattended in a hotel in Tampa, Florida, last year. The briefcase — which was recovered and returned to O'Neill — contained several documents

SPOTLIGHT

that included a report outlining virtually every national security operation in New York. As chief of the counterterrorism section at the bureau's Washington headquarters, O'Neill helped capture the mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing, coordinated information in the Oklahoma City bombing that led to the arrest of Timo-

thy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, and played a key role in the investigation of the crash of TWA Flight 800. Born in Atlantic City, O'Neill received a Bachelor of Science degree from American University in Washington and a master's degree in forensic science from George Washington University in Washington.

After joining the bureau in 1976, O'Neill worked in the foreign counterintelligence, organised crime and white collar crime units.

After assignments in Baltimore, Washington and Chicago, O'Neill headed the group charged with investigating violence against abortion clinics and the counterterrorism section at headquarters.

Osama is missing, says Taliban

ASSOCIATED PRESS

\$25 MILLION REWARD FOR BIN LADEN

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 23. - The Taliban has been unable to locate Osama bin Laden for the past two days, its ambassador to Pakistan said today.

US officials cast doubt on the claim, saying the Taliban might be trying to elude Mr George W Bush's demands that they hand over Bin Laden.

"We're not going to be deterred by comments that he may be missing. We don't simply believe it," the national security adviser, Ms Condoleezza Rice, told *Fox News*.

The Taliban ambassador, Mr Abdul Salam Zaeef, said their chief, Mullah Mohammed Omar, had sent emissaries to inform Bin Laden of a decision on Thursday by clerics that he should leave the country voluntarily at a time of his choosing. Mr Zaeef said Taliban authorities had been searching for Bin Laden for the past two days "but he has not been traced."

The Taliban leadership has said in the past that they are able to convey information to Bin Laden through radio communication with Taliban security personnel who travel with him.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23. - The USA is offering \$ 25 million for information leading to the apprehension of Osama bin Laden. Gen Colin Powell hoped that the cash reward could yield results.

"\$ 25 million dollars is a great deal of money and I feel there might be somebody so motivated" in Afghanistan who could supply the USA with the necessary information in exchange for the money, the secretary of state today told NBC television.

Taliban's removal: Mr Bush's national security adviser, Ms Condoleezza Rice, told Fox News Television today that America's goals include not only getting Osama bin Laden "dead or alive" but the removal of the Taliban. "The Afghan people would be better off without it," she said.

'Another plane shot down': The Taliban claimed to have shot down another "unidentified plane" flying over Afghanistan, the Russian news agency, ITAR-TASS, reported, quoting the official Bakhter agency in Kabul. The plane was shot down some kilometres from Aibak, where Taliban forces claimed to have shot down a US spy plane on Saturday. - AFP and PTI

The secretary of defence, Mr Donald H Rumsfeld, said the Taliban claim that Bin Laden was missing "is simply not credible."

"The Taliban may be trying to find a way to get themselves out of this terrible box they're in," Gen Colin Powell said on NBC's television show, *Meet the Press*.

Asked if the Bush administration thought the Taliban were telling the truth about Bin Laden's disappearance, Ms Rice said: "Well, we're going to find

out." She said the Taliban can meet Mr Bush's demands "or it can face the wrath of an international coalition that understands that the Taliban has been harbouring terrorists for quite a long time."

The Islamabad-based Afghan Islamic Press quoted Mr Omar's spokesman, Mr Abdul Hayee, as saying "guest Osama" had "gone missing" and that "efforts were being made to locate him."

Quoting Mr Hayee, the agency said that once Bin Laden

was found, he would be told of the clerical decision. "Then it would be his decision whether he wants to stay in Afghanistan or not," it said.

US to give proof: US officials said the country will soon share evidence with its allies that details how Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda are tied to the terrorist attacks. "In the near future we will be able to put out a document linking him to this attack," Gen Powell said.

Gen Powell also said any military action in Afghanistan won't be on the scale of the Gulf War.

"Let's not assume there will be a large-scale move," he said. "I don't think we should even consider a large-scale war at this point."

While Cabinet members made the talk show rounds, Mr Bush was at Camp David in Maryland, where marines raised the American flag to full staff for the first time since the attacks.

Officials said the administration has made contact with Syria and Iran, two countries the USA has accused of sponsoring terrorism, about helping to fight terrorism.

■ See OSAMA: page 5

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(Continued from page 1)

Mr Powell, Ms Rice and Mr Rumsfeld also denied reports that Saudi Arabia had rejected US requests to use a Saudi air force base to launch attacks against Bin Laden's group.

"They have been very responsive to everything we have asked for," Mr Powell said. He also said the President's decision to lift sanctions against India and Pakistan was "an important signal that we will stand by our friends who stand by us."

As the Pentagon rolled out B-52 bombers and moved more troops and equipment into place in the Persian Gulf, America's West Asian allies came forward to support the operation. Mr Vladimir Putin held discussions with the leaders of Central Asia on the fight against terrorism, the Kremlin press service reported today.

'USA lost spy plane': The USA lost a spy plane over Afghanistan, Mr Donald Rumsfeld said today, playing down claims that Taliban forces shot down the aircraft, adds AFP from Washington. "The USA has lost contact with an unmanned aerial vehicle," he said.

Osama supporters: Thousands of paramilitary troops, supporting Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda, have left Afghan bases and shifted to Mazar-i-Sharif and in the Kunduz province, bordering Tajikistan, adds UNI from Islamabad.

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No trace of Osama, says Taliban

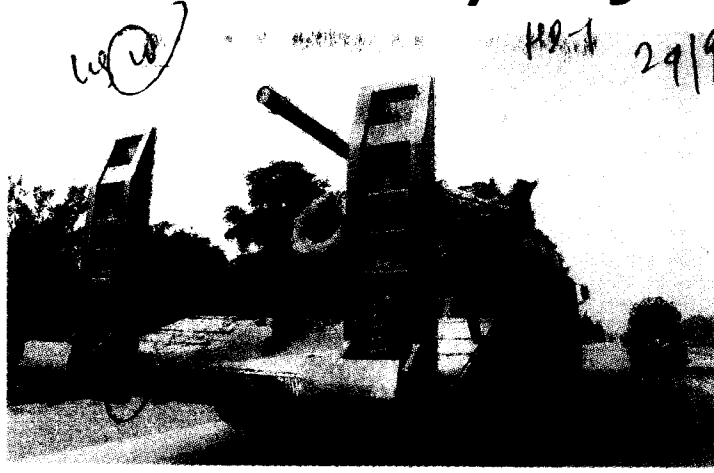
By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 23. Adding a new dimension to the ongoing confrontation between the United States and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan over the issue of handing over of the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, the Taliban today maintained that it could not trace him.

The Taliban spokesman, Mr. Abdul Hai Mutmaen, told an international wire agency that the militia could not deliver the edict of the religious leaders urging the Taliban authorities to encourage Osama to leave Afghanistan voluntarily at the time of his choosing and to a destination of his choice. "We have still not been able to deliver the clerics' message to him because we could not find him", he was quoted as telling the wire agency over phone from Kandahar, the spiritual headquarters of the Taliban.

Significantly, the spokesman has also disclosed that the Taliban supreme, Mullah Omar, had accepted the recommendation made by the congregation of religious leaders three days ago urging the Taliban Government to encourage Osama to leave on his own free will.

The Taliban Ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Saleem Zaef, who confirmed the news here, has also claimed that the Ta-



A Pakistani tank heading towards the Afghan border near Peshawar on Sunday. — AP

liban had recovered the wreckage of the unmanned spy plane shot down on Saturday.

The military establishment in Islamabad made it a point to urge the Taliban leadership to act immediately on the recommendation of the religious leaders and respond to the wishes of the international community.

The "disappearance" of Osama is not expected to make any material difference to the U.S. resolve to go after him in Afghanistan. The demands of the Bush administration go beyond the surrender of Osama. It wants access to all the associates of Osama, prime

suspect in the September 11 terror attacks in New York and Pentagon, and to his networks.

It is not clear as to what the Taliban intended to convey to the U.S. and the rest of the world by giving an impression that it was unable to locate Osama. It is difficult to judge if it is an indication of the Taliban distancing itself from the man most wanted by the U.S.

The other way of looking at the development is that the Taliban wants to put pressure on the U.S. not to resort to any military action as Osama was out of its reach. Perhaps it is the Taliban's way of

telling the world that the U.S. is bent on a campaign against it though Osama is untraceable.

Earlier in the day, the Taliban spokesman was quoted by the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP), a Peshawar-based news agency, as saying that there was no change in the Taliban's position on Osama. "There is no change in our decision. American demands are not in favour of Muslims and Afghans and we are not ready to accept this," he said. The latest developments came amidst reports of renewed fighting between the Taliban and the opposition forces led by the Northern Alliance. Reports from Afghanistan also suggested Taliban stepping up its preparedness to counter any military action by the U.S.

It is very difficult to know what is actually going on inside Afghanistan as the entire foreign press has left the country on orders from the Taliban. The CNN team was perhaps the last of the foreign scribes to leave.

Reuters reports from Dushanbe:

Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Foreign Minister of the Northern Alliance which is recognised as Afghanistan's Government by the United Nations, today said he believed that Osama was in hiding in southern Afghanistan with Mullah Omar.

We don't believe it, says Rice

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 23 The Bush administration has warned the Taliban again that it has a very clear choice between handing over Osama bin Laden or face the "wrath" of the international coalition; Washington has brushed aside the contention of Kabul that Osama is "missing"; and has dismissed the Taliban calls for proof for the actions of Osama as "somewhat misplaced."

The renewed warning to the Taliban was issued on Sunday morning by the senior members of the administration that took to the nation's top talk shows. They included the National Security Advisor, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld and the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell.

All this while the President, Mr. George W Bush, gets ready to return to the White House from Camp David to further continue discussions with his top aides on last minute preparations for military strikes against terrorist targets in Afghanistan. Dr. Rice took the position that Osama and his lieutenants were only part of the story and that the U.S. objective in this campaign against terrorism was "choking off" the bloodlines.

Stressing that the campaign against terrorism was a global one, Dr. Rice argued that the President had a number of "options and assets" and that he would be making his final decision at the "time of his choosing, not one minute before." The campaign to "squeeze out" the perpetrators of the September 11 acts has begun, she said.

Asked if the Bush administration believed the Taliban when it said that Osama was "missing," Dr. Rice shot back, "We don't simply believe it." Mr. Rumsfeld said the proposition was "laughable."

Gen. Powell further toughened the rhetoric when he said that Osama should not be seen as a "world hero" as he was in some countries

around Afghanistan. The U.S. is said to have assembled a broad array of forces and military hardware; and the clear impression is that when the President gives the go-ahead, the retribution is going to be very severe and in a variety of ways.

Secondly, a high-level military delegation is on its way to Pakistan

U.S. lost spy plane, Rumsfeld

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 23. The U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, has confirmed that the United States has lost "contact" with an unmanned spy plane and has argued that Washington has no reason to believe that it has been shot down.

"The United States has in fact lost — lost contact — I should say, with an unmanned aerial vehicle. That happens from time to time, in terms of the controls. We have no reason to believe it was shot down, as the Press has reported," Mr. Rumsfeld said on a talk show this morning. The unmanned aerial vehicle, known as the Predator, can be remotely operated and stay in the air for a day. The price tag of this vehicle, believed to be one of the equipment widely used in this campaign against terrorism, is \$ 3.2 millions.

but as a "murderer" who had to be condemned as being against civilisation.

The tough comments of senior Cabinet members of the administration have to be seen in the backdrop of at least major developments that are taking place. First it has to do with the continued military build up in and

to finalise the finer details of the operations against Osama and the Taliban. To underscore the seriousness of the military nature of the discussions, the administration decided against having the team led by the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Ms. Christina Rocca. The rationale has apparently been that the administration has

sorted out issues on the diplomatic front with Pakistan.

The Pentagon continues to be tight-lipped on the kind of measures that are being put in place in the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. And Washington is downplaying the dissent from Saudi Arabia that it would not allow the Prince Sultan Air Base to be used by the U.S. for operations.

Senior administration officials like Gen. Powell are maintaining that Washington was getting very good cooperation from Saudi Arabia or the regime there was being "very responsive" even while "details" were being worked out. And on a different front, the reminder has been that military action is only one part of ongoing campaign.

On Saturday, the President had his third conversation since the crisis began last week, with his Russian counterpart, Mr. Vladimir Putin. The telephone talk is said to have lasted 45 minutes, the length suggesting the kind of importance Mr. Bush is attaching to a role for Russia in the campaign against terrorism and terror networks. The Bush administration is confident that Moscow will provide assistance by way of logistics, in the realm of intelligence sharing especially.

"Guess what I got a cellphone for Rs 1000"

US anti-terror gambit pays off in Central Asia, not in Egypt

Washington, September 23

US DIPLOMATIC overtures to enlist the mainly Muslim nations of Central Asia in a global anti-terrorism coalition appeared to be paying off with pledges of support from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Countries in volatile region have been rocked by Islamic extremists themselves and have been wooed both publicly by George Bush and in closed-door meetings with diplomats here and abroad, according to US officials.

However, in Egypt, that same courtship has yet to bear fruit as President Hosni Mubarak struggles to balance his country's close ties with the US with growing anti-Western sentiment among the Egyptian people.

That tide of public opinion has been spurred by fears that Bush's proclaimed war against terrorism, aimed first at Osama bin Laden, his Al-Qaida network and their hosts, Taliban, will become an anti-Muslim and anti-Arab campaign. Targetting Osama and the Taliban has made the support of the five former Soviet republics - with their proximity to Afghanistan - crucial to the success of the coalition.

It has also made the backing of Egypt, with its influential status in the Arab and Muslim world, critical to the operation.

Anxious to cement their participation in the fight, Bush made a direct appeal to them in his speech to the Congress on



A Russian soldier posted in Tajikistan leaves a shelter during military exercise.

Friday in which he outlined plans for a lengthy battle that will not stop with Osama.

Calling them "a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam," Bush said: "This group and its leader... are linked to many other organisations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan."

US officials say the specific references to the groups - the only ones identified other than Al-Qaida and the Taliban - were aimed at bringing Egypt and the Central Asians on board. "It was a way of saying 'Uzbekistan, we need you', 'Egypt, we need you', and 'we will help those who help us'," said an official.

Observers noted Uzbek group IMU, while seeking the over-

throw of President Islam Karimov's secular regime in Tashkent, operates throughout Central Asia, particularly in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan but to a lesser degree in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

"We are paying some special attention to Central Asia," another senior official said. "There has been considerable back and forth with the Uzbeks and the Tajiks."

The official said Washington had been assured by Moscow that it would not oppose "any" cooperation between the US and the Central Asian nations which have collective security agreements with Russia.

Bush and President Vladimir Putin spoke at length yesterday. They probably discussed the situation in Central Asia. AFP

NOT IN INTERESTS OF SECURITY, SAYS BUSH

U.S. lifts sanctions against India, Pak.

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 23. The Bush administration has lifted sanctions against India and Pakistan, imposed in the aftermath of the 1998 nuclear tests. In a memorandum to the Secretary of State from Camp David, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, said the continuation of the punitive measures "would not be in the national security interests of the U.S."

Although India and Pakistan have been working hard in the last several months for the lifting of the sanctions, Mr. Bush's move came when a Pentagon delegation was heading for Pakistan to finalise the details and operational plans for a military strike on Afghanistan. Reports said the U.S. delegation, comprising members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, other Pentagon offices and the intelligence community, would be meeting with their counterparts in Pakistan early this week. Originally, the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Ms. Christina Rocca, was supposed to lead the delegation. But the Associated Press quoted an official as saying that since cooperation on the diplomatic front had already been worked out, the focus was on the military front as the details of the proposed operation were to be finalised.

As far as Pakistan is concerned, all sanctions relating to the development of nuclear weapons since the Symington Amendment of 1978, have been lifted. This also includes the 1990 Pressler and the 1998 Glenn Amendments, although the focus was on the latter imposed by the Clinton administration.

It follows that Pakistan is now eligible for economic assistance and the restriction on military sales to Islamabad stands removed. But what remain are the 1999 sanctions, imposed in the wake of the military coup of Gen. Pervez Musharraf. These include ineligibility for loans and a prohibition on Pakistan from sending its soldiers to U.S. for training. The sanctions would have to be lifted by Congress after the White House gives Pakistan a 'certification of democracy.'

There was hectic activity on Capitol Hill last week

as the Bush administration went about the task of "consulting" Congress on the issue of lifting sanctions against India and Pakistan. The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr. Marc Grossman, held closed-door meetings with law makers of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

One version is that the administration wanted to get rid of sanctions from the statute books by way of a waiver. Apparently, there was opposition to this from those who wished to retain some leverage in case there were further nuclear tests in the subcontinent. Key Congress members like the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Joseph Biden, favoured the lifting of sanctions against Pakistan after its stance on fight against terrorism. (Mr. Biden had earlier expressed his reservations against lifting sanctions on Pakistan in a letter to Mr. Bush.)

In the backdrop of what has been going on here, there is tremendous appreciation in the administration and Congressional circles for the Pakistan President, Gen. Musharraf, and the extent to which he has come through against the Taliban and Osama. And Washington has also decided that Islamabad will get a hefty financial 'rewards' package, the finer details of which are being worked out.

PTI reports:

On the lifting of sanctions against New Delhi, India's Ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Lalit Mansingh, said: "The sanctions imposed in 1998 were economic, military and restrictions on dual use technology. Some of these had been removed by the former U.S. President, Mr. Bill Clinton. But some remained — like lending by international financial institutions or foreign military sale or transfer of dual use technology... So we take it that these remaining restrictions have now been removed as a result of the presidential waiver."

The U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, said the lifting of sanctions was partial. While the post-nuclear sanctions were being lifted, other sanctions would remain.

Pak. will be beneficiary: Page 13

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ARRESTING HATE CRIMES IN AMERICA

THE TERRORIST OFFENSIVE, which struck New York and Washington on September 11, seems to have affected the American social psyche in a disturbing way. Several minority groups within the United States, citizens and other residents have begun to feel a sense of insecurity. They are the victims of seemingly sporadic hate crimes that are being foolishly committed to avenge the simmering terrorist onslaught. At least three persons are reported to have been murdered in this spree of violence. One of them was an Indian-American belonging to the Sikh faith, and he might have been murdered in a case of mistaken identity. Surely, these hate crimes are no more than notoriously misguided acts of revenge for a horrific terror episode which the American officials tend to blame on Al Qaeda, a radical but external Islamic network linked to Osama bin Laden. Whatever the perceived provocation, the American authorities and community leaders at different strata will do well to intensify their efforts to sustain social harmony at home. A genuine healing touch, designed to soothe the ruffled feelings of the affected minorities, including the Arab-Muslims and the Indian-Sikh sections of the American society, can only enhance the credibility of Washington's stated resolve to protect the U.S. as also its external friends and allies from the growing scourge of international terror.

Sensing the potential danger to the multi-ethnic and multi-religious fabric of the American society, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, has paid a well publicised visit to the Islamic Center in Washington. In so doing, he sought to underline the social reality of America as a large-sized microcosm of the many races and faiths of the world. Now, in its short but variegated history, the U.S. has witnessed some traumatic phases and instances of racial and other forms of social bigotry. A major civil rights campaign and the portrayal of America as a 'melting pot' as also

a 'great society' have at different times defined the cultural identity of the U.S. Yet, the Bush administration cannot simply afford to let the American tapestry fray at this critical moment when a possible move to eliminate an external Islamic outfit could encourage the fanatics within the U.S. to attack its own Muslims and their look-alike compatriots. Mr. Bush has consciously told the Muslims of the world that their faith has an honoured place in America too and that the terrorists, "traitors to their own faith", are "trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself".

219 The Bush administration's task of sustaining the confidence of the entire American society is truly cut out. The Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Mr. Robert Mueller, has not only promised a quick probe into all allegations of hate crimes but also assured that no ethnic group would be the prime target of those unravelling the terrorist crimes of September 11. However, at least one U.S. Congressman has complicated Mr. Bush's anti-terror agenda by calling for an augmented surveillance over a particular social group for purposes of airport-security and the like. Although the Congressman has subsequently apologised for his insensitive remarks, the battle for the hearts and minds of some of America's minorities is still far from won. Mr. Bush has therefore taken a right step by assuring the Sikhs of America that their interests would be safeguarded. It was brought to his attention that the men among the Sikh community had become vulnerable to the senseless hate crimes on account of their beards and turbans which, to the untrained eye, might resemble those of Osama bin Laden and the Taliban clergy, his "host" in Afghanistan. On a different but related plane, the Indian diplomats in the U.S., too, seem to have intervened quite actively to try and place this issue in perspective.

THE HINDU

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USA (W)
Afghanistan
57-11

'USA to bring back exiled king'

22/9

UNI & DPA

LONDON, Sept. 22. — America plans to topple the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and help the exiled King Zahir Shah return to power, a British paper, *The Guardian*, reported yesterday. The USA also plans to place the war-ravaged country under an interim administration with a role for the UN, the paper said.

The strategy around Mr Zahir Shah will include encouraging the Northern Alliance guerrillas to support the 86-year-old king, who has been campaigning to return to power from his exile in Rome, the *Guardian* said.

Washington is reportedly funding and organising the travel of several Northern Alliance leaders to Rome to confer with Mr Shah. "The king plans to call on all the Afghan tribes to rise up against the Taliban," *The Guardian* quoted diplomats from the Washington embassy of a key Western ally as saying. The cable also cited the advice of the US

The US plans were revealed when a senior European politician in Washington was told

by the US administration this week that it wanted to hear allies' views on "post-Taliban Afghanistan after the liberation of the country", the paper said.

"The Americans also spoke of a role for the UN in the new "interim administration" and for the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in central Asia, without mentioning Nato," *The Guardian* said. The move to include the UN and the OSCE could help further rally Europe, Russia and China, it added.

Mr Tony Blair met Mr Bush yesterday and suggested that military strikes against Afghanistan could come in a matter of days. "These people, if they could, would get access to chemical, biological and nuclear capability. We have no option but to act," Mr Blair was quoted as saying.

The man who could be king again: The 86-year-old Mohammed Zahir Shah, who was king of the Central Asian country for four decades, currently lives in exile in Rome. News reports indicate that the USA may favour his return to Kabul should the Taliban regime in Afghanistan be

overthrown.

Born in Kabul in 1914 and educated at a Parisian lycee, Zahir Shah was only 19 when his father, King Nadir Khan, was assassinated while attending a school celebration in his own palace.

Zahir Shah was immediately made king and he ruled the country for the next 40 years. He was seen as a reformer in western eyes, holding elections for parliament and forbidding royal family members from holding top government offices.

With war raging in surrounding regions, the Afghan king kept peace at home by playing the great powers off against one another, including the Nazis, the British and the Chinese.

Maintaining a neutral stance towards the Soviets and the Americans, Mr Shah received aid from both superpowers, which he used to build roads and airports in his country.

Mr Shah spends time now receiving fellow countrymen, playing chess and taking walks in the surrounding countryside. But he has not given up dreaming of a comeback.



Fidel Castro addresses a rally in Cuba on Saturday, warning of catastrophic consequences if the USA attacks Afghanistan. — AP/PTI

■ UAE snaps ties with Afghanistan ■ Taliban shoots down plane ■ Four held in UK

USA strengthens build-up

REUTERS & AFP

WASHINGTON/ISLAMABAD, Sept. 22. - The USA today stepped up its military build-up for an assault on Afghanistan with the Taliban rejecting the US ultimatum to hand over Osama bin Laden.

B-1, B-52 bombers and attack planes, designed for taking out tanks and air support of ground forces, lumbered into the air from bases in the American heartland on their way to the Gulf and Indian Ocean in the biggest US military mobilisation since the 1991 Gulf War.

Uzbek military sources said US warplanes equipped with surveillance devices had been stationed outside Tashkent. Russian President Vladimir

Putin, after an extended silence, voiced readiness to cooperate with US plans to strike Afghanistan - but only after they are approved by the UN Security Council.

The Taliban said its forces had shot down an aircraft in northern Afghanistan, but officials issued conflicting statements on whether it was an unmanned US spy plane or a helicopter of the Northern Alliance. The Pentagon didn't comment on this.

Taliban officials later said their forces had downed a pilotless drone aircraft over Tashkurgan with machine gun fire and a helicopter near Dara-i-Suf. Both areas are in Samangan, 240 km northwest of Kabul, where General Rashid Dostum reported that his Uzbek fighters had made advances against the Taliban.

In his weekly radio address, Mr George W Bush sought to bolster confidence in the US economy after the worst week in Wall Street financial markets since the 1930s. "The terror-

ists... targeted our economy as well as our people," the US President said.

Mr Bush won more support for his "war on terrorism" when the UAE cut diplomatic ties with the Taliban. The Gulf state's official news agency, WAM, said the government had decided on the move after failing to persuade the Taliban to hand over bin Laden.

The *Washington Post* said Saudi Arabia was resisting a US request to use a key command centre on a military base there. Quoting US defence officials, it said Saudi resistance to the use of the Prince Sultan air base had forced US military planners to consider moving the centre to another unspecified country, which could delay any air strikes for weeks.

Only Saudi Arabia and Pakistan now recognise the Taliban. Pakistan again asked the Taliban to consider the grave consequences of their defiance. "We hope that the Taliban would consider the grave situation and consider how to meet the demands the UN Security Council had made to them," the foreign ministry spokesman, Mr Riaz Mohammad Khan, said.

Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda has threatened to strike at "vital targets" in those Gulf countries which would support US attacks.

US defence officials said about a dozen more aircraft, including refuelling planes, would soon move to the Gulf and Indian Ocean - within range of Afghanistan - to join nearly 350 warplanes at land bases and on two aircraft carriers.

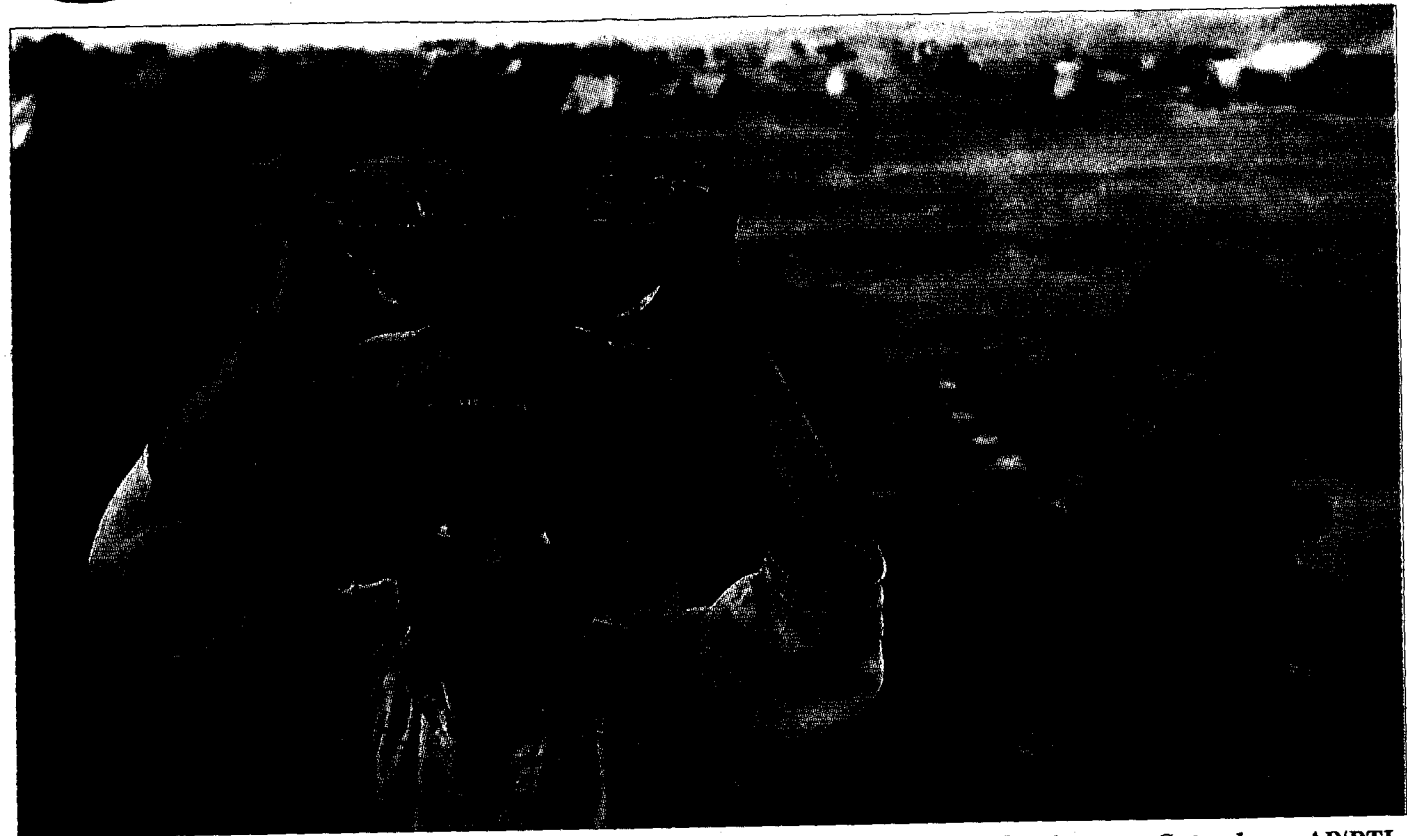
The US assault ship *Essex* left Sasebo naval base in Japan today and was expected to head for the Indian Ocean. The carrier, *USS Kitty Hawk*,



An Afghan shows a roti baked at a refugee camp near Khaga Bawden village in Afghanistan on Saturday. - AP/PTI

■ More reports on pages 7, 11 & 12

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Afghan children at a refugee camp near Khaga Bawden village in northern Afghanistan on Saturday. - AP/PTI

J&K terrorism on Bush's target list, says Powell

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22. - Terrorism in J&K is on President George Bush's target list with other movements like Irish and Basque terrorism, Mr Colin Powell has told the BBC in an interview.

Asked whether it's a war on terrorism, the US secretary of state said in the affir-

mative. "The President sees this as a campaign that goes after terrorism as a curse in society," he said.

"Any organisation that's interested in terrorist operations to overthrow legitimate governments, democratically elected governments...is a threat. We should go after them.

"In light of what happened on 11 September, we now need a worldwide campaign."

How he would judge that a war has been won? Mr Powell said: "I think we can make a judgment that the war is being won or has been won when we do not see that kind of terrorist incident occurring anywhere. Now, will we ever get there? I don't know. Can we reduce the likelihood of these sorts of incidents as we go after these terrorist organisations? The answer to that is clearly yes".

A small change



5-11 USA: 2399

USA:

(Continued from page 1)

which carries about 70 aircraft, left its home port near Tokyo yesterday.

Turkey and the Philippines pledged logistical support to the USA.

The USA has rejected a request from the Taliban to show proof that bin Laden was behind the strikes. It told the militia that "we'll defeat you" if Laden was not handed over.

Vowing to crush "every terrorist group of global reach," Mr Bush has thrown down a gauntlet to several shadowy networks beyond that of bin Laden, notably one backed by Iran, experts say.

Critics of the US practice of naming individual groups as "terrorists" say some of these organisations are genuine freedom fighters.

British arrests: British police today said they were holding three men and a woman for a second day of questioning in connection with the suicide attacks in New York and Washington. Two men, aged 27 and 29, and a 25-year-old woman were arrested in west London yesterday. Another man, in his mid-40s, was also detained in Birmingham, and was taken to London for questioning.

The 29-year-old man has been released, Scotland Yard said today.

THE STATESMAN

23 SEP 2001

In for the long haul

WHEN TERRORISTS hit New York and Washington on September 11, the conventional wisdom was that the Bush administration would be reacting soon and with a firepower not seen in recent times. In fact the first pressures on the President were on similar lines — that if he waited he would be losing momentum.

But wiser counsel appears to have prevailed on Mr. George W. Bush. He has given the intelligence teams enough time not only to come up with what has happened but also for a broader assessment of who and what it was that hit America.

Beneath all the rhetoric of the President's "Wanted Posters" of Osama bin Laden or of his Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld's pledge to "drain the swamps" the terrorists live in, there is the realisation from the President down that the campaign against terrorism is going to be long drawn.

In fact, if there is one thing that Mr. Bush has been saying from the very beginning it is that Americans need to have patience as the administration puts in place a comprehensive plan.

It may be the first war of the 21st century and against terrorism, but it is also the unconventional war of the century — an enemy with a possible name and a possible face, but with no permanent address. And this is what is making the retribution difficult, complex and tricky.

In spite of the temptation for the quick fix and the urge for the United States to look beyond Afghanistan and Osama bin Laden to Iraq and the Bekka Valley in Lebanon, the Bush administration has gone about this whole business in at least two ways.

First, without specifying the military targets, the Pentagon has been steadily building up its firepower in the Mediterranean, in the Persian Gulf and perhaps to some extent in the Arabian Sea. Battle groups are being moved — long range bombers to overseas bases and aircraft carriers into position.

At the same time, the elite Special Forces are getting ready. There could be some

There is a realisation in the U.S. administration that the campaign against terrorism is going to be long drawn, says Sridhar Krishnaswami.

paratroop action; perhaps even small teams of Special Forces making their ways into the valleys and mountains of Afghanistan in search of Osama bin Laden and his bunch of terrorist hoodlums who have wreaked so much havoc.

For the military component — Operation Infinite Justice — to succeed or even make a worthwhile dent, the U.S. has to shore up its diplomatic component.

Even if Mr. Bush and his top advisers are repeatedly making the point that the war is not against Islam, but against un-Islamic terrorists, there is far too much scepticism in the Muslim world.

And Washington very much understands what it means to someone like General Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan to stick

his neck out in support of the U.S.

The problem with coalition building at the State Department has been on at least three fronts: from the Islamic nations who are wary of being drawn into a scheme of things that is going to prove troublesome for their own internal societies and political survival; from nations such as Russia and China who are equally apprehensive of getting on the American bandwagon or giving any kind of a "blank cheque" to the Bush administration, even while holding out vague promises of cooperation.

And, finally, coalition building is coming under a lot of pressure and strain domestically from those conservatives who seem to be more interested in not losing the initial momentum than in looking at the issue in a wider perspective.

Which is why there is apprehension in the State Department and elsewhere that one sure and fast way to lose the coalition members is to put in place a strategy that attacks first and asks questions later.

Voices of caution

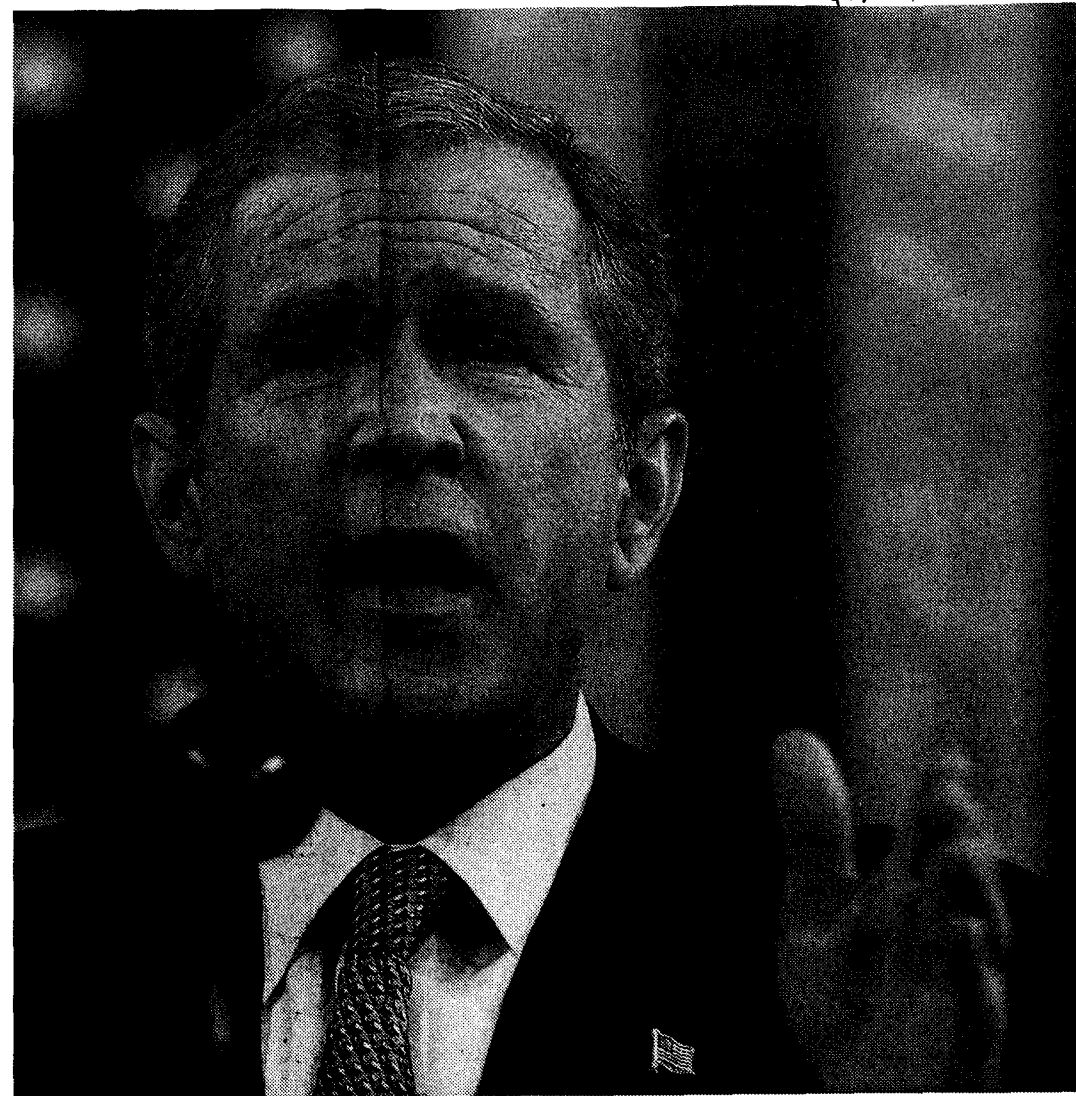
More than America and Britain, mainland Europe understands the dangers of talking up passions, particularly if they have racial or sectarian undertones, writes Hasan Suroor.

might have on their relations with the Muslim world.

The French Prime Minister, Mr. Lionel Jospin, felt compelled to declare that "we are not at war against Islam or the Arab Muslim world", and French MPs reacted with distaste to the idea that this is a modern "crusade", a term unthinkingly used by the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush.

Leading figures in Germany including its Chancellor, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister have called for restraint and their views have found echos in Belgium and Italy.

Cautionary voices have also



George W. Bush... facing a hard ask.

been raised in Britain, the most enthusiastic of U.S. allies in Europe, forcing the Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, to stress that this is not a conflict between the Christian and the Islamic world but between civilised values and fanaticism.

Yet, he is perhaps the only European leader to use the word "war" while others, including the NATO Secretary-General, Lord Robertson, pointedly avoided the term when asked if NATO was at war.

Europe is not against retaliation and in fact for the first time in its history NATO has invoked Article 5 of its

charter which implies automatic support of all member-states to the country which has been attacked. But most European countries do not want the issue to be couched in denominational terms or as a confrontation between the "civilised" West and the "rest".

The overwhelming opinion even in Britain is that any retaliation should be measured and there is unease over loose references to a range of Muslim countries as possible targets.

Mr. Blair, who has emerged as Washington's pointman in Europe, has been working overtime to keep his European friends in line and through his shuttle diplomacy this week he has succeeded in putting a lid on any more embarrassing public utterances.

Privately, however, European leaders still have reservations about giving a "blank cheque" to Mr. Bush.

Beijing's caveat

China wants 'irrefutable evidence' and clear targets, writes Amit Baruah.

and the five permanent members should increase consultations.

Separately, a spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry said: "The United States has asked China to provide assistance in the fight against terrorism... China, by the same token, has reasons to ask the United States to give its support and understanding in the fight against terrorism and separatists. We should not have double standards."

While this position "links" the issue of terrorism to the Chinese understanding of its domestic problems in Xinjiang, Tibet and Taiwan, the spokesman stated that the fight against terrorism

Careful calculations

The Kremlin is trying to fashion an active strategy to put Russia in the frontline of fighting terrorism and avoid giving the U.S. a carte blanche, says Vladimir Radyuhin.

RUSSIA HAS declared full moral solidarity with the U.S. and recognised its right to use force against terrorists, but has refused to extend blanket support for unilateral action America may take to punish the suspected attackers. Moscow is afraid that domestic pressures for revenge may push the U.S. administration to strike indiscriminately in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere, unleashing a Taliban backlash in Central Asia and queering Russia's pitch with the Islamic world.

As it struggles to crush separatism in Chechnya, Russia can hardly afford to open a "second front" of fighting in Central Asia. At the same time, the Kremlin is trying to fashion an active strategy to put Russia in the frontline of fighting terrorism and avoid giving the U.S. a *carte blanche* for chasing terrorists worldwide.

Moscow is pursuing several immediate objectives. It is working to get Washington involved in a broad-based international effort to combat terrorism. Russia has

called for an emergency meeting of the Group of Eight and is pressing the U.S. to seek U.N. Security Council approval to strike against terrorist bases. Moscow also wants to make Washington renounce double standards in its attitude to terrorism and recognise the war in Chechnya as an anti-terrorist operation. More broadly, Russia is working to persuade Washington to review its security priorities and backpedal on plans to build a missile shield.

Russia is also anxious to prevent a rift in the post-Soviet Commonwealth of Independent States on the issue of supporting America's war on terrorism. Moscow is trying to persuade its allies and Washington that the best and safest way would be to help the Northern Alliance break the Taliban regime. In a series of high-level political consultations with Washington, Moscow offered to share crucial intelligence information on Afghanistan, while the U.S. promised to "closely coordinate" its actions with Russia.

was a "different" issue. "We are not making any bargains here," he said.

Western media reports from Beijing have been highly critical of China's position — saying that it wanted to extract a price for supporting the broad coalition against terrorism that the U.S. is trying to put together.

Whatever be the correctness of such views, the fact remains that China is promoting its own national interest. If it can get the U.S. to back down on certain issues and raise the stakes for its support, then why not?

There is little doubt that Beijing remains concerned about a unilateralist U.S. Its stand favouring a broad role for the U.N., specific targets and avoiding injury to innocent people, is likely to win the Chinese Government support from many quarters. It will also strengthen the credibility of any anti-terrorist coalition the U.S. can put together.

Fight to the Finish

Hobson's Choice for Musharraf

By K SUBRAHMANYAM

PRESIDENT George Bush, in his address to the joint session of the Congress, has made it clear that the proposed war against terrorism will not follow the patterns of previous wars. He has made specific reference to the use of special forces and covert operations. Most commentators who are making predictions about the war are extrapolating from previous experiences — the Vietnam war, the Afghan war and the Gulf war. There is the usual repetition of cliches that the US cannot accept body bags coming home and has no will to fight a prolonged and sustained war. It is not realised that this is the first time since 1813 that the US faces an attack by foreign forces on its home targets in continental US. This attack was on its economic system and political values. The unity of the US, as never before in history, was demonstrated in the two parties getting together behind the president. This was not the situation during the Vietnam war or the Gulf war. Now, justified or not, there is a real sense of threat to US values, society and homeland which it is determined to defeat.

The US is putting together a global coalition against terrorism. Europe, Latin America, Russia, the Islamic nations, India, Indonesia, Japan and Australia have all supported the coalition's aim. While China has not joined, all indications are that Beijing will not stand in the way. Never before in history has the US been able to put together such a coalition. This again is a major difference.

It will take about six weeks for the US and its allies to put their forces in position in the bases around the Persian Gulf. The force will be largely air- and sea-based with a small component of marines and special forces. There will be no land battles and, therefore, no stream of body bags. In all probability, the forces of the Northern Alliance of Burhanuddin Rabbani, who is the ruler recognised by the UN, will start their offensive operations as the US airforce destroys the artillery and armour of the Taliban. The Pakistanis, who were the backbone of the Taliban army, have been withdrawn. With the US air effort destroying the Taliban's equipment, the Northern army will not have much difficulty in moving down and taking over various Afghan cities like Kabul, Herat and Jalalabad.

Unlike in the eighties, when the

Mujahideen derived all their logistic and manpower support from Pakistan backed by the US, this time the Pak-Afghan border will be closed with no oil or food getting through. Most of the governors in Afghanistan are as purchasable as they were when the Pakistan-Taliban forces advanced in 1994-97. Therefore, in the land campaign in Afghanistan, no significant US forces will be involved. They may use heliborne special forces for specific operations but not large numbers of regular forces as happened in Vietnam or by the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 80's.

When a sizeable portion of Afghanistan is freed from the Taliban, president Burhanuddin Rabbani can invite US forces to operate from Afghan soil. That would again be using armed helicopters, US aircraft and special forces. All this would take a few weeks after the beginning of the operation which will most probably be in the latter half of October. Food supplies too will become a useful tool

IN BRIEF

- The US will fight the Taliban in concert with the Northern Alliance
- If Musharraf cooperates in blockading Afghanistan, he will be rewarded
- Pakistan will have to cleanse itself of jihadis or face more economic sanctions

to turn the populace against the Taliban. In the course of this war, the training camps of the Taliban and Osama bin Laden will be destroyed. By the end of the year, an anti-Taliban government will be in Afghanistan exercising control over most of the country.

Meanwhile, if general Musharraf succeeds in blockading Afghanistan and assisting the US in destroying the Taliban, he will get his reward in terms of significant economic aid. But general Musharraf has to survive the internal opposition of the jihadis and keep the army together under his control. The destruction of the Taliban and its replacement by a non-Taliban government will be a strategic defeat for Pakistan brought about by its own submissive support to the US. At that stage, the US will have to devote attention to Pakistan itself. Afghan extremism will not be destroyed unless the Pakistani

jehadi network is eliminated. By this time, general Musharraf and the Pakistan army would have to make up their minds about containing the jihadis. In that effort, they will have the full support of the US and the international community. Without shutting down the madarsas, eliminating the jihadis and cracking down on the narcotics traffic, the US war on terrorism would not succeed.

The US, having given the carrot of economic aid to Pakistan, is likely to tell general Musharraf to either cleanse Pakistan of terrorism and extremism or face the full weight of economic sanctions, including an oil blockade, by the coalition against terrorism. General Musharraf is not likely to have any choice. In order to save Pakistan which he claims is a fort of Islam, he will have to accept those conditions and start the process of cleansing Pakistan. The Americans are not likely to overlook president Musharraf's reference, in his speech of September 19, to the Holy Prophet making tactical compromises with the Jews and residents of Mecca so that he could later take them on and defeat them.

The war against terrorism cannot be won unless Pakistan is reclaimed from terrorism. American strategists are using Pakistan against its terror child — the Taliban. While this war is being fought, the dynamics of it will subject the Pakistani army and elite to enormous pressure and force them to restructure fundamentally the country's polity. In that sense, general Musharraf is right in comparing the present situation to 1971. That war resulted in a change in Pakistan from military dictatorship to a democracy. This war is likely to force Pakistan to give up terror as an instrument of policy.

If that does not happen, Pakistan will be plunged into a near civil war or an actual civil war situation. If the international community provides adequate and appropriate help, Pakistan can be helped to rebuild itself as a democracy purged of terrorism. There are sceptics in this country who wonder whether the US will go that far. The US will in its own national interest since the origin of all this terrorism is Pakistan. All Pakistan's neighbours, including China, have an interest in ensuring that jehadi elements are removed from Pakistan. So do the majority of people in that country.

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

America's War

By Rajeev Dhavan

Specific cooperation on proof of specific issues merits scrutiny and support. India must think carefully before it wages America's war.

40-12
21/9

THE TERRORIST attacks on America on September 11 have left behind an awesome legacy. The destruction is immense. The loss of life is similar to that of the Bhopal and many other human and natural disasters. But it is not the scale of the tragic losses that contrives the legacy to follow; but, the fact that the disaster was inflicted on the most powerful nation in the world. America swears retaliation, revenge and an undeclared 'war' against Osama bin Laden and all the countries that harbour or support him. India has been invited to join this 'war'. Pakistan has its own reasons to join the invitation. Should India do so?

But, what exactly is the U.S. demand? Is it simply to get hold of Osama? Or, to crush his network which stretches across 34 countries? Or, to root out 'terrorism' in all countries? Or, to fight separatist movements chosen by the U.S. wherever they might be? In the past, the U.S. has made up its own 'international' rules for intervention. When it destabilises regimes, the U.S. calls the armed intruders it supports 'revolutionaries'. All others are terrorists. It was indicted in the Nicaragua case (1986) for organising counter-insurgency against the Sandinista regime. America supported the 'rebels' in Afghanistan against Russia to create Osama bin Ladens. Acquiring a U.N. or NATO label, it instrumented attacks on Iraq in the Kuwait war; and in Serbia. It has made up its own rules to become the victim of attacks. In 1993, the World Trade Center was attacked by Ramzi Yousef, who is linked to Osama bin Laden and is now in U.S. custody. This was followed by attacks on U.S. personnel in Saudi Arabia in 1995 and 1996, U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the 'suicide' bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen in 2000. When they de-stabilise foreign regimes, U.S. armed and funded forces are called 'rebels' and 'insurgents'. Everyone else is a 'terrorist'. By its own logic, U.S. foreign policy maintains a distinction between 'insurgency' (which is acceptable) and 'terrorism' (which is not).

The present demand of the U.S. is for

Osama bin Laden. The legal decks for such a demand have already been cleared by U.S. law. Fortified, by the Anti-Hijacking Conventions of 1970 and 1971, the Anti-Hijacking Act, 1982, and other legislation, India has never really been troubled by the 'extra-territoriality' of such offences. In the Eichman case (1960), Israel took a wide view of its jurisdiction of Nazi crimes before Israel was created.

The U.S. has gone further. In the Yunis case (1998), U.S. courts claimed jurisdiction over a surreptitiously obtained Lebanese citizen involved in the Jordan air-lines hijacking on the basis that "when another Government harbours international terrorists or is unable to enforce international law, it is left to the world community to respond and prosecute the alleged terrorists". The normal procedure to try all criminals in international law is the due process of extradition. However, in the Alvarez-Machain case (1992), the U.S. Supreme Court in a divided decision (6:3) proclaimed that the U.S. courts also had jurisdiction over a criminal, abducted contrary to extradition procedure. Thus, over the last 20-odd years, the U.S. had been re-interpreting its laws to acquire a universal jurisdiction over all persons, such as terrorists and others, including those handed over or illegally abducted by U.S. authorities contrary to international law.

The U.S.' call for an attack on terrorism also seems to create a signal for strong anti-terrorist laws throughout the world. In India, this will inevitably find an echo in the demand for the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA). As is well known, the Union Home Minister, Mr. L. K. Advani, advocates such a law even though he defeated the revival of TADA in 1995 when it was proposed by the Congress. In 1999-2000, the

Law Commission has faithfully supported the BJP Government's call for a new TADA. But, in July 2000, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) strongly dissented on such a revival.

There are various reasons for not using the attacks in America to revive the TADA in India. In the first place, TADA was randomly abused to cause panic and havoc and alienate both innocents and suspects alike. That is why, even in the Irish terrorist situation, the Europeans Court in Brogan's case (1988) counselled a

LAW AND SOCIETY

strong watered-down liberal reading of anti-terrorist legislation. Second, strong anti-terrorist legislation is not a universal panacea for all situations. There are many 'insurgencies' taking place in India. In the Northeast, India's objective is not to just crush the insurgents, but also to negotiate a peace. This is equally true of the predicament of Sri Lanka. Where peace has to be negotiated with one's own people — whether in Kashmir, the Northeast or elsewhere — the instruments of war and counter-insurgency cannot lose sight of the goal to win people over. American solutions may not be in line with India's objectives. India cannot be placed at risk to please America.

India has been invited to join America's war against terrorism in general; and, Afghan terrorism in particular. Such an invitation to fight an undeclared 'war' cannot be taken lightly as a logical addendum to the *tour de force* of American outrage. The initial demand being made on India may be to provide air bases for American planes to bomb terrorist hide-outs in Afghanistan. American bombing in Iraq and Serbia confirms that it would extend to civilian areas and innocent civilians. The war that India is being asked to join is in India's region. Even in the Taliban hijack of the Indian Airlines

plane from Nepal in December 1999, India tread warily so as to preserve its immediate and future negotiating position. Joining America's war, in fact, means declaring war on Afghanistan and its allies in the region. Providing air bases is an act of war. Symbolically, it is joining a future NATO offensive. This is a war that India can ill afford.

In all this, there is always the fear of being misunderstood. As a people and a nation, India is shocked at the barbaric attack in New York and Washington. India's foreign policy has always been to abhor such attacks; and, to use force only in self-defence. We have not been wholly consistent on this as self-evident from our support for the, then, nascent Bangladesh in 1971 and Sri Lanka in 1985. But, the broad parameters of India's policy of peace are a sound basis for the world's future. America is convinced that Osama bin Laden should be surrendered on the basis of a strong undisclosed intuition. Although, the correct legal procedure remains the law of extradition, it is possible to give qualified support for such a handover. But, what happens when such a handover is refused?

America contemplates the possibility of bombing. After Vietnam, America knows better than to commit ground troops for guerilla warfare. This failed in Vietnam for the U.S. and Russia in Afghanistan. But, the very act of taking steps to enter such a war invites a gruesome future. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, may win support for appearing to be strong. But, the results of such an undeclared war will invite a general conflagration in the whole region, including India. We are already involved in a major armed conflict in Kashmir and insurrection in various parts of India to which we are trying to negotiate solutions. While generally opposing terrorism, neither a revival of the TADA nor general lease of air base or space are called for. Specific cooperation on proof of specific issues merits scrutiny and support. India must think carefully before it wages America's war against all its neighbours. Nothing could be more dangerous.

British forces likely to join mission

By Hasan Suroor 21/9

LONDON, SEPT. 20. Stepping up his efforts to rally European support for U.S. action against terrorists ahead of the launch of "Operation Infinite Justice", the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair said today British forces were most likely to be involved in any military strikes. He also expected other European countries to join in what Britain sees as the start of a long and determined fight against international terrorism. His statement coincided with an opinion poll indicating that 70 per cent Britons back strong military offensive against countries suspected to be helping terrorists.

Mr. Blair, who was speaking in Paris during the second leg of his transatlantic shuttle diplomacy, said while the precise nature of "our response" was under discussion British participation was almost certain. He stressed that those who were in a position to help in bringing to justice the people responsible for last week's terrorist attacks in the U.S. should do so. His remarks came after a meeting this morning with the French President, Mr. Jacques Chirac who is known to have reservations about an overtly aggressive reprisal.

The continuing French unease over giving a *carte blanche* to Washington was reflected in

Mr. Chirac's comment that his country would support an "appropriate" response. "I can't see how France and Britain would not be involved if it was appropriate," he said answering a question from the media. This is also the message he is believed to have conveyed to the U.S. President, Mr. George W Bush as well when he met him in Washington earlier this week.

His offer of "unwavering" French solidarity was tempered with a call for restraint, a line favoured by most European countries. Even Britain, seen as the most "hawkish" of U.S. allies, is reported to be advising restraint in private and Mr. Blair echoed this saying any action would be decided "calmly" and in a "considered way."

Mr. Blair, who was on his way to meet Mr. Bush today, is engaged in a hectic diplomatic campaign to get Europe fall in line with the U.S. as it prepares for the long haul in its bid to track down the perpetrators of the September 11 carnage. On Wednesday, he had discussions with the German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder who is under pressure from his coalition partners, the Greens, to tread cautiously. He is believed to have assured Mr. Blair of full German support for what *The Guardian* termed as "purposeful military action".

Much attention was today focussed on Mr. Blair's talks with Mr. Bush amid reports that London and Washington were working on a long-term strategy to destroy terrorist networks around the world. *The Times* disclosed a "secret" British-U.S. plan to launch a 10-year "war on terrorism" called "Operation Noble Eagle" — a combination of diplomatic and military muscle backed by economic and political pressures. It quoted defence sources as saying that the current build-up of American forces in the Gulf would not necessarily lead to a "D- Day invasion of Afghanistan" and "no repeat" of the 1991 Operation Desert Storm against Iraq. They said the planned campaign was not aimed at just bringing Osama bin Laden to "justice".



The French President, Mr. Jacques Chirac (right), and the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, address a joint press conference at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Thursday. — AFP

SEE HINDU

21 SEP 2001

Identity confusion over hijackers

Washington, September 20

US OFFICIALS are investigating whether some or all of the 19 hijackers on the four hijacked aircraft used in last week's terror attacks used stolen identities, possibly complicating efforts to link them to Osama bin Laden. The doubts started to emerge when at least four men with names matching those on an FBI list of hijackers turned up alive in Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, according to newspaper reports.

An unnamed senior US official told *The Washington Post* that there was now uncertainty over the list of suspects. "There may be some question with regard to the identity of at least some of them," he said.

The Chicago Tribune spoke to an unnamed Justice Department official who said "the names on the list are the best information that we have, but we are investigating the possibility of identity-theft and false identification".

The doubts grew when FBI agents fanning out across the country and around the world looking for accomplices of the

hijackers arrested three suspects of Arab origins in Detroit on Tuesday, but were unable to immediately say from which country they came. The three were charged with possession of false documents.

Another four people have been arrested as material suspects — individuals believed to have information vital to the case — and the immigration and naturalisation service is holding between 75 and 115 people who may also be able to help the investigation.

FBI Director Robert Mueller last week said as he released what he said were the names of the hijackers, that his bureau had "a fairly high level of confidence" that these were their true identities. But at least one Arabic newspaper, the Saudi-owned *Asharq-al-Awsat*, said it had found two of the Saudis named on the list, Abdelaziz al-Omari and Hussein Gharamallah al-Ghamdi, alive and well.

Omari said he had been at work at the Saudi telecommunications authority in Riyadh when the September 11 attacks occurred and had nothing to do

with them, adding that his passport had been stolen in Denver in 1995. He said he could not be the man with pilot training the FBI claimed he was, saying "I am an electrical engineer and have no idea how to fly a plane".

Ghamdi, a Saudi Arabian airlines pilot reported to be in Tunisia, told the paper that he saw his photograph on television — received by the FBI from a Florida flight school — but said he had been in Tunis for the past nine months, training with colleagues.

The *Chicago Tribune* said it had a report that another "hijacker", Waleed M Alshehri, was also a pilot for Saudi Arabian airlines and was still alive, according to his father. It also said the Saudi Press had found Amer Kamfar, who the FBI was seeking as a suspect in the case, was a pilot living in Saudi Arabia.

There was confusion over the nationalities of the three men arrested in Detroit on Tuesday, who the FBI named as Ahmed Hannan (33), Karim Koubriti (23) and Farouk al-Halmoud (21).

AFP

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2001

TOWARDS AN ANTI-TERROR ALLIANCE

AN INTERNATIONAL COALITION to wage an effective war on the worldwide manifestations of terrorism is a truly grand idea. Its practicality is obviously open to much debate. However, the United States deserves to be commended for visualising such a herculean crusade. Surely, the brave new vision does not imply any of the religious overtones of some bygone crusades. It is also significant that the U.S. has chosen a moment of traumatic national consciousness to float the idea of a collective campaign to wipe out terrorism across the world. In a different perspective, though, the timing itself and the enormity of Washington's immediate compulsions sharpen a simple political poser. The issue is how far will the U.S. be relentlessly willing to go beyond the challenges of eliminating the definitive sources of the world's worst terroristic offensive. Last week's savage aerial assault on some meticulously chosen targets in New York and Washington has certainly stirred the conscience of the civilised world. The victims belonged to scores of countries, and the U.S. was palpably the prime target of the evil genius at work. It is in this context that the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, has begun to try and galvanise global efforts to bring the crafty criminals to retributive justice. Towards this end, he wants to build a sustainable international coalition to combat terror on a long-term basis. For launching a more immediate hot pursuit of those who unleashed mass terror on the mainland U.S., Mr. Bush has obtained Pakistan's cooperation in the primary belief that Islamabad might be able to help track down the shadowy suspect, Osama bin Laden.

A tremendously complex issue is whether the U.S.-Pakistan nexus of some plain utilitarian magnitude can indeed turn out to be the cornerstone of a multilateral coalition that will be the nerve-centre of a war on universal terror. Emphatic is the open claim by the Bush administration that no diplomatic deal has been struck

with Islamabad with reference to the Kashmir issue or any other sensitive question of direct concern to other countries. Regardless of a tacit American assurance that the present tie-up between the U.S. and official Pakistan need not destabilise peace and politics elsewhere on the international stage, the plan of forming the nucleus of a globalised alliance against terrorism does not yet seem to have crystallised. It is entirely natural that Washington's urgent priority is to neutralise the architect(s) of the attack on its citizens and assets, if only because America's 'soul' too is anguished. The dynamics of forming a united front against globalised terrorism will require matching commitments by Washington and its politically compatible friends and allies.

In the rush to send a quick warning to those who might have perpetrated last week's callous crime against humanity, the U.S. must not fail to broaden the framework of the anti-terror campaign from the beginning itself. It is heartening that the Bush administration is actively engaging all major and emerging powers, both democracies and others, to try and shape the ultimate anti-terror coalition. A potential task force must necessarily be governed by the principle of transparency in regard to its objectives. This will enhance the credibility of a possible alliance, although the U.S. (as the prime mover) has already underlined the relative importance of secrecy and confidentiality as the weapons of war against terror. Washington should look beyond such salient principles of this struggle and ensure that its clarion calls are not designed just to encourage other nations to rush to go with it at this critical moment. Reassuringly, the Bush administration has not taken any disturbing step as such. Yet, largely untested is the depth of Washington's inclination to associate itself with diverse countries such as India or Russia or China and with differing entities such as the U.N. or the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Everything hangs on whether the US has learnt anything from the tragedy

Beyond vengeance

SUNANDA K. DATTA-RAY

9-90
15/9

When the shock and horror have abated a little, and grief and anger yielded to calm reflection, the day of infamy when terrorists struck in the United States should prompt a sober reappraisal of American policy, especially in west Asia and in relation to dependent dictatorships like Pakistan's. Nothing can compensate for the devastation, but a reappraisal might ensure that one evil does not compound another.

It was a coincidence, but surely a coincidence pregnant with symbolism, that Israel's national security adviser, Major-General Uzi Dayan, was leading a ten-member delegation in New Delhi as the attacks took place. For out of the death and destruction could rise a new strategic equation in south Asia. If this is an opportunity for India to get out of the rut of old moorings, it is no less an opportunity for the US finally to shed the blinkers of the Cold War.

Indians see the assault on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon (heaven alone knows what other mayhem was planned) as a sequel to the bombings that ripped apart Bombay in 1993. As Jaswant Singh remarked sorrowfully, "India has travelled these bylanes and these roads." Now, India faces two dangers. Not content with wreaking havoc in Kashmir, Islamic militants have hijacked aircraft and bombed buses and trains elsewhere. They can hit targets anywhere in a country with hostile neighbours, porous borders, disgruntled minorities and poor security. And however reassuring Yashwant Sinha might sound, the soaring price of crude can be a severe drain on a country that imports more than 70 million tons annually.

The tragedy is that Washington did not take Indian concerns seriously. Not when Sushma Swaraj warned in 1999 that Osama bin Laden had bracketed India and the US as the "biggest enemies of Islam" and urged Muslims worldwide to "target" them. Nor even when the Clinton administration's coordinator for counter-terrorism, Michael Sheehan, told a senate committee that "the centre of anti-American terrorism has moved eastward, from Libya, Syria and Lebanon to south Asia".

Differences of perception made the US-India joint working group on coordinating anti-terrorist policies, set up in 1999, ineffective. Americans suspected India of only trying to place their friend and protégé, Pakistan, in the dock. Indians accused Americans of a blind spot about Islamic terrorism in Kashmir. India now hopes that "hexperience", as Mr Bumble in *Oliver Twist* would have said, will force Washington to focus on terrorism in general instead of only on just one man. Surging outrage in America might even allow Washington to develop strategic cooperation with New Delhi without a formal security relation-

ship, possibly on the basis of the draft comprehensive convention against terrorism that the 56th United Nations general assembly meeting was scheduled to discuss.

The need arises because, in spite of unrealistic gushing about two open, secular democracies (which has no bearing on Realpolitik), New Delhi is still coy about being seen to be tied to Washington's apron strings. America's favour has meant the kiss of death for too many Asian leaders. Moreover, India wants to preserve the goodwill that it believes it enjoys among nationalistic Arabs and is worried about the sensibilities of millions of poor and uneducated Indian Muslims who might be carried away by fundamentalist

nam, pulverized Iraq and pounded Serbia was at last getting a taste of its own medicine. One young man tells me that the American Central Intelligence Agency and Islamic fundamentalist organizations are alike in their commitment and ruthlessness.

Some of this explains why India also keeps its burgeoning friendship with Israel under wraps. There are reports of a \$2 billion weapons contract, of Israelis upgrading Indian fighter aircraft, providing sensors and surveillance equipment and training commandos in Kashmir. But officials only admit that Jaswant Singh's visit to Israel last year resulted in another joint working group (similar to those with the US, Britain, Canada and Germany)



An image to ponder

propaganda. It does not want them to think of their country leading Samuel Huntington's apocalyptic crusade against Islam.

Finally, no Indian government dare take public opinion granted. It's not just fellow travellers that our rulers must beware of. I was at a birthday dinner at a stately mansion in Alipore on Wednesday when the news came through. Ignoring the band playing old time waltzes and fox-trots, guests, many with sons and daughters in America, clustered round the TV set. Everyone was shocked by the gruesome tragedy, but two sentiments appeared to lace their horror. There was unmistakable admiration for the terrorists' sheer skill and daring. There was a feeling, too, that a superpower that had blasted Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ravaged Viet-

to share intelligence and cooperate against terrorism. General Dayan was in New Delhi for the group's third formal meeting.

Moving cautiously because of this baggage, Jaswant Singh was quick to assure Washington that India's concerns are not Pakistan-specific. But Taliban hospitality for bin Laden is compared with the reportedly lavish lifestyle under Pakistani protection in Karachi of Dawood Ibrahim and the Memon brothers, suspected perpetrators of the Bombay blasts. We have seen pictures of the celebrations in Karachi that greeted the attack and read of the popularity of bin Laden T-shirts in Peshawar.

Much will depend now on whether George W. Bush turns the screws on General Pervez Musharraf to obtain his cooperation in the war against terrorism or

persists with the notion — a relic of the Cold War — that Western interests are best served by succouring Pakistan, no matter how obscurantist, repressive and militaristic it might be.

By implication, the US accepted Islamabad's definition that terrorism in Kashmir is freedom-fighting, presumably because Americans also agree with the expedient and dangerous thesis that Kashmir is of crucial importance to Pakistan's identity and existence. If so, Washington might well decide to turn the screws on India over Kashmir as a sop to ensure the general's help in dealing with Afghanistan.

The US must also rethink its superpower obligations in west Asia. Support for reactionary feudalisms does not endear it to the Arab masses. Neither does uncritical backing for Israel, as seen at Durban. There is scope for a realistic formula that guarantees both Israel's security within recognized borders and legitimate Palestinian aspirations for a sovereign homeland, if only Washington would consider it. Indeed, Wednesday's holocaust might even be called a reaction to earlier American action. Bin Laden describes "the time when the Americans decided to help the Afghans fight the Russians" as his baptism in revolution. The CIA says it never "controlled" him but certainly knew all about the renegade Saudi tycoon.

He learned two lessons from that conflict. First, the CIA, which financed, armed and trained (through Pakistani intermediaries) the *mujahedin*, could be turned to his own purpose, especially when it abandoned huge stockpiles of weapons, grenades and rocket launchers. Second, the *mujahedin*'s victory "cleared from...minds the myth of superpower". Bin Laden believes that that triumph can be repeated against the remaining superpower, "the American (who) imposes himself on everyone". He claimed to have learnt that sheer will can destroy even a superpower.

Everything hangs now on whether the US, too, has learnt anything from the tragedy. The craving for vengeance is understandable, but wisdom decrees taking a look at the long term to ensure not the elimination of one Osama bin Laden but prevent the emergence of others like him. That means a superpower whose authority is voluntarily accepted because it stands for peace and justice. Almost the entire world now mourns with the US in its suffering. But I am not sure whether they are reacting with revulsion to the means employed rather than expressing repugnance for the cause.

Unless Washington can make the adjustment, it will serve no purpose Atal Bihari Vajpayee telling us that the world's oldest and biggest democracies must unite in the face of the common enemy.

Pakistan should prove peace credentials, says Bush

WSW 511 14/9

Osama prime suspect: Powell

DESIKAN THIRUINARAYANAPURAM
SNS & Agencies

WASHINGTON, Sept. 13. - The unfolding Osama bin Laden link to the attacks in the USA has put pressure on Pakistan to prove its peace credentials.

As investigators identified 50 people believed to be involved in Tuesday's terrorist strikes, the USA mounted pressure on Pakistan to compel its ally Taliban to hand over Osama.

The US secretary of state, Gen. Colin Powell, said today Osama is a prime suspect. Speaking at a press conference, he said recent US diplomatic overtures to Pakistan were aimed at securing Islamabad's cooperation in dealing with Osama, holed up in Afghanistan.

He also said he would talk later today with Gen Pervez Musharraf about a series of measures Islamabad could take to cooperate in dealing with "candidates" the USA thinks were involved in the attacks. "Yes," Gen. Powell replied when asked whether Osama was the "candidate" discussed with the Pakistanis.

SIKHS ATTACKED

NEW YORK, Sept. 13. - Incidents of attacks by angry Americans on ethnic minorities, including Sikhs, possibly mistaking them to be Arabs, have taken place in the aftermath of the terrorist strikes.

A Sikh was manhandled and a gurdwara in Richmond Hill attacked. Police have arrested one person in connection with the attack on the gurdwara during which rubber bullets were fired by the culprits. - PTI

Mr George W Bush said he would give Pakistan a chance to live up to its commitment to fight terrorism.

The President also said: "My resolve is steady and strong about winning this war that has been declared on America.....It's a new kind of war.....This government will adjust and this government will call other governments to join us."

"We have just seen the first war of the 21st century," he added.

Addressing a press conference at the White House, the US President said he appreciated Gen Musharraf's statement, pledging his "unstinted cooperation" to fight terrorism.

"I appreciate the support extended by the Pakistan government to track down those responsible. We'll give the Pakistan government a chance to prove themselves," he said.

Gen Musharraf yesterday discussed the emerging situation with key aides following which an official statement was issued in Islamabad in which he assured Mr Bush of his help. "We regard terrorism as an evil that threatens the world community," he said, adding "all countries must join hands in this common cause."

The US ambassador to Pakistan, Ms Wendy Chamberlin, met Gen Pervez Musharraf yesterday and said the Pakistani leader had condemned the attacks and offered to help in any way he could. The US secretary of state, Gen Colin L Powell, had singled out Pakistan

■ See OSAMA: page 8

Pak trapped in debris: US demands support on terrorism

Continued from Page 1
Pakistan will be if we find a basis to act." The pressure sent the Pakistan government into a panic reaction with Gen. Musharraf holding a three-hour meeting with top officials and Army officers. This was supplemented by another meeting between Pakistani officials and Taliban foreign minister Wakil Ahmad Mutawakkil where the US intention to take retaliatory action against those found responsible for the strikes in New York and Washington was clearly communicated. Pakistan, along with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, has given diplomatic recognition to the Taliban. But, unlike the other two countries, it has been working

very closely with the Taliban to run and maintain terrorist training camps. The Pakistani Army and the ISI are considered to exercise considerable influence over the Taliban. US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld expressed surprise recently over the close ties between Pakistan and the Taliban.

Gen. Musharraf had steadfastly refused to recognise the jihadi groups as "terrorists." He has been maintaining that those involved in Kashmir are those engaged in a struggle for liberation, with the US maintaining silence on this aspect despite India's continuous claim that there is little difference between the Taliban-sponsored ter-

rorists and those working out of Pakistan territory. Reports from Islamabad speak of a great deal of tension with Pakistan clearly unhappy about being caught in the cross-fire. Sources here say that it has probably been made clear to Gen. Musharraf that he had just one of two options — to either support Washington or be part of those facing retaliatory action. US President George W. Bush has already stated that the US wrath will be felt by not just the terrorists but also those harbouring them.

Mr Powell has repeated this at his first press conference after the attack. He did not specify the country or the organisations that were deemed to fall under this

category but maintained that the US would proceed against any such country if required. Pakistan has come under international scrutiny in the recent past for its support of terrorist groups. Extensive reports have been carried by the US and world media detailing the terrorist training camps at Muridke and other parts of Pakistan. Osama bin Laden is formally not part of the terrorist offensive against Kashmir but has been drawing cadres from the same camps that have been training mujahideen for the Valley.

The Taliban ambassador in Islamabad has held two press conferences distancing his organisation from the terrorist strikes.

He has claimed that the "Taliban government has complete control over Bin Laden." The Bush administration has not officially identified Osama bin Laden as the main suspect but enough indications have been given by the officials through the media to suggest that he is being held responsible for the terrorist attack.

Bin Laden, in a video tape released a few days before the tragedy, was captured on camera exhorting his followers to come out to help the Palestinians who are "desperately in need for your help." This video, which is being sold in Pakistan, is also being taken as an indication of Bin Laden's resolve to strike against the US.

Iran to join U.S.-led coalition

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, SEPT. 21. Britain today claimed a major breakthrough in its efforts to enlarge and consolidate the U.S.-sponsored international coalition against terrorism with Iran agreeing to come on board after the Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, spoke to the moderate Iranian President, Mr. Mohammed Khatami, on Thursday, described as the first-ever conversation between the leaders of the two countries since the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

The British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Jack Straw, will visit Teheran next week to discuss the nature and extent of the Iranian cooperation amid speculation over how far the hardliners would allow Mr. Khatami to go. There was much self-congratulation here over the development with commentators hailing it as a diplomatic "coup" for Mr. Blair who took the initiative to call up Mr. Khatami, and experts said that even if, in the end, Iran was not able to offer much beyond an exchange of intelligence, the psychological impact of having an important Muslim state in what many regard as an "anti-Islamic" coalition would be enormous.

Mr. Blair, who spoke to Mr. Khatami from his plane while on his way to the U.S., was reported to be visibly excited as he told journalists accompanying him that he had just finished a phone

call which he could not have imagined having a few weeks ago. Calling it a "remarkable" conversation, he said: "Not only did he give his full solidarity in terms of what had happened to the U.S. and his condemnation of terrorism, but also said how important it was that out of that we rebuild the relationship between our two countries as well."

Commentators said getting Iran into the Western alliance would count as a major triumph for British diplomacy which has seen Mr. Blair criss-cross the Atlantic this week as Washington's key mediator. Iran's willingness to join the coalition was said to be significant as anti-U.S. feelings there still run high and it does not have diplomatic relations with Washington. *The Times* said Mr. Blair's success in enlisting Teheran's support gave some idea of Britain's huge "behind-the-scenes effort" to construct and hold a coalition of more than 100 countries in the hunt for those responsible for the Sept. 11 atrocities in America.

It pointed out that without Iran's support any military operation in the region would be "harder to undertake" and it would become that much more difficult to get the cooperation of other "radical" Muslim regimes. Although Iran has ruled out the use of its airspace for any U.S. action against Afghanistan, its hostility to the Sunni Taliban regime is

seen as a blessing by Western analysts.

Meanwhile, *The Guardian* reported a "secret" U.S. plan to topple the Taliban regime and prop up an interim government under the United Nations auspices. In a front-page story, the paper said the U.S. was pressing its Western allies to agree to a military campaign for the "liberation" of Afghanistan from the Taliban. The plan, it said, involved resurrecting the former Afghan king, Zahir Shah, who lives in exile in Italy since he was deposed in a coup in 1973.

The Guardian said it had seen diplomatic cables in which Washington sought the views of NATO allies on "post-Taliban Afghanistan after the liberation of the country". The cables, it said, revealed that the U.S. administration was "bent on force to evict the Taliban from power" and support the campaign of Zahir Shah to return to power "by encouraging the guerilla army of the Northern Alliance opposition to fall in behind him."

Mr. Blair, who met the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, in Washington on Thursday, gave further indication of British military participation in any U.S. operation, saying there was no "flinching from action". He said it was a "huge and heavy responsibility" but in a climate of growing terrorism "we have no option but to act".

2 2 SEP 2001

Secret memo reveals US plan to overthrow Taliban

Tajikistan/Washington,
September 21

THE US Government is pressing its European allies to agree to a military campaign to topple the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and replace it with an interim administration under United Nations auspices.

Diplomatic cables from the Washington embassy of a key Nato ally, seen by *The Guardian*, report that the US is keen to hear allied views on "post-Taliban Afghanistan after the liberation of the country".

The embassy cable reveals that the US administration is bent on force to evict the Taliban from power because of the shelter it has offered Osama bin Laden, named by the White House as prime suspect for the New York and Washington atrocities of September 11.

The Guardian has also learned that two large US Hercules transport aircraft landed in Tashkent, capital of the former Soviet republic of Uzbekistan, on Tuesday loaded with surveillance equipment to be installed along the northern Afghan border.

The secret landing represented a radical departure since it appeared to herald the deployment of squadrons of US fighters at Uzbekistan's sprawling airfield at Termez, directly on the border.

Such a build-up would incur the wrath of Russia which views the central Asian republics as its backyard.

The US strategy to depose the Taliban regime is based on more than military thinking.

A further plank appears to entail supporting the campaign



A student shows the peace sign as another holds up a US flag at a rally against war and racism on Thursday.

of the exiled 86-year-old monarch of Afghanistan, King Zahir Shah, to return to power by encouraging the guerrilla army of the Northern Alliance opposition to fall in behind him.

Diplomatic documents seen by *The Guardian* show that Washington is funding and organising the travel of several Northern Alliance figures to Rome to confer with the exiled monarch who is expected to call for a revolution.

"The king plans to call on all the Afghan tribes to rise up against the Taliban," the diplomatic cable reported yesterday,

citing the advice of the US administration.

US plans to overthrow the Taliban regime were revealed when a senior European politician in Washington this week was told by the US administration that it wanted to hear his country's views on how Afghanistan should be run after the Taliban were defeated and that "closer consultations" were necessary.

The Americans also spoke of a role for the UN in the new "interim administration" for Afghanistan and for the Organisation for Security and Coopera-

tion in Europe in central Asia, without mentioning Nato.

Washington is routinely sceptical of the UN and OSCE, but the key role was seen as an attempt to build as broad a coalition as possible behind the imminent campaign.

The Europeans, Russia, and even China might be swayed by the unusual US inclusiveness, diplomats said.

"It's a major change of US policy," said one.

The spying mission in Uzbekistan is also fraught with political risk. The two Hercules could not fly over Iran, but Turkmenistan, the third ex-Soviet state bordering Afghanistan granted permission.

However, diplomats said the Turkmens were less keen to grant overflying rights to US fighter aircraft heading for the Afghan border.

The Pentagon yesterday continued its move to a war footing, with orders for up to 130 heavy bombers, fighters, aerial refuelling planes and other combat aircraft to be deployed around the Middle East and Central Asia region.

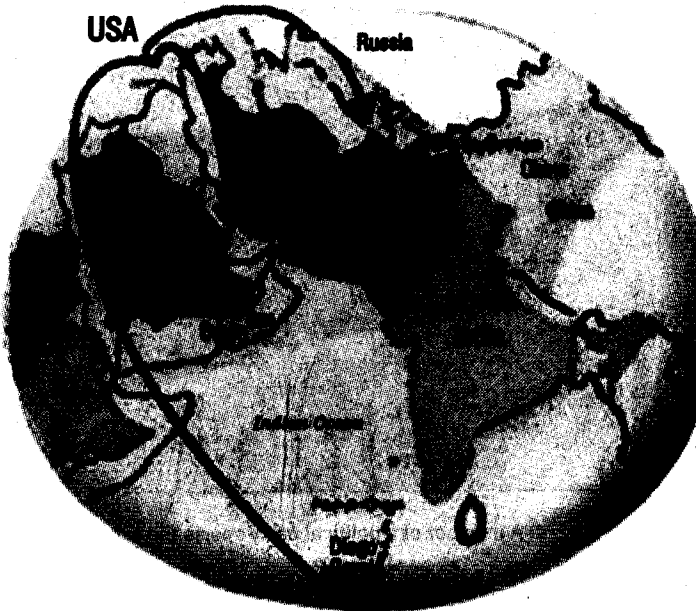
Two B-52 bombers yesterday left Barksdale airbase in Louisiana, joining F-15E fighter-bombers, F-16 fighters, B-1 long range bombers and E-3 Awacs airborne command-and-control aircraft that left on Wednesday.

The navy has also sent an additional aircraft carrier toward the Middle East region, which along with the air deployment could place up to 500 US warplanes in the Mediterranean, Gulf and Indian Ocean areas.

The Guardian

US war machine on the move

More than 100 warplanes and three carrier battle groups are taking up positions to attack targets in Afghanistan and elsewhere



Potential targets in Afghanistan

- The civilian-military airport in Kabul and a Taliban garrison in the north of the city.
- Training bases set up by suspect Osama bin Laden across the country, including two near Jalalabad, a city in eastern Afghanistan, and five in provinces along the Pakistan border.
- The airport in Kandahar, city in southeastern Afghanistan where the Taliban is based.
- Hundreds of housing units built for arabs associated with Bin Laden, one in Kandahar and one in Logar province in central Afghanistan.
- The airport and Taliban military bases located in and around Jalalabad, a city in eastern Afghanistan near the Pakistan border.
- Similar bases north of Jalalabad in Kunar province
- A Taliban garrison and the airport in Herat in the border with Iran.
- Taliban's Shindand air base in southwestern Afghanistan.

SOURCE: AP

<p>B-1</p> <p>TYPE: Heavy Bomber RANGE: Intercontinental MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT: 214,000 kg Crew: 4 SPEED: Mach 1.2, Cost: \$200 million</p>	<p>B-52</p> <p>TYPE: Heavy Bomber RANGE: 8,000 miles MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT: 220,000 kg Crew: 5, Speed: Mach 0.84 Cost: \$200 million</p>
<p>B-57</p> <p>TYPE: Medium bomber RANGE: 1,000 miles MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT: 100,000 kg SPEED: Mach 0.8, Cost: \$40 million</p>	<p>F-15</p> <p>TYPE: Multi-role fighter RANGE: 2,000 miles MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT: 19,000 kg SPEED: Mach 2.5, Cost: \$20 million</p>
<p>AWACS</p> <p>TYPE: Airborne Surveillance and command RANGE: 2,000 miles MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT: 100,000 kg BASED IN: Paphos, Cyprus</p>	<p>F-16</p> <p>TYPE: High speed multi-role fighter RANGE: 4,000 miles MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT: 19,000 kg Crew: 1, Speed: 500 mph Cost: \$10 million</p>
<p>F-15</p> <p>TYPE: Tactical Fighter RANGE: 3,450 miles MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT: 30,000 kg Crew: 1/2 SPEED: MACH 2.5 Cost: \$40 million</p>	<p>F-117</p> <p>TYPE: Stealth Fighter RANGE: Unlimited with air refuelling MAXIMUM TAKEOFF WEIGHT: 23,000 kg Crew: 1, Speed: High subsonic Cost: \$40 million</p>

Bush tunes war cry to please global ear

FROM JOHN F. HARRIS AND MIKE ALLEN

Washington, Sept. 21: Standing before a united Congress and a stricken nation, President Bush last night described in stark and forceful terms a global war against terrorism, issuing an ultimatum to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan to immediately turn over Osama bin Laden and vowing that "from this day forward, any nation that continues to harbour or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime."

To bipartisan roars of support, Bush promised that the United States will punish and ultimately vanquish the terrorist forces that executed the deadliest attack ever on US soil ten days ago. But he pleaded for patience from Americans in waging war against a sprawling, shadowy foe vastly different from any the nation has fought before.

"Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom," Bush declared from the podium in the House of Representatives, where virtually the entire leadership of the national government as well as British Prime Minister Tony Blair were in attendance. "Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done."

The speech clarified in important ways how the President conceives the coming campaign. Bush described a diverse array of military strikes executed over time, ranging from airstrikes that will have highly visible results to covert actions that will not. He made plain that the immediate target is suspected terror mastermind bin Laden and the al Qaeda network he heads, as well as the Taliban regime if it responds with anything less than complete cooperation to his non-negotiable demands.

But Bush, describing a titanic struggle between the civilised world and radical Islam, said he would not stop there. "Our war on terror," he said, "will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated."

That passage was one of several carefully crafted to maximise international support for a US-led campaign. Specifying that he was aiming only at groups of "global reach," would alleviate concerns that he was proposing war on Palestinian liberation groups, for instance, a move that would have little support in West Asia. He

mentioned several times that the terrorists he was targeting practice a "fringe form of Islamic extremism," and that he was not labelling all Muslims as enemies.

The address, delivered in the most solemn setting available to a President, found Bush projecting an ease and confidence not always seen in his formal addresses. It came on a day when New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani — who was in the audience and won praise from Bush — revised sharply upward the official number of people missing and presumed dead in the collapse of the World Trade Center towers to 6,333.

Bush outlined a number of specific steps he is ordering as part of a government-wide programme to confront terrorists and avert new attacks, including the creation of a Cabinet-level coordinator of "homeland defence." He said he will name Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge, Republican, a long-time friend of the President, to the new post.

He also said he wants to expand the number of air marshals on domestic flights and "keep our airlines flying with direct assistance during this emergency."

The speech came as the US military was rapidly revving its war machinery, dispatching ships and aircraft to West Asia. "And tonight a few miles from the damaged Pentagon," he said, "I have a message for our military: Be ready. I have called the armed forces to alert, and there is a reason."

The President said he was anxious to answer Americans' questions about the terrorist attack on the country on September 11, and he did so in blunt, vivid language that was designed to convince Americans that the fight will be worth the price of a long-term battle. Bush described bin Laden's network of terrorist organisations, al Qaeda, as being to terror "what the Mafia is to crime" — but with a goal not of making money but of "remaking the world and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere."

"They are the same murderers indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and responsible for the bombing of the USS Cole," Bush said. "They are recruited from their own nations and neighbourhoods, and brought to camps in places like Afghanistan where they are trained in the tactics of terror. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction."

Calling their leader "a person

'THE ENEMY OF AMERICA IS NOT OUR MANY MUSLIM FRIENDS'



President George W. Bush greets Senator Charles Schumer as he leaves the House chamber following his address to a joint session of Congress in Washington on Thursday. (Reuters)

named Osama bin Laden," Bush called the terrorist network "the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century," saying they "follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism." The list notably excluded communism — an unmistakable nod to China, where Bush hopes to win support. Bush pointed to the influence of bin Laden and his network in Afghanistan, but made it clear

that it was the terrorists — not the people of that rugged land — that are his targets.

"Afghanistan's people have been brutalised," he said. "Many are starving and many have fled. Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not

long enough." Bush devoted considerable time to emphasising what the coming war will not be. It will not be a repeat of the Persian Gulf War waged by his father, "with its decisive liberation of territory and its swift conclusion."

"It will not look like the air war over Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat. Our response involves far

more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle but a lengthy campaign unlike any we have ever seen."

But he pleaded to Americans to prevent the zeal for retribution from curdling into misguided hatred. "The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends," he said. "Our enemy is a radical net-

- The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them
- And what is at stake is not just America's freedom. This is the world's fight. This is civilisation's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom
- We will direct every resource at our command — every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war — to the disruption and defeat of the global terror network
- And tonight, a few miles from the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for our military: Be ready. I have called the armed forces to alert, and there is a reason. The hour is coming when America will act, and you will make us proud
- I will not forget this wound to our country, or those who inflicted it. I will not yield — I will not rest — I will not relent in waging this struggle for the freedom and security of the American people

work of terrorists and every government that supports them."

The President acknowledged that many Americans were fearful, but urged them to hug their children and live their lives as normally as they can. "I ask you to be calm and resolute, even in the face of a continuing threat," he said.

LOS ANGELES TIMES-WASHINGTON POST NEWS SERVICE

■ USA may lift curbs on India, Pak ■ Arab League cautions America ■ Iraq under fire

USA to Taliban: Laden or your lives

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE and Agencies

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21. — The USA and Taliban today appeared headed for war as President George W Bush firmly asked Kabul to hand over Osama bin Laden "immediately" or "share his fate." The Taliban rejected the demand and said it was left with no alternative but to declare a holy war against America.

As a formidable array of US air force planes and a 14-ship naval task force took position at various locations and Washington issued orders to mobilise its crack special forces, Taliban soldiers were deployed on mountain peaks overlooking Pakistan's deserted Torkham border posts in a war-like situation.

In a special address before the US Congress late on Thursday night, Mr Bush made it clear that Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network was responsible for the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

Mr Bush condemned the Taliban for supporting terrorism and demanded that they immediately hand over all terrorists linked to Al-Qaeda. He said the Taliban should return foreign nationals imprisoned in Afghanistan, hand over all terrorists to the appropriate authority, and give the USA full access to terrorist training camps. "These demands are not open to negotiations or discussion," he said.

Reacting to Mr Bush's demand for unconditional handing over of Laden, Taliban ambassador in Islamabad, Mullah Abdul Saleem Zaef, said: "This is not possible. There is no change in our stand..." "If the USA is hell bent on attacking Afghanistan on the pretext of Osama, they (Taliban) would be left with no alternative but to declare *jihād* against America," he said.

Mr Bush did not go into the specifics of his planned attacks. But unlike the Gulf war 10 years ago, "Americans should expect not one battle but a lengthy campaign..." Mr Bush said. "It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success," he said.

Mr Bush said America would starve terrorists of funds, and turn them against each other.



Mersul (8) and her brother, Hismet (11), wait at the Pakistani border for their widowed mother, left behind in Afghanistan, on Friday. They walked for three days in plastic slippers to reach Torkham. — AP/PTI

He warned they would pursue any nation that aided terrorism. "Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists. Any nation that harbours terrorists will be regulated by the USA as a hostile regime," he said. He said intelligence sources had found links between Al-Qaeda and organisations in Egypt and Uzbekistan. The network trained terrorists in hundreds of countries and

brought them back to Afghanistan to "plot destruction." As the number of hate attacks against Muslims in the country rocketed into the 200s, Mr Bush warned people who targeted Muslims in America. "America's enemy is not its Muslim or Arab friends. The enemy is a network of terrorists and all governments that support them," he said. "Clash of civilisations": Arab

AMERICA PREPARES FOR WAR AGAINST TERRORISM

Three aircraft carriers to be stationed in the Mediterranean, with a capacity to carry over 200 strike and support planes

Over 100 US Air Force planes sent to bases in the Gulf, Indian Ocean, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as part of the anti-terrorism campaign. Planes deployed include F-16 and F-15 fighters, B-1 bombers, AWACS radar planes and E-8C Joint Stars ground surveillance planes

Planes for the Indian Ocean island base of Diego Garcia, controlled by Britain, include B-1 and B-52 bombers. F-15E Strike Eagle fighter-bombers will operate out of Uzbekistan, which, along with Tajikistan, shares Afghanistan's northern borders

US SPECIAL FORCES

1. US Army Delta Force
2. Air Force Special Operations
3. Insertion Commando Units
4. Airborne Troops
5. Navy SEAL

Combat planes are stationed in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Kuwait and weapons' storage and other installations are located elsewhere in the Gulf. The US Navy's 5th Fleet is based in Bahrain; two aircraft carriers with their complements of guided missile cruisers and destroyers are in the Gulf and the Arabian Sea

Where is Osama now?

AGENCIES

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 21. — Osama bin Laden has "silently" left Afghanistan for an undisclosed destination, a newspaper reported today quoting sources close to the Taliban and a former interior minister of Pakistan.

The *News* reported that Osama had left Afghanistan four days ago. But it did not confirm its report from the Taliban leadership. The Taliban has not denied Osama's departure, it said. According to *The Frontier Post*, Osama has reached the Wakhan Corridor in Afghanistan near the border with China.

Taliban officials said their chief, Mullah Omar, reluctantly accepted Osama's request to leave just before the *shura* in Kabul, which had asked the Taliban to persuade him to take refuge outside the country.

"Osama left Afghanistan four days. I believe the news is not wrong. He must be out of the Afghan soil," *The News* quoted a Taliban official as saying. "Laden decided to leave Afghanistan, after the USA threatened to attack the country."

"We do not know which country Osama was heading for, but the reports carry weight that he is no longer in this country," Taliban officials said. *The News* said Lebanon or the remote mountain regions of Chechnya could be possible places where Osama may be headed for.

A former interior minister in the PPP government, Mr Naseerullah Babbar, too said Osama had left Afghanistan four days ago. Mullah Omar had sought four days to endorse the *shura* edict and that gave Osama some time to leave, Mr Babbar said at Nowshera. Osama left Kabul even as the Afghan Amir convened the four-day session of the *shura* to decide his fate.

Osama's trusted lieutenants have left the country with him, *The News* said.

League chief Amr Mussa today claimed Arabs and Muslims were being persecuted after attacks on the USA and warned of a "clash of civilisations." "The new world order, or some of its leaders at least, has gone looking for an enemy to target," Mussa said, a Cairo report adds. **Afghan fighting:** Fierce fighting raged in northern Afghanistan today as Taliban troops battled opposition forces seeking

revenge for the assassination of Ahmed Shah Masood. **Hekmatyar:** Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar said he and his followers would take up arms if the USA takes military action against Afghanistan. **Sanctions to be eased:** The State Department has notified the Congress that it's moving to ease sanctions against Pakistan and India, administration and congressional sources said

today. The plan is to ease the sanctions early next week, a House Republican aide said.

Iraq under fire: British and US warplanes today attacked military targets in Iraq's southern "no-fly" zone, the UK ministry of defence said in London.

■ Editorial: Tightrope walk, page 6
 ■ More reports on pages 5 & 8

US, Euro stocks drop to new low as Asia retreats

London/Tokyo/NY, September 20

STOCKS STAGGERED lower in midday trading on Thursday after a slew of companies reported last week's terror attacks would exacerbate mounting layoffs and shrinking profits, dimming the outlook for the struggling US economy.

The blue-chip Dow Jones industrial average scraped out a fresh session low at 8,420.15 and neared a three-year trough. It was trading down 337.25 points, or 3.85 percent, at 8,421.88. Within minutes, the Dow recovered some of that loss to 8,468, down 290 points, or 3.32 percent.

The broader Standard & Poor's 500 Index fell 24 points, or 2.37 percent, to 991, while the technology-laced Nasdaq Composite Index dropped 39 points, or 2.61 percent, to 1,487.

The market has racked up four straight days of decline since it re-awakened on Monday from a

four-day break after hijacked airliners leveled the World Trade Center in New York's financial district and hit the Pentagon near Washington, D.C.

US Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan told Congress earlier Thursday that last week's attacks will damage the economy in the short-term, but won't dampen bright long-term prospects. The central bank has cut interest rates eight times this year to buoy the economy.

European share prices tumbled on Thursday to levels not seen since the 1997 Asian financial crisis, as concerns mounted about the impact on corporate heavyweights of last week's carnage in the US.

Markets were hit across the board by nagging fears of US retaliation for the September 11 assault. By early afternoon, London's FTSE 100 index had fallen 2.2 per cent to 4,618.9 points, taking it back to depths not plumbed

points. Across the 12-nation euro-zone the Euro Stoxx 50 index gave up 2 per cent to 3,043.3 points, while the euro bought 0.9247 dollars.

Oil was quoted at 26.78 dollars a barrel, while an ounce of gold was fixed at 288.2 dollars an ounce. Dealers had been hoping for a more sanguine market after US equities pulled off their lowing down 1.6 per cent and the Nasdaq falling 1.7 per cent.

But the mood remained extremely jittery as the threat of a war in Afghanistan hung heavy over financial centres.

Sentiment was hardly helped as British Airways spelled out the extent of the damage done to its business by last week's terrorist attacks in the United States.

The British carrier increased job losses to 7,000 staff -- 12.5 per cent of its workforce -- and cuts flights by 10 per cent.

Leading Asian markets

retreated on Thursday with investors jittery over an imminent US military response and its economic consequences.

Stocks in Japan, South Korea and Australia posted their first losses for three days while share prices in Hong Kong and Singapore were down sharply after falls on Wall Street on Wednesday. Japanese stocks retreated 1.6 per cent Thursday, led by autos and other export-oriented blue chips.

The Nikkei average of 225 leading issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange closed down 154.44 points at 9,785.16.

The leading business daily Nihon Keizai Shimbun reported that the government's economic reform timetable, due Friday, would call on banks to lift reserves against borrowers classified as "requiring attention."

Hong Kong stocks tracked falls on Wall Street with share prices diving 2.5 per cent. Agencies



**ATTACK
FALLOUT**

since the 1997 Asian crisis prompted a meltdown of global markets. The index has now fallen 33 per cent from its high-water mark set early last year.

In Paris, the CAC 40 index slumped 2.3 per cent to 3,801.1 points, while Frankfurt's DAX index lost 2 per cent to 3,961.9

US moves to lift curbs against India, Pakistan

S Rajagopalan
Washington, September 20

THE UNITED States, which has denied any "deal" with Pakistan in return for its support to a military operation against Osama bin Laden's bases in Afghanistan, is nonetheless striving for a delicate balance in its relations with India and Pakistan.

Now, there is a distinct possibility of the US lifting the 1998 nuclear sanctions against both countries.

Hitherto, the US State Department's moves were largely restricted to lifting the sanctions on India. Some influential Senators had actually wanted Pakistan to be taught a lesson for its

poor non-proliferation record. Events since the September 11 terrorists strikes followed by President Pervez Musharraf's pro-America noises seem to have brought about a qualitative change in perceptions.

A House panel will deliberate today on the administration's thinking of lifting sanctions against both countries. The Senate will consider the issue tomorrow.

The White House, however, has refuted reports about Musharraf's purported conditions, including third-party mediation on the Kashmir issue, in return for its facilities to battle bin Laden's forces.

A reassurance on this score

was provided by a senior official to Ambassador Lalit Mansingh a few days back. But there is no denying the new American compulsions.

Analysts saw significance in a comment by President Bush on Wednesday.

After complimenting Musharraf on his reaffirmation of support, Bush remarked that the recent developments have given the US an opportunity "to refashion the thinking between India and Pakistan".

He, however, did not gloss over the terrorist dimension that has bedevilled Indo-Pak ties.

As he put it, the terrorists outrage has actually provided the US with "an interesting opportu-

nity to shake terrorism from sponsor states...I think we have an opportunity to refashion the thinking between Pakistan and India."

Bush, while appreciating Musharraf's "bold position" on confronting international terrorism, said the US would "work and consult closely with Pakistan and India to make sure that that part of the world is as stable as can possibly be stable".

Some within the Bush administration hold the view that a simultaneous lifting of nuclear sanctions against India and Pakistan will be in the fitness of things.

A State Department official

has been quoted by the Washington Post as saying: "It's pretty obvious. If we want Pakistan to help us, they're going to have to have certain things."

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer parried questions at a briefing over Musharraf's concerns on the issue of evidence against Osama bin Laden. He, however, confirmed that Pakistan had raised the issue.

Asked about Musharraf bringing up the question of India "taking advantage of the situation", Fleischer confined himself to the observation that Bush was satisfied that the nations there (India and Pakistan) understood the cause and were uniting behind the US.



GEORGE W BUSH

Taliban leaves it to Bin Laden

USA not satisfied, wants Osama out

REUTERS & AFP

ISLAMABAD/WASHINGTON, Sept. 20. — The Taliban-Osama solidarity seems to be breaking under US pressure, but not to Washington's satisfaction.

Taliban clerics today asked Bin Laden to leave Afghanistan "whenever possible", but the USA demanded the world's most hunted man be turned over to responsible authorities.

"It doesn't meet our requirements," said White House spokesman Ari Fleischer. "This is about much more than one man being allowed to leave voluntarily, presumably, from one safe harbour to another. It's time for action... The President has demanded that key figures of the Al Qaeda terrorist group, including Osama bin Laden, be turned over to responsible authorities and that the Taliban close terrorist camps..."

Osama has reportedly said he was ready to stand trial on suspicion of attacks in the USA if Washington provided the evidence.

The Taliban deputy ambassador in Islamabad, Suhail Shaheen, said Osama could be tried in Afghanistan or in any other Muslim country. "He said 'I'm not involved, I'm a guest (in Afghanistan). If they have evidence, I'm ready (for a trial)'. He said Washington was not providing proof against Osama because it wanted to combat the Islamic system established by the Taliban."

The Taliban came under more pressure today as the Saudi Arabian foreign minister urged the militia to hand over the "criminals" who launched the terror attacks. "We're still hopeful that Taliban will accept the wisdom of handing over criminals..." Prince Saud al Faisal said after meeting Mr George W Bush.

In Afghanistan, the clerics passed a resolution saying: "To avoid the current tumult and



Clouds fill the morning sky over lower Manhattan on Thursday as rescue crews (far right) search for terrorist attack victims in the WTC rubble — AP/PTI

THURSDAY UPDATE

■ India today indirectly backed US military action against terrorists. Jaswant Singh says an 'eye for an eye' could be the immediate answer to terrorism but there are other options too

■ Black box of passenger plane that crashed into the Pentagon is unreadable, says FBI chief

■ Saudi Arabian foreign minister asks Taliban to hand over the 'criminals'

■ USA ready to ignore UN and fight terrorism alone

■ Dia'a Rashwan, Egyptian expert on Islamic activism, says Osama may have left Afghanistan for a Central Asian country

also future similar suspicions, the high council of the honorable *ulemas* recommends to the Islamic Emirate (of Afghanistan) to persuade Osama bin Laden to leave Afghanistan whenever possible."

They passed an edict saying

AMERICAN ANTI-BIN LADEN COALITION — FOR AND AGAINST



they would declare a *jihād* if the USA attacked Afghanistan. "If infidels invade an Islamic country and if it can't defend itself, *jihād* becomes a definite obligation of all Muslims." It said anyone found helping the USA attack Afghanistan

would face the *jihād*. The Taliban, however said it wouldn't force Osama to leave because that "would be an insult to Islam." The education minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi, said: "Osama has many enemies, and he must find an appropriate

place to go. This needs time." His choices are limited to places like Chechnya, Somalia and northern Yemen that are largely controlled by warlords. **Bush address:** President George W Bush is scheduled to address the US Congress today.

American army ready for combat

AP, AFP, PTI & REUTERS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20. — The US army is ready to conduct "sustained land combat operations" as part of Mr George W Bush's promised war against terrorism, the army's secretary said today.

Mr Thomas E White told reporters at the Pentagon that a troop deployment order signed by the defence secretary, Mr Donald Rumsfeld, yesterday includes the army and air force troops. It was only the first step in a broader military plan to unfold in the weeks ahead. "A lot more will come."

But Mr Bush's advisers are divided on what targets to hit first, though about 100 US Air Force planes have been dispatched to bases in the Gulf, the Indian Ocean and Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

In the Bush administration's "first high-level quarrels over the scope and timing of its military response to 11 September's attack on the USA, some senior officials led by Mr Paul D Wolfowitz, deputy secretary of defence, and Mr I Lewis Libby, chief of staff to the Vice-President, Mr Dick Cheney, are pressing for the earliest military campaign not only against the Osama bin Laden network but also other suspected terrorist bases in Iraq and Lebanon's Bekaa region," the *New York Times* said.

"These officials are seeking to include Iraq in the target list with the aim of toppling Mr Saddam Hussein from power even if he can't be linked with the terrorists who struck New York and Washington," the paper said.

But the secretary of state, General Colin Powell, has urged during weekend meetings with Mr Bush that the USA must take time to prepare the diplomatic groundwork for military action, first in Afghanistan, by consulting allies and building the case to justify the actions under international law. "We can't solve everything with one blow," he said.

Among the planes deployed by Mr Rumsfeld's order are F-16 and F-15 fighters, B-1 bombers, AWACS and E-8C Joint Stars ground surveillance planes, a senior defence official said.

Planes heading to the Indian Ocean island base of Diego Garcia, controlled by Britain, include B-1 and B-52 bombers. F-15E Strike Eagle fighter-bombers may operate out of Uzbekistan. The fleet set sail for the Mediterranean and "points east," Pentagon officials said, hoping to retain an element of surprise in the military build-up dubbed "Operation Infinite Justice."

Dostum offers help to USA

Afghanistan's anti-Taliban leader, Abdul Rashid Dostam, is ready to give military support to the USA in its campaign against Osama bin Laden, the online version of the German weekly *Der Spiegel* said in Berlin today, AFP adds. *Spiegel Online* said the ethnic Uzbek general has 15,000 fighters.

■ Editorial: Post-NY doctrines, page 6
■ More reports, photographs on pages 5 & 8

'Dead hijackers alive'

AFP & REUTERS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20 — US officials are probing if some or all the 19 hijackers of the four planes used in the 11 September attack used stolen identities, possibly complicating efforts to link them to Osama bin Laden.

Doubts began emerging when at least four men with names matching those on an FBI hijackers' list turned up alive in Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, a newspaper reported.

An official told the *Washington Post* that now there was uncertainty over the list of names. "There may be some question... (on) the identity of at least some of them."

A justice department official told the *Chicago Tribune*: "The names on the list are the best information that we have, (but) we are investigating the

possibility of identity theft and false identification."

The doubts grew when the FBI arrested three suspects of Arab origins in Detroit on Tuesday. But they couldn't say which country they belonged to and charged with possessing false papers.

Last week, the FBI chief, Mr Robert Mueller, had said his bureau had "a fairly high level of confidence" that they were their (the hijackers') true identities. But the Saudi-owned newspaper, *Asharq al-Awsat*, said it had found two of the Saudis, Abdelaziz al-Omari and Said Hussein Gharamallah al-Ghamdi, alive.

Omari said he was working at the Saudi Telecommunications Authority in Riyadh when WTC was attacked and had nothing to do with the crime. His passport was stolen in

Denver, Colorado, in 1995. He couldn't be the man with a pilot's training, as the FBI claims, for he's "an electrical engineer and (I've) no idea how to fly a plane", he said.

Ghamdi, a Saudia pilot reported to be in Tunisia, told the paper that he saw his photograph on TV but said he had been in Tunis for nine months. The *Chicago Tribune* said it had a report that another "hijacker", Waleed M Alshehri, too was a Saudia pilot and was still alive, according to his father.

The Saudi press had found Amer Kamfar, who the FBI was seeking as a suspect, to be a pilot living in Saudi Arabia.

There was confusion too over the nationalities of the three arrested in Detroit and named by the FBI as Ahmed Hannan (33), Karim Koubriti (23) and Farouk Ali-Halmoud (21).

Come to Kabul for jihad: Omar to J&K ultras

NEW DELHI, Sept. 20. — Mr Jaswant Singh today said the Taliban chief, Mullah Mohammed Omar, has "appealed" to all terrorist groups in Jammu and Kashmir to "quickly move" towards Afghanistan to help the militia against impending US strikes.

The external affairs minister said Indian intelligence agencies have received several "inputs" about the appeal but declined to elaborate.

"Our information based on intelligence resources is that Mulla Omar has issued an appeal that all terrorists that are currently in J&K should quickly move towards Afghanistan, come to Afghanistan to stand up against what is apprehended." — PTI

DISCOVERY CHANNEL PRESENTS



A worldwide special that takes you behind the fear, the anger and the destruction into the depths of terrorism.

Discover the answers in two hours

US GETS READY

Infidel presence on sacred soil lit Osama spark

Tall figure with aristocratic demeanour

FROM SHRABANI BASU

London, Sept. 20: As US investigators search for clues leading them up to the door of Osama bin Laden and the Taliban ask for evidence in response to demands for handing him over, the Saudi fugitive's biographer says he alone had the capability to mastermind the September 11 attacks.

Peter Bergen, who met bin Laden in his hideout in Afghanistan and covered the hijacking of the Indian Airlines aircraft to Kandahar in 1999, says there are several reasons that the 44-year-old millionaire is the chief suspect in this case.

First, the operation required recruits sufficiently motivated to commit suicide, the former CNN correspondent says in an article in *The New Republic*. Bin Laden's group, al Qaeda, employed suicide bombers in the 1998 attacks against two US embassies in Africa and in the bombing of the *USS Cole* in Yemen 11 months ago.

Second, last week's attacks also required pilots capable of flying jets into their targets. "And al Qaeda has actively recruited pilots capable of flying such planes," says Bergen. "In 1993, the group even purchased a jet in Arizona, which was flown to bin Laden's base, then located in Sudan by a pilot the group had hired."

Bergen, who met bin Laden in March 1997 in eastern Afghanistan, says the man being accused of the worst terrorist act in history was a tall figure with an aristocratic demeanour who was then walking with the help of a cane. He spoke in a mild manner, hewing the rage of his words.

Son of a wealthy Saudi construction magnate, the family had the honour of renovating and maintaining Islam's holiest sites, Mecca and Medina, within weeks of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the 22-year-old Bin Laden travelled to Pakistan to support the holy war against the Russians.

"What we benefited from most was that the glory and myth of the superpower was destroyed not only in my mind, but also in all Muslims," he told Bergen in 1997. With the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Bin Laden turned his attention to other jihads and founded the al Qaeda or "the Base". Al Qaeda's main target now became the US.

Bin Laden had developed a dislike for the US from the mid-1980s because of American support for Israel. In 1990, when American troops were despatched to Saudi Arabia, this dislike "mutated into hate", says Bergen.

"Armed infidels of both sexes were trespassing on sacred Arabi-

an soil. For Bin Laden, this defied the dying words of the Mohammed: "Let there be no two religions in Arabia."

Bin Laden's anti-American attacks began as early as 1992, says Bergen, when he bombed a hotel in Aden, Yemen, that housed US servicemen. The attack killed two Australian tourists. A year later, he allegedly shifted base to Somalia, where he started training Somalis to bring down US helicopters with rocket-propelled grenades. In 1995, four of his men confessed to being trained in Afghanistan to blow up a military facility in Riyadh, killing five American soldiers. Then in 1998 came the attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which killed over 200 people.

For New Year's Day 2000, al Qaeda had plotted a terrorism spectacular spanning the globe. They planned to bomb Los Angeles airport, sink a US warship in the Gulf and bomb tourist sites in Jordan. But the attacks were foiled.

Last October, bin Laden's men attacked the *USS Cole*, one of the most advanced destroyers in the US navy as it was refuelling in Aden and killed 17 American sailors.

This June there were strong indications of renewed attacks. Bin Laden's followers threatened the US embassy in Yemen. The embassy was temporarily closed and FBI investigators shifted. The same month two men were picked up in New Delhi where they were planning to blow up the visa section of the US embassy.

They admitted to acting on orders from bin Laden's lieutenant who orchestrated the *Cole* attack. In July, the state department warned of increased terrorist activities against US interests in the Arabian peninsula.

Bergen says bin Laden frequently circulated publicity and recruitment videos, which either gave indication of attacks to come or celebrated past attacks.

Last year, a few weeks before the attack on the *Cole*, bin Laden's video had shown him wearing a curved dagger, typical of Yemen, which he had worn before.

This summer, a new two-hour recruitment tape made by al Qaeda was circulating in West Asia. Again, it was a subtle indicator of further action, a usual tactic of al Qaeda.

On the new videotape, bin Laden and his advisers make references to Muslims suffering in Chechnya, Kashmir, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Indonesia, and Egypt. However, for bin Laden, the greatest insult to Muslims is the continued presence of the Americans in Arabia.



A file picture of Osama bin Laden. (Reuters)

Ancient cash trail stumps superpower

BY TIM WEINER AND DAVID CAY JOHNSTON

A six-year struggle to uncover Osama bin Laden's financial network failed because American officials did not skillfully use the legal tools they had, did not realise they needed stronger weapons, and faced resistance at home and abroad, officials involved in the effort say.

Federal officials say they have not convinced foreign banks to open their books to investigators and a law that would have allowed the United States to penalise foreign banks that did not cooperate was blocked last year by a single US senator.

Laws and regulations give the government less authority today to seize the assets of terrorists than of drug cartels, one federal investigator said; it only may seize assets that are the direct proceeds of terrorist violence. For drug cartels or organised crime gangs, it can seize any assets used to support their activities.

Investigators also blame their inability to pierce bin Laden's financial network on an ancient system of cash transfers based on trust, not detailed records, that they say has spread from countries like Pakistan into the United States.

Since last week's attacks, proposals to curb money-laundering by terrorists have suddenly gained support among old opponents — including the Bush administration — after languishing for two years.

The White House says it now wants an aggressive attack on money laundering, including stepped-up seizure of assets. The bin Laden organisation operates in 35 countries and needs to move money to its members, American officials say. The state department's international law enforcement efforts from 1994 to 1999 and now practices law in Washington.

But present and former government officials say that since the mid-1990s, they did not fully use the legal tools they had to wage this difficult fight. "We could have starved the organisation if we put our minds to it," said Richard Palmer, an expert on international money laundering, who gained experience in that field as the CIA's station chief in Moscow during the 1990s. "The government has had the ability to track these accounts for some time."

Congress is now reviving a proposal killed last year by Sen. Phil Gramm, the Texas Republican who was then chairman of the Senate Banking Committee. The bill, introduced by the Clinton administration, would give the treasury secretary broad power to bar

foreign countries and banks from access to the American financial market unless they cooperated with money-laundering investigations.

"I was right then and I am right now" in opposing the bill, Gramm said yesterday. He called the bill "totalitarian" and added: "The way to deal with terrorists is to hunt them down and kill them."

But the bill is now gathering support from both parties. "I would be amazed if there is not a sea-change," said Sen. John Kerry, Democrat, Massachusetts, who is sponsoring the bill with Sen. Charles E. Grassley, Republican, Iowa. He said the opposition was based on "ridiculously phony" arguments and would not violate bankers' legal rights.

Even after the attacks last week the banking industry, which opposed the Clinton bill last year, continues to doubt the need for new rules to combat money laundering, a lobbyist said. Most experts say the funds used to finance the attacks here probably came into this country in small amounts either through wire transfers or through the use of brokers that belong to a paperless underground banking system.

That system of brokers is often referred to by its Hindi name, "hawala". It enables individuals to transfer sizeable sums of cash from their country to recipients in another country without the funds themselves ever crossing borders. The system, which has spread to the United States, is particularly popular in countries like Pakistan and India.

"Somebody will come into the office of a hawala broker in Pakistan and say 'I want \$100,000 to get to somebody in Vero Beach who is going to come in and identify themselves as Cuidid,'" said state department's international law enforcement efforts from 1994 to 1999 and now practices law in Washington.

The Pakistani broker, Winer explained, will contact a counterpart in the US, often using the Internet, then mail him a chit or agree on a code word to complete the transaction. Winer said such brokers may have been used to transfer sizeable amounts of funds destined for terrorists in this country because carrying large amounts of cash through US customs checkpoints posed too many risks.

"The two brokers have absolute trust in each other," said an expert on money-laundering at Control Risks Group. "They often come from the same clan and that is why nothing is written down or records kept."

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Israel intelligence points finger at Iraq

London, Sept. 20 (Reuters): The military journal *Jane's* has reported that Israeli intelligence believes Iraq was a sponsor of the suicide attacks on the United States last week.

Foreign Report, published by *Jane's* Information Group, said on its website today that officers in Israeli military intelligence believed two of the world's "foremost terrorist masterminds" had led the attacks.

The journal named them as Imad Moughniyeh of Lebanon, a man it said was head of special overseas operations for Hizbollah, and Egyptian Ayman Al Zawahri, a senior member of prime suspect Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda group.

"The Iraqis, who for several years paid smaller groups to do their dirty work, were quick to discover the advan-

tages of al-Qaeda," *Foreign Report* said. "We believe that the operational brains behind the New York attack were Moughniyeh and Zawahri, who were probably financed and got some logistical support from the Iraqi Intelligence Service (SSO)," an Israeli intelligence source told *Foreign Report*.

Iraq denied on Wednesday that an Iraqi intelligence official had met a suspected hijacker of one of the planes that crashed into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington last week, killing thousands.

"The US administration and its allies know very well that we have no relation whatsoever with groups that are being accused now by the US of committing what happened in the United States," Iraqi foreign minister Najib Sabri said.

An Egyptian security source in Cairo today dismissed the report as "baseless and unfounded". A Hizbollah spokesman in Beirut denied that the group had any link with Moughniyeh.

Foreign Report quoted the Israeli sources as saying that Iraqi intelligence officers had been shuttling between Baghdad and Afghanistan, meeting Zawahri, for the past two years. According to the sources, the Pakistanis captured one of the Iraqi intelligence officers last October near the border with Afghanistan.

"The Iraqis are also reported to have established strong ties with Imad Moughniyeh," the report said.

It quoted unconfirmed reports in Beirut as saying that Moughniyeh had undergone plastic surgery and was un-

recognisable while Zawahri, thought to be based in Egypt, could be bin Laden's chief representative outside Afghanistan.

Defence targets bombed

US and British warplanes bombed air-defence targets in a "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq today in a continuing campaign to degrade Baghdad's air defences, Pentagon officials said. They said the jets struck anti-aircraft gun emplacements at two sites southeast of Baghdad at approximately 11.20 am GMT, and that all aircraft returned safely to their bases.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman stressed the raids were not part of a new movement of US forces in the wake of last week's attacks on the World Trade Center buildings in New York and the Pentagon near Washington.

FROM WILL DUNHAM

Washington, Sept. 20 (Reuters): In 356 BC, the pride of the gleaming city of Ephesus in modern-day Turkey was the massive Temple of Artemis, measuring 91 metres in length and 45.5 metres wide with more than 100 massive stone columns supporting a gargantuan roof.

But an act of infamy carried out by a young man named Herostratus reduced this great structure to rubble. He succeeded in torching the temple, which was left in ruins. Historians have described Herostratus as a madman who saw destroying this landmark of antiquity as his only chance for immortality.

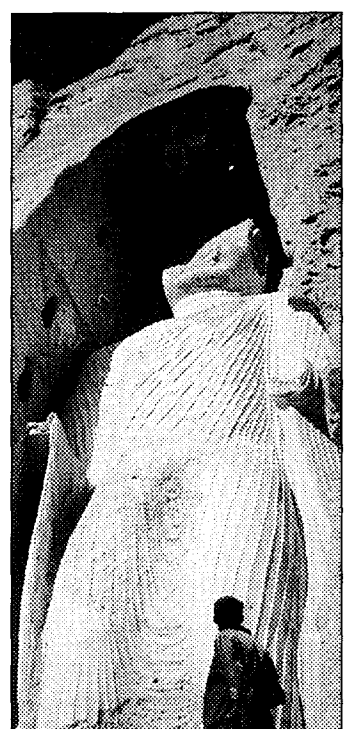
His act was so horrendous that the citizens of Ephesus issued a decree that merely mentioning the name of Herostratus would carry the death penalty.

Throughout history, great landmarks have been targets for people or nations carrying out acts that today might be called terrorism. The September 11 aerial attacks that destroyed the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York and damaged the Pentagon outside Washington represent the latest in a long line of assaults on famed man-made creations.

In March, the Taliban rulers of Afghanistan, seeking to create a strict Islamic state, shelled and dynamited into rubble two of the most famed sculptures in Buddhism, which they deemed "offensive to Islam." The targets were the world's largest sculptures of the Buddha — carved from the sandstone cliffs of Bamyan in the third and fourth centuries.

One of the Buddhas towered 53 metres and the other 36 metres. By way of comparison, the Statue of Liberty stands 46 metres tall. The Buddhas, once gilded in glimmering gold, had survived the centuries, even escaping the destructive wrath of Mongol leader

Infamous destruction of history's landmarks



A file picture of a Bamyan Buddha statue that was destroyed by the Taliban. (AFP)

Genghis Khan.

"Surely, every time a culture confronts another one that it doesn't understand, part of its initial instincts are to obliterate the other completely. It's kind of a human instinct that goes back into the dimness of time," said Lowry Burgess, professor of art at

Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. Many stellar landmarks — temples, churches, mosques, palaces and others — have been lost to the ravages of time or destroyed in all-out warfare. But others have been selected for destruction — much like the twin towers and the Pentagon — for their symbolic meaning.

"It's an ideological association of a building that eventually could cause it to be demolished," said Donald Redford, professor of classics and ancient Mediterranean studies at Pennsylvania State University. "There are some interesting parallels from antiquity to the tragic events of the 11th," added James Higginbotham, classical archaeology professor at Bowdoin College in Maine.

History is brimming with examples. In 1009, the Egyptian caliph al-Hakim ordered the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem — originally built in 330 AD by the mother of Constantine, the first Roman emperor to embrace Christianity. The church was said to be located at the site of Jesus Christ's crucifixion and burial. On al-Hakim's orders, the tomb of Christ was hacked down to bedrock.

The act helped precipitate the Crusades and centuries of warfare between Islam and Christianity. The Crusaders later built a new church on the site. In 1521, a band of Spanish conquistadors led by Hernan Cortes razed the Great Temple and the rest of the ceremonial centre of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlan, one of the world's most populous cities at the time and site of modern-day Mexico City. The Great Temple was a towering double pyramid dedicated to the gods of war and rain that included ripping the heart out of a living victim's chest.

The Spaniards, repulsed by the Aztec rituals but vicious in their own right, sought to obliterate Aztec culture in part by erasing its great monuments.

Uneasy lies the head that swaps friends

Islamabad, Sept. 20 (Reuters): Perviz Musharraf is struggling to sell support for the US to sceptical Pakistanis, invoking everything from Islamic history to the threat from India.

It's an uphill battle. Street demonstrations against US policy, while still small, are growing by the day.

Rather than the confident commander Generalized had seen since the general seized power in October 1999, Musharraf sounded on the defensive throughout his televised speech yesterday. As reports of him snapping at questioners during recent meetings indicate, he is under pressure.

"When there is a crisis situation, the path of wisdom is better than the path of emotions," Musharraf said, making it clear he felt he had little choice but to accept US demands for help.

In an analogy aimed at the Islamic parties who have been threatening a jihad if there is a US attack on the Taliban, Musharraf said even the Prophet Mohammad had to make agreements of convenience.

Musharraf portrayed some Islamic critics as displaying emotion rather than wisdom. That may be true, but does not diminish the threat it poses in a country where mobs destroyed the US embassy in 1979 and attacked the US information centre a decade later.

There is no doubt emotion is running high on the streets. Demonstrations are growing in size, especially in the North West Frontier Province where the population comes from the same Pashtun tribes as the Taliban. A national strike has been called for Friday.

In an effort to win backing in a



Musharraf

country where many see the US as hostile to Islam, Musharraf listed the reasons why he felt compelled to help in what is increasingly likely to be US military action in Afghanistan.

Choosing the threat Pakistanis take most seriously, Musharraf said India was trying to capi-

talise on the crisis to isolate Pakistan, undermine its efforts to gain control of Kashmir and install a hostile government in Afghanistan.

Despite trying to justify his backing for Washington, Musharraf simultaneously was trying to play down the extent of a shift that has taken him from defender of the Taliban last month to US ally against the hardline Islamic movement today.

Musharraf also posed as defender of the Taliban against a hostile world, saying he did not want any harm done to the Taliban or Afghans despite the US requests all pointing at an attack on Afghanistan.

Musharraf's claims that he was helping the Taliban emerge unscathed sit uncomfortably with the stream of statements out of Washington thanking the Pak-

White House parade to build strike accord

Terror war to test Saudi ties

Washington, Sept. 19: After a week of unconditional support from abroad, President George W. Bush is scheduled to try his powers of personal persuasion on leaders from Asia, Europe and Russia at the White House.

At the series of meetings, Bush will try to iron out the first significant difficulties in building a broad international coalition to support using military power and other means against a still-faceless terror network rooted in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

A procession of world leaders was either on the way or on the phone to Washington seeking to convince the White House that only a multilateral approach based on consultation, hard evidence and UN support would justify the use of military power.

Last night, French President Jacques Chirac became the first in the parade of foreign leaders and officials to visit the White House where he stood side-by-side with Bush in a show of solidarity against "this absolute evil which is terrorism". Chirac, however, stopped short of endorsing Bush's use of the word "war", but agreed that "we are faced with a conflict of a completely new nature".

President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, met Bush next. Megawati, who is still trying to consolidate her hold on power, treaded more gingerly in offering support.

US officials had hoped Megawati would be influential in taking a stand against the Islamic militants that Washington says are behind the assaults. But the Indonesian leader declined to answer a reporter's question on whether she had the backing of her people to join in Bush's coalition.

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and his German counterpart Joschka Fischer also were due to meet Bush at the White House as some European allies began to express caution about the US plans, urging patience and restraint.

Foreign minister Saud al-Faisal of Saudi Arabia was also due to arrive with a large contingent of Saudi intelligence officers and their files on Osama bin Laden and his al Qaida network.

In an effort to rally France and other nations, Bush, with Chirac by his side, told reporters: "I am absolutely — I know that we are called to respond to terror now. This is the time and the world is ready for leadership."

Russia urged caution at the weekend and President Vladimir Putin said he opposed any indis-



President George W. Bush and President Megawati Sukarnoputri at the White House. (Reuters)

criminate retaliation, calling instead for careful action based on proof.

Putin, who has pledged Moscow's support in efforts to root out international terrorism, said Moscow wanted a thorough investigation before any military action. Russia, which accuses bin Laden of feeding money and resources to separatist rebels in its southern province of Chechnya, keeps a sizeable military presence in ex-Soviet Tajikistan, an impoverished republic on the Afghan border.

Moscow used Tajikistan in

1979 to launch an ill-fated decade-long occupation of Afghanistan. Defence minister Sergei Ivanov has already dismissed the possibility of a Nato country deploying from Tajikistan.

As for Germany, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder condemned the attacks on the US as a "declaration of war against the civilised world".

"Germany stands at the side of the United States without reservation," he said, adding that Berlin would help with any information that domestic security agencies could provide. South African

President Thabo Mbeki assured Bush in a phone call today of Pretoria's support in the fight against terrorism, but they did not discuss military options, officials said.

Minister in the Presidency Essop Pahad told a news conference that Bush called Mbeki to assure South Africa that his response to the attacks in New York and Washington would not target any specific group.

"President Bush emphasised that the US, its government and he himself are not against Islam, are not against Arabs and that there is

no approach of collective guilt on the part of any people," he said.

"He indicated that a judicious approach was necessary... that a cool head is required in these circumstances," Pahad said.

He said Bush did not raise the question of military support in the fight against terrorism.

Bush also spoke by telephone with South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, who pledged cooperation "in the spirit" of amutual defence pact with the United States.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE AND REUTERS

FROM NEIL MACFARQUHAR

Cairo, Sept. 19: Saudi Arabia's track record in previous terrorism investigations has been one of keeping its distance from the United States. It is a distance that illustrates a challenge: how does Washington square Saudi Arabia, the loyal ally and vital oil supplier, with Saudi Arabia, the guardian of Islam, a power of the Arab world and birthplace of suspected terrorists?

In past cases when it has been called upon to investigate terrorism, Saudi Arabia seemed less concerned with finding the killers than with making sure it did not stir up radical opponents at home who might paint members of the royal dynasty as American lackeys.

Despite evidence suggesting that some of those who carried out the attack on the United States this week may have been Saudi citizens or at least linked to another former Saudi resident, Osama bin Laden, it remains to be seen to what extent the kingdom will aid the United States in taking on his shadowy movement.

Some Saudi officials noted that names bandied about this week as armed and dangerous men and even suicide pilots turned out to be average Saudi citizens sitting quietly home in Jeddah and Mecca, their flight training over.

While Saudi diplomats and other officials reached by telephone remained noncommittal and said there had been no formal American request for help, there were unusual expressions of support. The Saudi chief justice, Sheikh Saleh bin Muhammad al-Luhaidan, not normally the kind of figure to express public sympathy for the West's problems, condemned the attacks. He added his voice to that of senior royal figures, including King Fahd, Crown Prince Abdullah and Prince Bandar, the Saudi ambassador to Washington.

"We in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia are fully prepared to cooperate with you in every way that may help identify and pursue the perpetrators of this criminal incident," the official Saudi Press Agency quoted Prince Abdullah as telling President Bush.

Among Saudis there was a

sense that the movement of bin Laden, if indeed it carried out this week's attacks, had moved beyond the pale.

"If in the past there were supporters or sympathisers or admiration, what happened in New York will turn it off," said Jamal Khashoggi, the managing editor of *The Arab News* in Jeddah, who spent years covering Islamic movements.

Once, bin Laden was a kind of icon for young children in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world who spent their free time collecting money to help him and other mujahadeen dedicating their lives to freeing Afghanistan from Soviet tyranny. No one remembers bin Laden actually soliciting funds. His father, a billionaire contractor, left him a healthy inheritance. But in the battle for Afghanistan in the 1980s, richer patrons around the Persian Gulf were generous, adding their millions to financing from the governments of the United States — then backing Islamic warriors against the Soviets — and Saudi Arabia, among others.

That seemingly stopped when bin Laden's increasing radicalisation in the 1990s finally prompted the Saudis to strip him of his passport in 1994. His criticism for the way the royals were running the country dried up any official support. Anyone found overtly supporting bin Laden would have risked having all assets in the kingdom seized. Yet the Saudi government finances various conservative religious organisations without much rigorous accounting of where the money goes.

The Saudi authorities, guardians of Islam's most holy shrines, have never been able entirely to smother the idea that bin Laden was engaged in a glorious and glamorous struggle. The ruling family allows no domestic dissent, so radical Islam has always served as the outlet for those who would topple their government. The arrival of hundreds of thousands of American troops in 1990 to expel Saddam Hussein and Iraq's forces from Kuwait galvanised recruitment. Followers of Islam were horrified that infidel troops had been brought into the land of Mecca and Medina.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Time for actions, not negotiations: U.S.

Bush lining up global support

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 19. The United States would not negotiate with Afghanistan's hardline Government for the handover of Osama bin Laden, main suspect in last week's terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, or members of his terrorist network, the White House said on Wednesday.

"It's time for actions, not negotiations, with the Taliban," the spokesman, Mr. Ari Fleischer, said. He also ruled out presenting the United Nations with evidence of Osama bin Laden's involvement in the attack.

"People who we are after would very much... love to remain in hiding, and know what we know and how we know it," the White House spokesman said. "We're not about to do that."

The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, is intensifying efforts to gain concrete support for a war on global terrorism, meeting with allies and making overtures toward nations that shelter some of the world's most notorious terrorist masterminds.

For countries with tenuous relationships with the U.S., the message was clear: Support a crackdown on terrorism or face U.S. retaliation.

Mr. Bush today met Ms. Megawati Sukarnoputri, President of Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation with 210 million people. He will also be meeting the Foreign Ministers of Russia and Germany.

He called the South Korean President, Mr. Kim Dae-jung, who promised to participate in the international coalition, and the two leaders indicated they still planned to meet at an economic summit in Seoul next month.

Nature of support

At a joint Oval Office appearance with Ms. Megawati, Mr. Bush said he expected nations rallying to his international coalition to be involved in different ways.

"Some nations will be comfortable supporting overt activities,

some nations will be comfortable supporting covert activities, some nations will only be comfortable in providing information, others will be helpful and only feel comfortable helping on financial matters. I understand that," he said.

Mr. Bush met the French President, Mr. Jacques Chirac, late on Tuesday and won his backing.

"We are of course prepared to be completely supportive of the United States and do whatever we (both nations) deem useful or necessary to reach the vital goal of eradicating terrorism," Mr. Chirac said during a joint appearance in the Oval Office.

A report from Berlin, quoted the German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schroeder, as saying that his country was ready to take military risks in supporting the U.S., but concentrating exclusively on a military response would be "fatal."

"What we as Europeans and Germans aim for is unreserved solidarity with the United States in all necessary measures," Mr. Schroeder said in an address to parliament today. "German is ready to take risks, even military ones, but isn't prepared for adventures."

The Russian Foreign Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, said late on Tuesday after arriving in Washington:



GIVE US A HELPING HAND: The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, with the Indonesian President, Ms. Megawati Sukarnoputri, at the White House in Washington on Wednesday. — Reuters

"It is becoming an imperative — unification of efforts of all the international community in the fight against the terrorist threat."

In Washington, Mr. Bush on Tuesday signed into law a \$40 billion package, most of which will go to recovery efforts in New York City, Washington and southwest-

ern Pennsylvania — where four hijacked planes crashed last week, killing thousands of people — and to battle terrorism.

The President also put his signature to the congressional resolution authorising him to use military force against the terrorists responsible for the attacks.

Scope of U.S. response

As the U.S. military moved on a war footing, the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald H. Rumsfeld, said on Wednesday the U.S. response to the attacks must reach beyond finding Osama bin Laden.

"This is not a problem of al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden," Mr. Rumsfeld said on CNN television. "It is a problem of a number of networks of terrorists that have been active across the globe." He said there was evidence that Osama bin Laden and his associates were operating in 50 to 60 countries, including the U.S.

White House apologises

Mr. Bush has expressed regret over having used the word "crusade," with all its historical connotations of religious war, to describe his campaign against terrorists.

Mr. Fleischer said on Tuesday that Mr. Bush only meant to say that his was a "broad cause" to stamp out terrorism worldwide.

"I think to the degree that that word has any connotations that would upset any of our partners or anybody else in the world, the President would regret if anything like that was conveyed. But the purpose of his conveying it is in the traditional English sense of the word, it's a broad cause," said Mr. Fleischer.

On Sunday, Mr. Bush had told reporters: "This crusade, this

Give concrete evidence; we're ready for talks: Taliban

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 19. The agonising wait, over whether or not Afghanistan and the other countries in the region are going to be plunged into a bloody conflict, continues as the grand council of pro-Taliban clerics postponed its meet to decide on the fate of the Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, by another day.

The only concrete development during the day was a message from the Taliban supremo, Mullah Omar, to the clerics to deliberate on the U.S. demand that Osama be handed over "without providing evidence" on his involvement in crimes cited against him, including the latest terrorist attacks on American cities.

The message was clear — without concrete proof, the Taliban could not be expected to turn over Osama. Making a qualified offer of a dialogue with the U.S., the Taliban chief urged the religious leaders to consider a 'fatwa' (edict) of 'jihad' (holy war) against the U.S. if it was bent on attacking Afghanistan.

The message covered the familiar ground — the Taliban had nothing against the U.S. Its guest, Osama, had neither been allowed to contact the outside world nor allowed to use the Afghan territory against any one. He did not have the capability to carry out the kind of terrorist attack witnessed in the U.S. "The presence of Osama in Afghanistan is being used as an excuse," he said.

The Taliban had been engaged with the U.S. in negotiations, seeking proof of Osama's involvement in the crime charges and "we are still ready for talks with the U.S."

As things stand, the Mullah's message offers little

hope for a peaceful resolution of the row between the Taliban and the rest of the world. It sets the tone for the conference of grand council of clerics and perhaps contains a hint of the shape of things to come.

'Pak. did not mediate'

Even as the Taliban took its time to respond to the demand of the U.S. and the United Nations for the unconditional surrender of Osama, Pakistan reiterated that it had neither played a mediator nor was it holding any negotiations with the Taliban.

The Foreign Office spokesman, Mr. Riaz Mohammad Khan, told presspersons that the official delegation, dispatched by the President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, had gone with a simple and straight message: "Deliver Osama or be prepared for disastrous consequences."

Conceding that the Musharraf Government was facing problems from within on the Osama question, he said "in critical times, the Government has to take certain decisions and the President has decided what is in the best interest of the country and the international community."

Asked about the nature of co-operation promised by Pakistan, Mr. Khan said it had agreed in principle to help in the investigations to track down the culprits behind the terrorist attacks and share whatever information was in its possession. He maintained that the U.S. had not yet approached Pakistan for any specific assistance. (An AFP report, quoting Mr. Khan, said "Pakistan is not privy to precise details on U.S. military plans.")

Keep off, Musharraf tells India

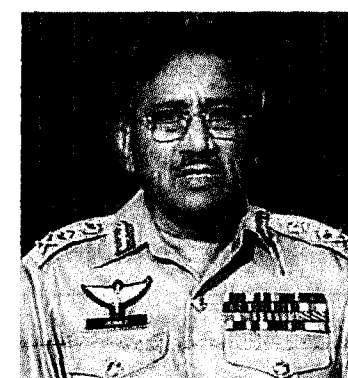
By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 19. In one of the sharpest-ever attacks on India since the Agra summit, the Pakistan military leader and President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, today accused New Delhi of attempting to take full advantage of the crisis arising out of the terrorist attacks on the United States and said preserving the unity and integrity of Pakistan was a primary consideration behind his decision to extend unstinted cooperation to the U.S. against the Taliban regime and Osama bin Laden.

In his 45-minute address on the State-controlled television and radio in chaste Urdu, Gen. Musharraf devoted a considerable length of time targeting India for its alleged efforts to "win over America on to its side" and harm the vital interests of Pakistan.

Using an English phrase, he said his reply to the Indian designs was "lay off" and maintained that the Pakistani Army would never allow the 'grand Indian game-plan' to succeed.

Gen. Musharraf alleged that while the whole world was con-



cerned with ways to tackle international terrorism, India was busy hatching a plot to harm the interests of Pakistan.

Though Gen. Musharraf did not name India initially, yet, as he progressed, he left no one in doubt as to his main target. "They have offered all military facilities to America. They want America on their side. The objective is to get Pakistan declared as a terrorist state and harm our strategic interests and the Kashmir cause."

He listed four factors — unity and integrity of Pakistan, revival and revitalisation of the economy,

safeguarding of its nuclear capabilities and the Kashmir cause — areas which played a vital role in Pakistan's decisions in the emerging situation.

He accused India of trying to instal an anti-Pakistan regime in Afghanistan. "Recently, there was a meeting at Dushanbe where a representative of the Indian Government was also present. I want to ask what has India got to do with Afghanistan? It does not even share its border with Afghanistan. It has nothing to do with Afghanistan." The danger to the vital interests of Pakistan, if it does not take the right decision at this juncture, has been the running theme of Gen. Musharraf in the last few days of his consultations with a cross-section of society. But it is for the first time he has spoken so openly against India.

The domestic compulsions could have prompted Gen. Musharraf to launch a tirade against India. As the protests against possible U.S. retaliatory attacks on Afghanistan grew within the country, there is a sense of unease within the military establishment.

Support to the U.S. Page 11

Russia to allies: do not join U.S. military action

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, SEPT. 19. Russia will not take part in any U.S. strikes against terrorists in Afghanistan and has strongly advised its allies in Central Asia to refrain from opening up their territory for American forces.

"Russia has not participated and has no plans to participate in U.S. military actions," the Itar-Tass news agency quoted Russia's armed forces chief of staff, Gen. Anatoly Kvashnin, as saying in Tajikistan, where he is discussing the situation with the country's political and military leadership.

Moscow has expressed full solidarity with the U.S. in its fight against terrorism, but fears that large-scale U.S. military operations in Afghanistan could provoke an Islamic backlash in Russia and in Central Asia.

Hasan Suroor reports from London:

Some of the belligerent rhetoric from Washington is beginning to embarrass Britain and in its first show of irritation, Downing Street has been quick to distance itself from the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush's call that he wants Osama bin Laden "dead or alive".

Dhaka to allow use of airspace

By Our Special Correspondent

DHAKA, SEPT. 19. Bangladesh has decided to permit multinational forces to use the country's airspace, seaports and airports for any possible attack on Afghanistan and in efforts to combat terrorism.

The caretaker Government's decision came last night after days of hectic consultations with the major political parties here. Announcing the Government's decision here last night, Mr. C.M. Shafi Sami, Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser, Mr. Justice Latifur Rahman, said, "Bangladesh will

respond positively to the U.S. request in respect of combating terrorism in reprisal for the terrorists attacks on the United States on September 11."

The country will allow planes to overfly its air space and provide refuelling facilities to the aircraft of the multinational forces.

The modalities for the use of the country's strategic facilities will be worked out later, Mr. Sami said, adding that the permission was not for setting up permanent bases. He said the decision was taken at the request of the U.S. and in line with the U.N. Security Council resolutions 1999 and 1368

of September 12. Mr. Sami said the decisions were approved at a special meeting of the council of advisers with Mr. Justice Latifur Rahman presiding. The President, Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, who is the Supreme Commander of the armed forces during the caretaker tenure, has give his assent to the move.

In reply to a question whether such a major policy decision could be taken by the interim Government, Mr. Sami said, "All legal aspects were looked into by constitutional experts and they found the decision as per constitutional provision." (u)

'Australia will back U.S. move'

By Amit Baruah

SINGAPORE, SEPT. 19. The United States will react to the September 11 terrorist attacks in a targeted, but lethal manner, the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. John Howard, said today.

"I am sure the Americans will behave in a targeted yet lethal fashion... This is what we have encouraged them to do and we have indicated that we will be part of that response if that is what they want," Mr. Howard was quoted as saying. The Prime Minister said he did not want innocent people to get hurt in the retaliation, but pointed out that 5,000 innocent people had died in the New York and Washington attacks.

"There were 5,000 innocent people killed by the terrorists. Please let us not first invoke the spectre of innocent deaths in the context of the American response. Let us first recognise that innocent people died in their thousands in New York last week," Mr. Howard said.

The Australian leader also promised that his country would be a 100 per cent ally of the United States in the "war" against terrorism.

"You are either a 100 per cent ally of a country that

was a 100 per cent ally of Australia's in World War II and it made the difference between Australia surviving or going under to the Japanese assault. "We have to remember the history that America came to our aid. We have been close allies ever since. This is an assault as much on the freedom and values of Australian society as it is on the freedom and values of American society," Mr. Howard maintained.

On the issue of how Australia would support the U.S., the Prime Minister said: "If we are asked to contribute in a particular way it will be for us to decide whether we can or will do that." Available information also suggests that the Australian Defence Force is getting ready to support the American campaign against terrorism.

While the Australian naval frigate, Anzac, will remain in the Persian Gulf, defence personnel currently serving in U.S. units will be available for deployment with American forces. A report in *Sydney Morning Herald* said elements of the three Royal Australian Regiment based at Holsworthy will be sent at the weekend to a Queensland training camp in preparation for active service.

THE HINDU

20 SEP 2001

FBI files charges against three

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 19. Investigative agencies have filed their first formal charges for the terror attacks of last Tuesday in New York and Washington.

Criminal charges have been made against three people in Detroit in what is believed to be the first of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's efforts to come to grips with the events of last week. The investigative agency has maintained that the material seized from the three persons include airport and runway maps, false identification badges, false papers and notations about a overseas American installation and the "American foreign minister".

The FBI is seeking as many as 200 people and has detained about 50 persons in its massive hunt for the perpetrators and supporters of last Tuesday's attacks. And the Bush administration is looking at ways in which to give investigative agencies broader support in their fight against terrorism.

The new pieces of legislation being contemplated include detaining non-American citizens who have been taken into custody for immigration violations; allowing Federal authorities upto two days to charge anyone detained on a visa violation; and *The Washington Post* is saying that the Justice Department is drafting legislation that would give the Attorney-General the powers to arrest and deport suspected

terrorists without giving evidence in court.

On the investigative front, the focus is on different dimensions. The four hijackings that resulted in the direct hits on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon are one part of the investigation. The Task Force on Terrorism is also looking at the possibility of a fifth hijacking that may have been planned out of Dallas, Texas. And the real hunt is on for the links of the hijackers in this country, accomplices and those who may have given any kind of help, material and otherwise.

What has stunned many is the extensiveness of the terror network within this country and the manner in which the terrorists had gone about the business. In many instances, the terrorists and hijackers had come to the U.S. legally, mingled with the society and given hardly any indication in the last several months of their plans.

In the midst of the intensive and extensive investigation that has made authorities spread the net worldwide, there is talk whether one of the hijackers who crashed his plane into one of the towers at the World Trade Center may have made contact with an Iraqi intelligence official earlier this year in Europe. There have been unconfirmed and preliminary reports to this effect even as officials have been quick to say that this did not in any way establish an Iraqi connection to the acts of terror.

C'wealth to discuss terrorism

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, SEPT 19. Issues relating to international terrorism would dominate next month's Commonwealth summit in Brisbane, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Mr. Don McKinnon, said here today.

He said that as the first major congregation of world leaders after the terrorists' attacks in the U.S., it was expected to provide a "global perspective" to buttress the worldwide coalition against terrorism. The events in the U.S. had shown that "we are all vulnerable" and the Commonwealth model of cooperation could help evolve a global response to the increasing menace of international terrorism.

Observers said that India which has been a victim of cross-border terrorism was likely to use the occasion to raise its own concerns. India, they said, had been campaigning for international cooperation to fight terrorism and last week's events vindicated its position that a global response was needed to tackle the problem.

Bush to consult world leaders

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19 | 9 WASHINGTON, SEPT. 18 In his effort to structure a global coalition to support America's fight against terrorism, the U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, will be meeting leaders of various countries. He will hold talks with his French counterpart, Mr. Jacques Chirac, later in the day and meet the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, on Thursday.

The German Foreign Minister, Mr. Joschka Fischer, leaves for Washington later today. Mr. Bush will be meeting the Russian Foreign Affairs Minister, Mr. Igor Ivanov, on Wednesday.

It has been announced in Washington that the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Italy, China and Belgium are to arrive there this week.

The Chinese President, Mr. Jiang Zemin, tonight put preconditions for China's support for America's plans for retaliatory strikes against Afghanistan by saying that any military action should comply with the U.N. Charter and be based on irrefutable evidence.

"Any military action must comply with the objectives and principles of the U.N. Charter as well as widely-recognised norms in international laws," Mr. Jiang told the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, during a telephonic conversation from Beijing.

A report from London quoted the NATO chief, Mr. George Robertson, as saying the Alliance had a "moral obligation" to assist the U.S. in retaliating for last week's terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

Speaking to the *Financial Times*, today, Mr. Robertson stressed that Washington had still not decided whether to call on NATO for help, and if it did member-states would make up their own minds, "but there is a moral obligation to assist."

At the United Nations, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, said the world body was prepared to lead a worldwide fight against terrorism.

Mr. Bush joined 300 White House employees on the South Lawn to observe a moment of silence marking last week's attacks.

"May God continue to bless America," Mr. Bush said. After he left, some of his staff stretched the silence for a while longer, until 8:48 a.m. (local time), the moment of the first impact in Manhattan.

Across the country, radio stations marked the time with patriotic songs. Mr. Bush on Monday visited a mosque, where he said Muslims and Arab-Americans should be treated with respect. "Islam is peace," he said. "These terrorists don't represent peace, they represent evil and war." — DPA, AFP, AP, PTI

THE HINDU

19 SEP 2001

Bush decries bias against Muslims, Arab-Americans

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 18. — Mr George W Bush decried prejudice against Muslims and Arab-Americans, saying those venting such anger “don’t represent the best of America, they represent the worst of humankind and should be ashamed.”

In stocking feet while visiting the Washington Islamic Center, Mr Bush stood yesterday with his back to an ornately tiled prayer alcove and read a passage from the Quran: “In the long run, evil in the extreme will be the end of those who do evil.” He said: “Islam is peace. These terrorists don’t represent peace.”

Mr Bush said millions of Americans were Muslims and they make “an incredibly valuable contribution to our country.”

Even though they’re angry over the terror attacks, Americans

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UNHQ/DHAKA, Sept. 18. — The UN today indefinitely postponed the annual General Assembly session scheduled for 24 September.

Bangladesh will allow the USA to use its air space, airports and sea ports to combat terrorism in the region, Mr Shafi Sami, special assistant on foreign affairs, said today. — AFP/PTI

must respect each other. “Women who cover their heads in this country must feel comfortable going outside their homes. Moms who wear covering mustn’t be intimidated in the USA.”

The FBI chief yesterday said the US government wouldn’t tolerate any attack or threats against Arab-Americans.

Since the terror attacks, there

have been dozens of hate crimes directed against Arab-Americans and Muslims, including arsons, assaults and two possible ethnically motivated murders, the FBI director, Mr Robert Mueller said.

“Vigilante attacks and threats against Arab-Americans will not be tolerated,” he said.

Around the USA several apparent backlash attacks and threats have been reported against people of Middle East and South Asian descent.

Mr Mueller said such attacks violate American hate crime laws and the FBI and Justice Department will investigate and prosecute any violations.

He said some 40 hate crime investigations have started.

Some Arab-Americans say they are being questioned about the attacks because of their ethnicity. Mr Mueller denied that.

THE ST. LOUIS POST-DEMOCRAT

U.K. to shore up support for retaliation

19/9
H.D. 16

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, SEPT. 18. Britain has launched a high-profile diplomatic offensive to firm up the wobbly Western alliance as the U.S. prepares to retaliate over last week's terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, who has emerged as America's pointman in Europe, will visit European capitals over the next two days, beginning tomorrow, before flying to Washington to meet the President, Mr. George W. Bush for what is being termed as a discussion on the nuts-and-bolts of the proposed U.S. military response. On Friday, he will be in Brussels to brief European Union leaders on American plans.

Domestic issues have been pushed into the background with Mr. Blair plunging himself deep into what his Foreign Secretary, Mr. Jack Straw described as the "most worrying situation I can remember since the Cuban missile crisis in the 1960s".

Nicknamed Mr. Bush's "chief whip" with the task of pushing America's wavering European allies into line, Mr. Blair had a long discussion with the Italian Prime Minister, Mr. Silvio Berlusconi at Downing Street on Monday and today he was in Chequers playing host to a group of African leaders as part of Britain's diplomatic efforts to mobilise as much support

IN SEARCH OF LADEN

With Afghanistan's role in harboring bin Laden already well documented, intelligence is being sought about the links with other suspects also.

Osama bin Laden, 44, the son of a Saudi construction magnate has estimated assets worth US \$ 200 million. In the 1990's he led for Al-Qaeda to participate in the Afghan jihad against the Soviet forces. He went into exile in Sudan after falling out with the Saudi ruling family in 1991. He took refuge in Afghanistan after Sudan expelled him under pressure from US, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Reports suggest that while Mr. bin Laden decries the terrorist organisation Al-Qaeda which is believed to have cells operating in many parts of the world.

Although information on the whereabouts of bin Laden, the chief suspect of attacks on US, is key to the possible US led operation in Afghanistan, the focus of the search has also spread to other countries linked to bin Laden. Countries where he is believed to have financial assets are also under the microscope.

COUNTRIES WHERE OSAMA BIN LADEN'S AL QAEDA CELLS ARE BELIEVED TO BE OPERATING

USA'S LIST OF COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN STATE-SPONSORED TERRORISM

All are likely to come under pressure to give up their alleged support to terrorists or face possible consequences.

KBK

to be keen on a face-to-face discussion with his country's most loyal European ally.

By the time Mr. Bush sits down with Mr. Blair, he would have already had talks with the French President, Mr. Jacques Chirac. Reports suggest that while Mr. Chirac will promise his country's full support to the U.S. he will also convey European concern that the military response should not be excessive and is restricted to the "right target".

The E.U. summit on Friday would thus have two independent assessments of American plans to help European countries formulate a response. In Britain, public opinion was reported to be overwhelmingly in favour of British participation in U.S. military strikes against terrorists.

Bomb threats

AFP reports from New York: The New York Mercantile Exchange — the world's largest commodities exchange, situated close to the ruined World Trade Center — was evacuated for security reasons for an hour today, a spokeswoman said.

"We had two bomb threats, possibly three," a spokeswoman for the building's security said. The building was evacuated from 10.00 am to 11.00 am. She said she did not know how many people were in the exchange at the time.

Britain's "complete solidarity" with the U.S., declaring that "in ordinary, everyday terms we are at war with the people who have committed this terrible act". This is the message he is expected to ram home when he visits Berlin, Paris and Brussels this week. Despite official declarations of support, several European countries, including France and Germany,

have reservations about giving a "blank cheque" to Washington. Mr. Blair, in his talks with French and German leaders, would try and convince them of the need to stand together with America in what he regards as a collective "war" by the "civilised" world against terrorism. Mr. Blair is visiting America at the invitation of Mr. Bush who is reported

as it can for Washington's impending "war". Mr. Blair also spoke to the Pakistani President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf and his Government was reported to be in touch in Iran with whom Britain's relations have improved lately though it still does not have diplomatic relations with Tehran. After his talks with Mr. Berlusconi, Mr. Blair reiterated

Kabul readies for 'jehad' against U.S.

War against Afghanistan is war against us: Pak clerics

ISLAMABAD: Anticipating U.S. attacks, Afghanistan's ruling Taliban regime is conducting military exercises, has declared a national emergency, closed down religious seminaries and armed its students to fight back.

Taliban leaders have also urged Afghans to prepare for a *jehad*, or holy war, against the United States, the Taliban's Bakhtar News Agency reported on Tuesday.

Throughout the country, Taliban leaders are sending a message to their people: "Stay united and prepare for *jehad* against the U.S. invaders," the news agency reported.

The Taliban regime is currently conducting massive ground and air exercises at Kandahar to keep its forces fighting fit, Moulvi Muhammad Hasan, governor of Kandahar province, told the Urdu daily *Jang*. He said seminaries had been closed and the students were being armed to meet any eventuality.

The leaders said Saudi dissident Osama bin Laden, who has taken refuge in Afghanistan, has been wrongly implicated in the deadly terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

Earlier, a meeting of Islamic scholars from across Afghanistan to decide on whether to extradite Osama, wanted "dead or alive" by the U.S., was postponed, a senior Taliban source said.

"There will be no meeting today (Tuesday). Maybe the meeting will take place tomorrow or the day after," the source said. However, late on Monday night, certain conditions set by Taliban chief Mullah Mohammad Omar for handing over Bi Laden were communicat-

ed to the visiting Pakistani delegation led by ISI chief Lt Gen Mehmood Ahmad in Kandahar.

The conditions include lifting of U.S. sanctions against Afghanistan, the trial of Bin Laden in a neutral country, stopping of military support to the Northern Alliance opposition and resumption of international economic aid to Afghanistan, *The Nation* reported on Tuesday.

The developments in Afghanistan came even as Washington said that it bears no ill-will towards the people of Afghanistan but would punish the country's ruling Taliban militia unless it expelled its guest.

"The Taliban, of course, is responding in the way that it always has, that Osama bin Laden and his associates are guests in their country," U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell said on Tuesday. "Well, it's time for the guests to leave."

"They are a poor people and it's for that reason alone that they should not allow these invaders to put their society at risk and to con-

nect themselves to the government of Afghanistan," he told reporters.

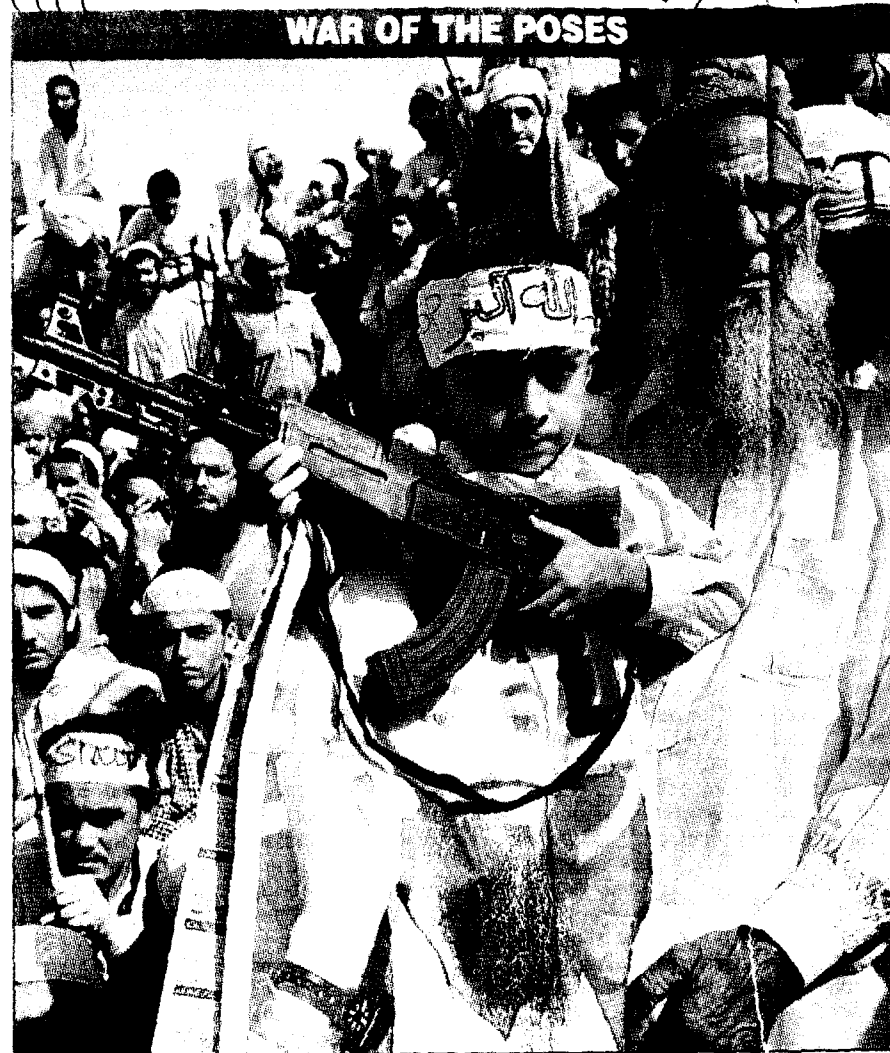
Meanwhile conflicting reports about the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden continued to pour in, with one report saying that the Saudi dissident had taken leave of his 500 suicide fighters or *fidayeen* and fled on horseback to an unknown destination. The Pakistani newspaper *Dawn*, in a report from Peshawar, said that Bin Laden took an oath of allegiance from 500 of his Arab supporters in Kabul and shifted to an unknown place. (Agencies)

► See Edit: The Pakistan Card, Page 10



IN THE LINE OF FIRE

- State of emergency declared in Afghanistan
- Afghan religious council defers decision on Laden extradition
- Laden fled on horseback to an unknown destination: Pak daily
- Security tightened around General Musharraf
- It's time your guest left, Powell tells Taliban



A young demonstrator holds a toy rifle at a meeting in support of Osama bin Laden organised by a militant group in Karachi on Tuesday.

WAR OF THE POSES

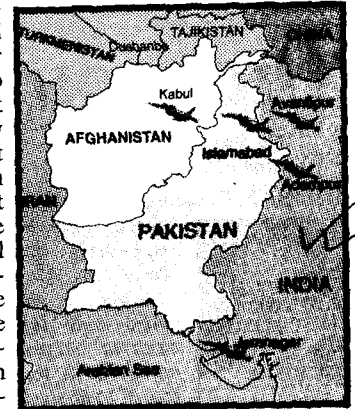
India offers U.S. use of three air bases

By Manoj Joshi
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Even though no military plans have been firmed up by the U.S. for retaliatory strikes, India has identified three air bases in addition to unspecified port facilities on the western seaboard as part of its offer for operational support to the U.S.

The air bases are Avantipur in Jammu & Kashmir, Adampur in Punjab and Jamnagar in Gujarat.

A senior security official told TNN that the offer was conveyed to the U.S. after it was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security last Thursday. The CCS approval came after consultations with the three service chiefs who unanimously agreed on the need to support U.S. action.



According to the official, "The chiefs felt that the Americans had joined 'our' war against terrorism and we must naturally be the first to offer them help." He said that Union defence minister Jaswant Singh's articulation of the government stand was motivated by a desire to ensure that Pakistan does not gain by India's default.

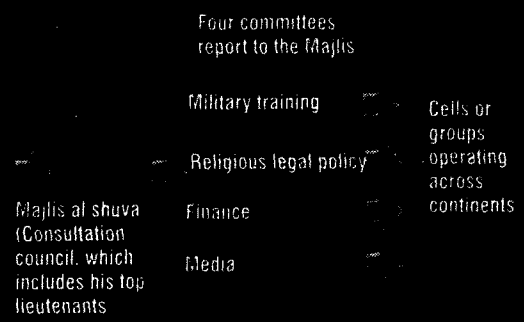
According to the official, India has already begun "operational cooperation" by providing U.S. officials with intelligence on Afghan camps and on the Taliban. The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) has gathered a wealth of detail on Pakistani military assistance to the Taliban in the last few years.

Andhra police probes links Samata cautions NDA govt.

OSAMA'S HIERARCHY OF TERROR



Osama bin Laden
(Undisputed leader called Emir or prince by his followers)



HOW AL-QAIDA WORKS

- Cells are split into planning and execution phases
- Members of one cell don't know members of other cells
- Operators often don't know the identities of people they are communicating with
- Communication between the different groups through mail only

HIS GLOBAL NETWORK

BIN LADEN HAS OPERATIONS IN 40 COUNTRIES OR REGIONS



Pakistan under tight security

Islamabad, September 18

PRESIDENT PERVEZ Musharraf, US citizens in Pakistan and the US Embassy have been placed under heightened security with Taliban and their supporters threatening to retaliate in the event of US military strikes.

"A contingency plan has been prepared to protect Musharraf, US citizens and the embassy staff from any suicide terrorist attacks," a media report quoted senior law enforcement officials as saying.

"Security has been beefed up in the capital according to the 'blue book' of security and the chief security officer of the President is well aware of the situation," Pakistan's daily The Dawn quoted a spokesman of Interior Ministry as saying.

"There are reports of possible threat on lives of Musharraf, the US ambassador to Pakistan, Wendy Chamberlain, American diplomats and citizens, which also included assassination attempts," the paper said.

Yesterday, anti-terrorist police squads and riot police outnumbered about 300 protesters from local religious mosques who had gathered in one of Islamabad's

main shopping areas.

"The protesters threatened to overthrow the military regime, fight battles from Khyber to Karachi in every street and kill those who side with the US troops or allow them to launch attacks on Afghanistan," The Dawn said.

The religious leaders in Islamabad, including members of the Afghan defence council, Jamaat Ualema Islam and Jamiat Ahle Sunnat, warned the Government of a civil war if it extended any cooperation to the US, the paper said.

Meanwhile, emergency has been declared in the State-run Pakistan Telecommunications Corporation Ltd (PTCL).

A report from Karachi said paramilitary forces were deployed on Sunday at all sensitive communication installations in the country after the emergency in PTCL.

"Well-placed sources in Islamabad said the emergency had been declared and the staff of the PTCL had been put on high alert following the situation that had arisen out of United States' intended military strikes on Afghanistan".

PTI

Defiant Taliban ready for jihad

Islamabad/London September 18

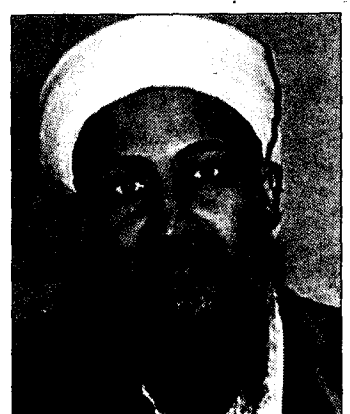
THE TALIBAN'S most senior body of clerics is poised to declare a holy war against the US if a last-minute plea from Pakistan today fails to persuade them to hand over the wanted Saudi-born dissident, Osama bin Laden.

With fear growing throughout the region that the US assault is imminent, Afghan forces were massing at the Pakistan border near the Khyber Pass, ready to repel US ground forces and to retaliate against Pakistan should it help the US.

President George Bush, preparing Americans for a nasty and unpredictable war, mobilised reservists and stepped up the rhetoric, declaring he wanted bin Laden "dead or alive". Those such as the Taliban who housed them would feel the heat, he said.

US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said: "This isn't going to be a few cruise missiles flying around for the world to see that something blew up."

Amid signs that action may be only days away, the British Ministry of Defence deployed troops to Kuwait. SAS and other soldiers on a training exercise in Oman have also been put on standby. Britain and the US are braced for civilian casualties, and are desperate that such scenes will not turn public opinion



OSAMA BIN LADEN

suicide attacks against American interests if US troops are allowed on Pakistani soil.

Mullah Omar emerged from talks with Pakistani envoys to announce that a grand Islamic council, not he, should decide Bin Laden's fate. The Pakistani delegation had made it clear that Afghanistan faced the prospect of a devastating attack if the Taliban failed to co-operate with America's key demand.

After flying to meet Mullah Omar at Kandahar, the Pakistani delegation made an unscheduled overnight trip to Kabul in a last-ditch attempt to influence the clerics' ruling. The ulema, or council, of 20 religious leaders is scheduled to convene in the Afghan capital later today.

Earlier, Taliban Abdul Hai Mutmaen said the two sides had made little progress on Osama. "There was no clear discussion on this particular topic," he said. The Pakistan foreign minister, Abul Sattar, said: "Time is definitely running out."

According to the Pakistan army, the Afghans have mobilised 20,000 to 25,000 fighters at the Khyber Pass. The army said the Taliban had begun moving Russian-made scud missiles to the border. Captain Ahmed Bahtti, of the Pakistan army, said reinforcements of Pakistani troops have fanned out along the west-

ern border with Afghanistan.

Last night there were reports that the Taliban have already moved their key military assets out of Kabul and Kandahar, the two most likely targets. Taliban officials have sought refuge in the mountains. A Taliban unit, mostly made up of foreign militants, has been sent to take up a defensive position 40 miles south of the Afghan capital.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell said the message that the Taliban had been giving so far was Osama and his associates were guests in their country. "Well, it is time for their guests to leave," Powell said. He hinted that the net would be widened to bin Laden's network in other countries.

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw for the first time confirmed Osama as the prime suspect, saying the assessment was based on British intelligence reports separate from the US.

The sense of menace was reinforced when China rushed troops to its small border with Afghanistan. Although the US was continuing to build up its international coalition and succeeded in winning the support of Saudi Arabia, some countries, including Pakistan, are pressing the US to go first to the UN to get international approval for action.

The Guardian

US mission to rope in 100 countries against terrorism

RICHARD BEESTON and
MICHAEL EVANS
THE TIMES, LONDON

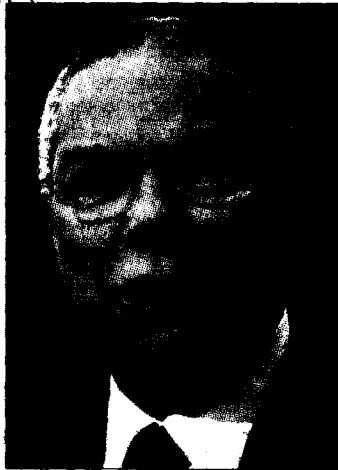
LONDON, Sept. 17. — The USA has begun an ambitious diplomatic offensive to stitch together a coalition of more than 100 countries prepared to join its "war against terrorism".

The campaign, to be conducted in capitals around the world, is seen as an essential prelude to any military action and vital if terrorist groups, and support networks in countries that harbour them, are to be isolated and broken up.

Central to the success of this mission, led by General Colin Powell, the secretary of state, will be maintaining the support of traditional allies and signing up countries that have previously opposed US intervention abroad.

Yesterday, Mr Powell hinted that USA would welcome anyone prepared to fight terrorism, even those countries currently listed by the state department as sponsors of terrorism, such as Iran and Syria.

"Iran made a positive statement," Mr Powell told CBS television. "We have serious dif-



General Colin Powell: Towards a concert of nations

ferences with the Iranian government because of their support for terrorism. But they have made a statement, and it seems to me a statement worth exploring to see whether or not they recognise that this is a curse on the face of the earth."

Gen. Powell praised Damascus for a "forthcoming statement". "Perhaps there are new opportunities with the Syrians," he said.

The US plan for a coalition of more than a hundred countries

coincides with Nato's strong desire that the USA does not take any unilateral action against Osama bin Laden and the country which is harbouring him.

Alliance defence officials said yesterday that a solo campaign by the USA would "only inflame the situation" and create more anger in the Muslim world. "This is not a clash of civilisations and it's absolutely crucial that a broad multinational effort is developed, involving Muslim countries as well," an official said.

The Italian defence minister, Mr Antonio Martino, said: "As was the case during the Gulf War, the idea that the USA should build a coalition and seek approval from the UN is gaining ground."

China, locked in a bitter dispute with USA earlier this year over a US spy plane, has expressed support and could be vital in assisting any military operation in Afghanistan.

Russia, at odds with USA over the Bush administration's threat to break an arms control treaty, is also willing to join the

■ See POWELL: page 8

THE STATESMAN

SEPTEMBER 17, 1999

POWELL:

(Continued from page 1)

fight. Its long experience of warfare in Afghanistan and its dominant role in Central Asia may be decisive for any future US mission.

Talks on joint co-operation are scheduled to be held in Moscow by senior diplomats today. The Russian foreign minister, Mr Igor Ivanov, will visit America next week. 51-8

The Americans already have some powerful diplomatic weapons in their armoury. A Security Council resolution passed after the suicide attacks effectively authorises the use of force to defend against further acts of terrorism. 89

British defence officials denied there was "any back-peddalling" over last week's historic Nato decision to invoke Article 5. But they admitted that many Nato members were anxious that any military action should be proportionate.

France which, has a large Muslim community, has pledged support for the USA but is yet to offer military assistance. Other Nato members have also been reluctant to make pledges of troops.

Only Britain has offered to join the USA in any military action. Nato officials said the USA had not yet made any request for help.

Foreign office officials said yesterday that Britain would help the USA with their recruitment drive.

The issue is bound to dominate the Commonwealth heads of government summit in Brisbane next month and could provide a perfect opportunity to sign up many of the 54 leaders present.

THE STATESMAN

18 SEP 2001

Taliban stab in the back pains Sattar

Islamabad, September 17

PAKISTAN HAS taken a "very serious note" of the Taliban threat to declare war if Islamabad joined or facilitated US attacks against it, Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar said today.

The Taliban had, some days back, said that any country helping the Americans in their endeavour to nab Osama bin Laden would face Kabul's wrath. "Pakistan has taken a very serious note of the threat that has been hurled against Pakistan. We are terribly saddened that a Government and country that we have regarded always as a neighbour and friend should use such a language against Pakistan," Sattar said in an interview to CNN.

Sattar said a high-level delegation from the US would soon visit Pakistan to discuss US plans to deal with terrorism and the extent to which Islamabad could be a "partner" in the endeavour. Islamabad, he said, would not join any "joint military force" against Afghanistan.

Despite mounting pressure from the US, the Taliban today remained defiant as ever. Its Ambassador to Pakistan Abdul Zaef said if the US launched a strike "we will fight to the death." "We will defend ourselves as we did against the Russians," he said. PTI

Pak ready to take risks to fight terror: Powell

Washington, September 17

PAKISTAN IS willing to take "risks" in the fight against terrorism despite "internal problems" and there is no reason not to trust the Pakistanis, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said.

He said in an interview to CBS late last night that the US was "very sensitive" to Pakistan's internal situation.

In an interview to CNN, also yesterday, Powell had said the US would take into account Pakistan's "sensitivities" against involvement of India and Israel in any operation to deal with those responsible for the recent terror attacks in New York and Washington.

He said "so far the Pakistanis have been forthcoming" in their reaction to the list he did not see any reason not to trust them.

"So far they have been forthcoming. They have given assurances to me, they have given assurances to the President. And we will see now what they are actually going to do when specific requests are put before them."

Powell said: "We are very sensitive to that, and I know that President Musharraf is very sensitive to that. So in our conversations with the Pakistani Government in the days and weeks ahead, we will be mindful of that."

"They have internal problems that they are dealing with. But that was part of his (Pervez Musharraf's) calculation as he and his senior advisors and military leaders sat down and examined this earlier in the week," Powell said.

He said that Pakistan Government came to the judgement that even with the difficulty it might cause them internally this was such a problem they were willing to take risks. "I compliment them for this."

Asked if he trusted Pakistanis, Powell said he did not see any reason not to trust them.

"We have had a strong relationship with Pakistan for many, many years. We have been

friends of Pakistan and the Pakistani people and I hope that friendship will continue and the relationship will grow."

Asked about a Pakistani delegation going to Kandahar in Afghanistan to persuade the Taliban militia to hand over Osama bin Laden, he said: "I am encouraged that the Pakistanis continue to play such a positive role in moving this campaign forward against those who might have been responsible for the tragedies of the September 11."

To a question whether by announcing this Pakistan was telling Laden to get out of the town, the Secretary of State said: "We are very pleased with the role the Pakistan Government is playing. We asked them for a variety of things, and I think it is best we keep those between the two governments at this time until we have an opportunity to see their reaction, and then it will all become public."

Powell said if Pakistanis managed to get Osama the US would see whether he could be tried under UN resolutions or Pakistani law. "But let us not over speculate before anything has really happened."

Chechen chopper shot down, 9 die

Moscow, September 17

NINE RUSSIAN soldiers, including a general, died when Chechen rebels shot down a helicopter near the Russian military headquarters at Khankala, near the capital Grozny today, a Russian military official said, as quoted by the Interfax news agency.

The name and rank of the general were not immediately known, the official at Russian Northern Caucasus headquarters said. The downing of the Mi-8 helicopter was claimed in a telephone call to AFP by Movladi Udugov, a spokesman for a radical Chechen separatist group.

Udugov said that around 10 Russian troops had died in a suicide attack carried out on a military installation at Argun, some 10 km east of the capital Grozny, where he said violent fighting was in progress.

There was also fighting in several districts of Grozny, Udugov said, without elaborating. AFP



FLIGHT TO SAFETY: An Afghan rides with his possessions on top of a truck on the highway along the Pakistan side of the Torkham border with Afghanistan on Monday.

Taliban officials leave Kabul

Kabul, September 17

TALIBAN OFFICIALS have started to flee Kabul amid growing expectations of US attacks, witnesses said on Monday.

Officials and their families were seen heading out of the city, but it was not clear if this was under instruction from their spiritual leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, they said.

Those fleeing appeared mainly to be junior commanders and officials. The majority of the leadership is based in the southern city of Kandahar.

Witnesses said hundreds of residents were also trying to escape. "Better leave now before you are trapped," said a resident. Reuters



Members of Muslim religious groups shout anti-US slogans in Islamabad on Monday.

Woman linked to Osama flees, hunt on

Vijay Dutt London, September 17

REPRISALS FEARED in UK as an Osama-linked woman disappeared from the city.

The special branch and other police agencies have launched an intensive countrywide search for a woman suspected of having links with hijackers of the planes in the US.

Officers of the anti-terrorist cell of Scotland Yard raided a flat in London after a tip-off. The FBI, according to reports, had found the name and address of the woman among documents its agents seized from a house in

Florida tenanted by one of the hijackers. Another man who was arrested at Heathrow just a few hours after the carnage in New York and Washington has been flown to the US for questioning by the FBI.

The man, Mufti Mohammad Khan, is alleged to be the second-in-command of the Jiash-i-Mohammed, said to be a very dangerous terrorist having links with Osama bin Laden.

Jiash outfit has been concentrating on British Muslims for recruiting the young ones and raising funds from business people. It had claimed responsibility for the attack on US Destroyer

Cole in which 17 US sailors had been killed.

Sources told HT that the fear of terrorist attacks has deepened in this country following the declaration by Tony Blair that Britain is at war. The response to it by some fundamentalists here has been extremely belligerent and provocative.

Reports are of a member of the Al-Muhajiroun group having addressed a packed meeting in Birmingham where he said that if the US attacked Afghanistan it would be the duty of every Muslim to support the country. The speaker, Zahir Hussain, although born here and married to a white

woman, said that he was not British by any means. "I'm Muslim."

He warned that the war (to be launched) cannot be won by the West. He told Mail, "If Britain helped attack Afghanistan, it would be allowable to Muslims to attack military targets in Britain."

Such declarations, some in public but most privately, have intensified fears in London and Midlands. One Shah Jalal who lives in

Blair's constituency of Islington, north London, told the Mail, that Whitehall and Downing Street were legitimate targets.

24 held for anti-US protests in Pak

Karachi, September 17

PAKISTAN TODAY struggled to control demonstrators demanding that their Government must not join the US hunt for Osama bin Laden.

In a daylong crackdown, 24 people were arrested, as supporters of the country's Islamic parties staged demonstrations against the Government's support for US action against Afghanistan.

More than 1,000 people demonstrated in Islamabad and Lahore today as angry protestors burned tyres and blocked roads.

The demonstration in Karachi was smaller, involving around 50 members of the students' wing of the Jamaat-e-Islami.

"We will not allow our mother-

GADDAFI APPEAL

Libyan leader Moamer Gaddafi has appealed for a united Arab and Muslim position to "fight terrorism", in a letter to the Arab league on recent attacks on the US, Arab diplomats said on Monday. AFP Cairo

land to be used by the US," they chanted before police pounced on them. Mohammad Amin, a police officer, said the arrests had been made because "there is an official ban on holding such rallies and demonstration".

Earlier, a coalition of more than 30 radical Islamic parties meeting in Lahore agreed to

launch a nationwide campaign of strikes and protests against President Pervez Musharraf's stance on the crisis from Friday.

The parties grouping into the newly-formed Council for Defence of Afghanistan and Pakistan, said they would "consider any US attack on Afghanistan as an attack on Pakistan," and warned it could lead to civil war.

More than 30 parties, which make up the formation warned demanded that President Musharraf immediately reverse his decision to cooperate with the US against Afghanistan.

"If Afghanistan declares jihad against the US, we will stand by them," the parties said in statement. "Pakistan will have to suffer devastating consequences for

a long, long time."

Pakistan's mainstream political parties have, however, backed Musharraf's handling of the crisis and accepted that the country couldn't afford to stand in the way of the US.

Fundamentalist leaders including Jamaat chief Qazi Hussain Ahmed and pro-Taliban leaders Maulana Fazlur Rehman and Maulana Samiul Haq, who head separate factions of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam exhorted people to resist any move to join hands with the US against the Afghans.

They demanded that the US ask for solid evidence against bin Laden and the Taliban before accepting any US demand for assistance. PTI

Hamburg University confirms suspect studied engineering

Hamburg, September 17

HAMBURG UNIVERSITY said today that one of the suspectedackers in Tuesday's terrorist attacks studied aircraft engineering there.

Ziad Jarrah was aboard the jetliner plane that crashed in Pennsylvania during week's attacks, the University of Applied Sciences said. University officials couldn't immediately be reached for more details of Jarrah's stay in Hamburg. But the university said its



ZIAD JARRAH

university members to a session tomorrow.

Jarrah, a Lebanese national, was reported missing by his girlfriend in Germany, who was placed under witness protection by police. German federal investigators say they found a suitcase

containing "airplane-related documents" in the girlfriend's apartment. German authorities believe Jarrah and two other suspected hijackers, Mohammed Atta and Marwan Al-Shehhi, were part of a terrorist group formed in Hamburg at the beginning of this year to destroy high-profile US targets.

Atta and Al-Shehhi were students at the city's technical university. All three left Germany last year to take flight lessons in Florida, investigators say.

Jarrah's uncle, Jamal, says his nephew was a secular-minded student who drank alcohol, which is forbidden in Islam. AP

Terrorist toured Boston tower

Boston, September 17

FEDERAL AUTHORITIES are investigating whether a suspected terrorist toured the control tower at Logan airport three days before two planes from the airport were hijacked.

The two flights, carrying 157 people, took off from Boston and crashed into New York's World Trade Center.

No log is kept of tower visitors, and there is no security video. That means everyone who worked at the tower must be interviewed, Peters said Sunday. The FAA, as a courtesy, allows pilots to tour the tower, though access is restricted.

The man, who showed a pilot's license and said he had family in Afghanistan, entered the tower September 8 unescorted. AP

'Hijacker' alive and well in S Arabia

Beirut, September 17

ONE OF the 19 men identified by US investigators as having taken part in last week's suicide attacks in New York and Washington is alive in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi-owned newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat said today.

Abdelaziz Al-Omari told the London-published daily that he was at work with the Saudi telecommunications authority in Riyadh when New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon in Washington were hit by hijacked airliners on September 11.

He said that his original passport had been stolen in Denver, Colorado, in 1995.

The FBI said Omari, whose date of birth was given as December 24, 1972 or May 28, 1979, was thought to be one of the pilots that took over the American Airlines Boeing 767 that slammed into the World Trade Center's North Tower.

Asharq Al-Awsat published a picture of the "real" Omari, who said he was born December 24, 1972, reading the newspaper's September 12 edition.

"I am an electrical engineer and I have no idea how to fly a

plane," he was quoted as saying. Asharq Al-Awsat said Omari's passport and other personal documents were stolen from his apartment in 1995, two years after he arrived in Denver to study electrical engineering at the University of Denver.

Omari informed the police of the theft and returned to Saudi Arabia at the end of 1995 on a travel document supplied by his country's embassy in Washington, the paper said.

He went back to the US at the end of 1996 on a new passport and finished his studies in April last year. AFP

Russia links missile defence, anti-terror fight

Moscow, September 17

RUSSIA LINKED the fight against international terrorism with maintenance of the key 1972 anti-ballistic missile treaty in talks today with US Undersecretary of State John Bolton.

The September 11 terror attacks show that the "real threat" presented by terrorism "can be met by strengthening the world order and the fight against terrorism," Bolton's counterpart Georgy Mamedov said.

Current strategic defence accords "are an integral part of that order," Mamedov said in a reference to the ABM treaty that Washington is planning to abrogate in order to build a missile defence shield.

During his hour-long talk with Bolton, Mamedov stressed that in Russian-US relations with regard to strategic stability, "the priority must be given to the fight against terrorism."

Moscow is bitterly opposed to the US missile defence plan, and Bolton's talks were scheduled to discuss the issue and prepare a meeting in Washington on Wednesday between US Secretary of State Colin Powell and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov.

Russia has given its assent to US plans to take reprisals for last Tuesday's terror attacks in which more than 5,000 people are believed to have died, but has shown little enthusiasm for joining in a possible military intervention. AFP

Stocks slide but don't crash

Selling pressure pulls Sensex down

HT Correspondent
Mumbai, September 17

DALAL STREET was laden with frantic sellers for the fourth consecutive day with the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) benchmark 30-share price sensitive index melted to its near eight year low of 2644.56 points dropping by 149.14 points.

The downslide gathered momentum on Monday with the rumor mill working overtime creating further panic on the bourses. The BSE sensitive index plummeted by a massive 185 points in early trades to 2644.56 points before recovering to 2680.98 towards the end.

The market has lost a massive 500 points since the terrorist strike in the twin towers of US last Tuesday. The war like situation, which is building up, indicates a long drawn out tension in the South Asia and the brokers are worried about its economic consequences.

"Crisis of confidence in the equity market coupled with US development has impacted the trading pattern," said Motilal Oswal, a BSE stock broker.

Taking cue from the Asian markets, which fell with Hang Sang, Taiwan and Nikkei reporting heavy losses, the trading on the Indian bourses witnessed a bearish mood. The rumor mill at the Dalal Street was also operating in full gear.

The brokers were found frantically enquiring about the likely petrol and the diesel hike. ACC, Gujarat Ambuja, L&T and steel major Tisco fell heavily in early trades. "The power cost comprises of 20-30 per cent of the cost of production of steel and cement

companies. The investors got panicky," said Sachin Abhyankar, vice-president of C D Equisearch Private Ltd. The foreign institutional investors (FIIs), fearing massive redemption pre-//ssure in US market, continued their selling spree. Morgan Stanley, Government of Singapore, Schroder, Capital International and Solomon Smith reportedly sold in the market," said market observers. The local institutions like UTI, LIC and GIC did brisk buying in select counters. Reliance, Nestle, Bajaj Auto, Aventis Pharma, PSI Data System, MRF topped the list of gainers in the market.

"There was some investment buying at lower levels, though small investors kept themselves away from the market" said brokers having large number of retail clients.

The sensitive index, which close the day 149.14 points lower as compared to Friday, once again lost over 5 per cent. The market regulator has fixed a maximum cap of 10 per cent for daily index movement in order to avoid any panic selling in the event of developments outside.

"We are still awaiting response of the US markets when they will open later in the day," said Bhavesh Jangla, a dealer at the ASK Raymond James Ltd. The selling was all round with heavyweights like Infosys, HLL, Telco, Glaxo, Cipla, Zee Tele, Reliance Petroleum, and RIL witnessing massive erosion in their market prices. There was also no respite for the technology stocks. The downslide was led by Infosys Technology, Satyam, SSI, HCL Technology, Polaris and Digital Equipment Ltd.



New York police officers and fire fighters ring the bell to open trading at the New York Stock Exchange on Monday while the senators Hillary Clinton and Chuck Schumer and the Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neil applaud.

US, Asian indices drop as European markets recover

New York, September 17

STOCKS TUMBLED in extremely volatile trade Monday as Wall Street reopened after a four-day closing due to last week's terrorist attacks, but a feared meltdown in share prices did not occur.

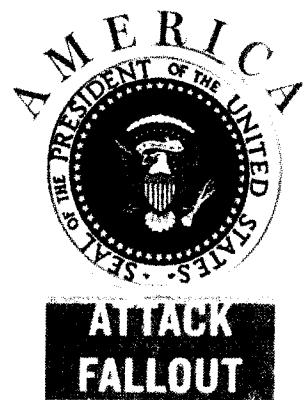
The Dow Jones Industrial Average plunged below the 9,000 mark, then recovered somewhat, but was still down 474.33 points (4.94 percent) to 9,131.03 at noon (1600 GMT).

The Nasdaq composite also moved off its early lows, and was down 71.31 points (4.21 percent) to 1,623.59. The broader Standard and Poor's 500 shed 38.08 points (3.49 percent) to 1,054.46. The losses were massive but there appeared to be no panic selling in the first trading since Tuesday devastating attacks halted activity.

"This is not unexpected, but (economic) fundamentals remain very strongly and solidly in place," said Ari Fleischer, spokesman for President George W. Bush.

Jefferies and Co chief equities strategist Arthur Hogan said the fact that major indexes stabilized above their worst levels by late morning was widely viewed as a positive sign.

"Obviously, we knew there would be a great deal of pressure in the market in the first hour of



trade," Hogan said. "There is a feeling of 'so far, so good.' This is seen as a signal to the rest of the world that we're back in business."

Traders bowed their heads in a two-minute period of silence, and then sang "God Bless America" at a ceremony marking the reopening of the world's biggest stock exchange.

Attention everywhere was focused on Wall Street to see if, after a four-day closure, it would struggle to throw off the tragedy of the World Trade Center destruction just three blocks away — or whether it would signal the start of a deep global recession.

US market authorities have done all they can to prop up trading, notably easing restrictions on

corporate share buybacks. Several big US companies, including Cisco and FleetBoston have unveiled stock buyback programs in a bid to prop up their equities.

There were widespread fears that the all-important bourse — the world's largest with a capitalization of 17.3 trillion dollars — would plunge at dizzying speed.

But analysts called for calm and some even said the turmoil could be seen as a buying opportunity. "The US economy faces temporary stresses, but is fundamentally sound," said Goldman Sachs market strategist Abby Joseph Cohen.

"We expect economic and profit growth will resume in 2002. Equities are attractively priced, even with adjustments following the tragic events of September 11."

There was talk of a patriotic buying spree by ordinary Americans determined to send a message of defiance to the faceless men who scarred their lives and pitched the country towards war.

"Buy stock in those companies whose products are known worldwide, that are potent representatives of the American way of life, culture and industrial strength," said Bruce Bartlett of the National Center for Policy Analysis, a Washington think tank.

The US Federal Reserve slashed interest rates half a percentage point Monday just ahead of the

US FRED, ECB CUT RATES

THE EUROPEAN Central Bank and the US Federal Reserve slashed cut rates by half a percentage point off their key rates on Monday. The ECB move was unprecedented taken to buffer the euro-zone economy against the shockwaves of the deadly terrorist attacks in the US last week. Just three hours after the US Federal Reserve cut its own rates, the ECB took the markets completely by surprise by announcing a half-point reduction in euro-zone borrowing costs.

AFP, Frankfurt/New York

opening of Wall Street, cutting the benchmark federal funds rate target to 3.0 percent, the eighth cut in rates this year.

The US central bank has been helping to pump money into the financial system since terrorists hijacked four commercial passenger jets, ramming two planes into the World Trade Center and one into the Pentagon. The fourth plane crashed in western Pennsylvania.

That was followed by similar rate cuts by the European and Canadian central banks in an effort to reassure markets.

European share markets gyrated wildly on Monday as they

watched Wall Street.

In London, the FTSE 100 index of leading shares bounced around its opening level before rising one percent to 4,806.3 points. Before Wall Street opened, Asian share markets were hammered Monday on fears of a Wall Street meltdown.

Tokyo stocks plunged 5.0 percent to their lowest point for nearly 18 years while the South Korean, Singapore and Philippine share markets closed at levels not seen since the Asian economic crisis in December 1998.

On Wall Street, airline stocks were punished, tumbling as much as 40 percent, in the wake of the terrorist hijackings.

AMR Corp, parent of American Airlines, plunged 10.61 dollars to 19.09 while United Airlines parent UAL slid 12.13 to 18.69.

Boeing was down 5.31 at 38.15, impacted by the worries about the aviation industry.

Insurers were lower amid worries about the exceptionally heavy claims payouts which doubtless will follow last week's carnage. Allstate was down 88 cents at 33.20, AIG slid 4.51 to 69.75 and John Hancock fell 1.95 to 36.55.

Northrop Grumman was sharply higher — up 14.02 to 95.96, benefitting from predictions that the US is poised for a massive ramp-up of its defense operations.

AFP

Rupee's drop fails to enthruse exporters

HT Correspondent
New Delhi, September 17

EXPORTERS COULD have reacted in a different manner to the rupee, if it were a different day, but in the current economic and political environment, they are not very optimistic about gain due to the devaluation despite their long standing demand for a free fall in the currency.

Some exporters feel that the situation is worse as the money is already struck in the different part of the world. Consignment release is one of cause for depression as they are not sure about the handling. Bankers are also expected to run into payment problems. Tax on the import is going to increase. This is what prominent exporters have to say.

Navratan Samdria, past president of Federation of Indian Export Organisation (FIEO). The value added products will have a major impact as Christmas buying will be less. There is uncertainty prevailing over the market and it will be affected. 70 per cent of the exporters are now running under a cloud of fear. This will have a long term effect on exports. Ramu S Deora, president All India Shippers Council: Export to US will be affected.

Rupee breaches 48, bounces back

HT Correspondent
Mumbai, September 17

RIDING PIGGYBACK on the support from state owned banks, the rupee on Monday performed a somersault after touching a historic low of Rs 48.45 against the US dollar before recovering to Rs 47.80/83 towards the end.

The trio — State Bank of India, Bank of India and Canara Bank — reportedly pumped in \$200 million to stem the rupee slide, according to market observers.

Though rupee got a reprieve for the time being, the dealers were still apprehensive of the direction the rupee will take in the days to come. "It's a dynamic situation. The support from the state banks just cannot be indefinite," said dealers. The rupee, which opened lower at Rs 47.80/83 to a dollar pierced all the psychological barrier to touch an intra day low of Rs 48.45. It finally ended the day at Rs 47.80/83 as compared to its Friday's close of Rs 47.81/83.

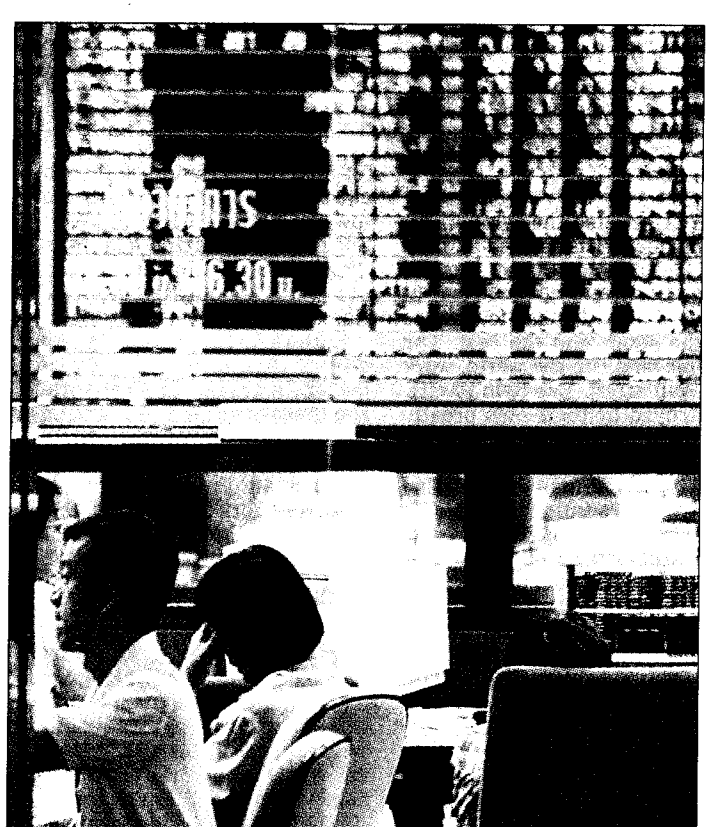
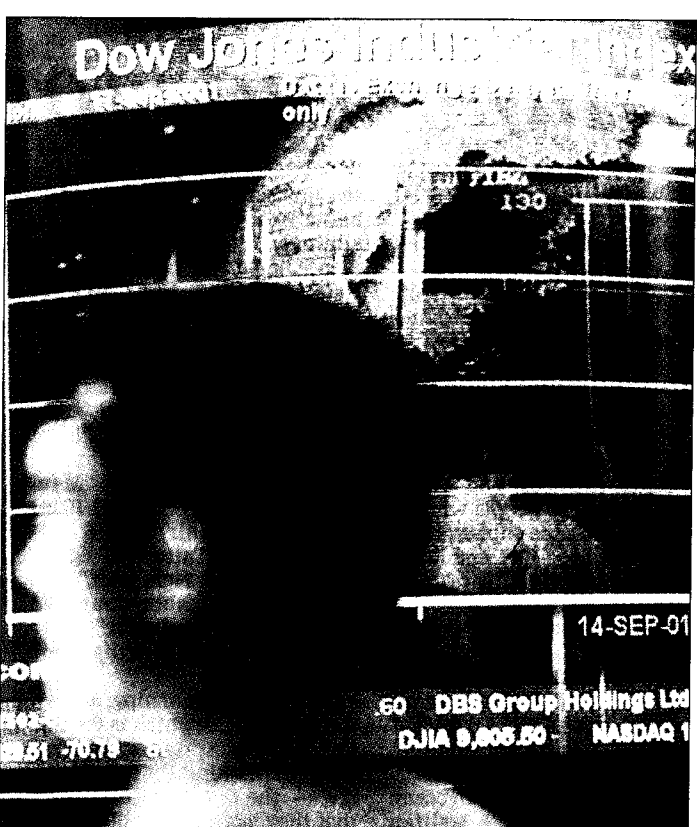
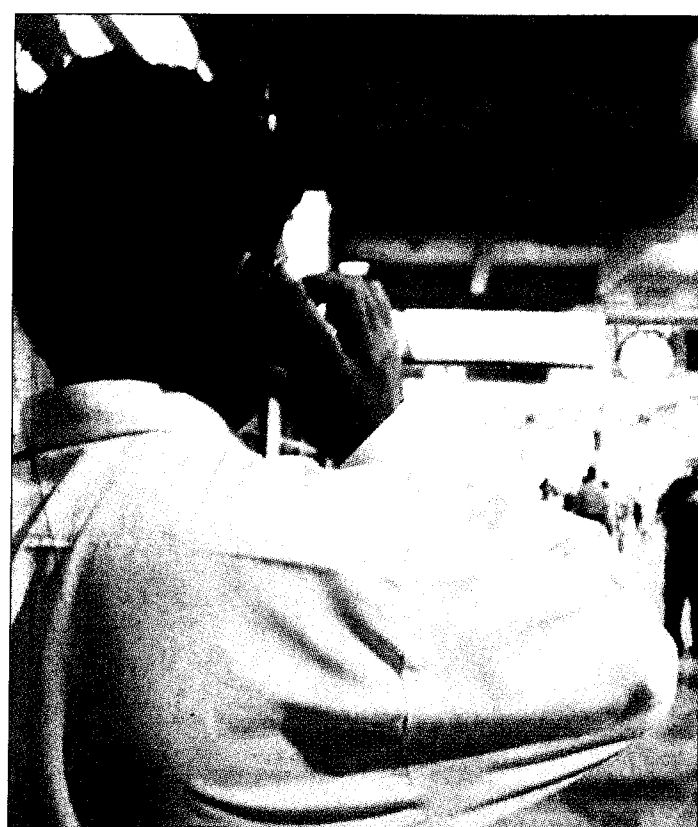
There was also no direct intervention from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), though it has maintained last Saturday that they are watching the situation. "Outlook is still bleak. The rupee will take some time before it stabilizes," said a dealer at Global Trust Bank

RBI TO BUY GOVT PAPER

IN A MOVE aimed at checking money supply, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to open the purchase window for select government securities market on a daily auction basis. RBI said in a press release that it was opening the purchase window for select government securities on a daily auction basis in view of the extraordinary circumstances in the government securities market.

HTC, Mumbai

Ltd. In a highly volatile trading, the rupee depreciation continued on the back of heavy import covering by corporate sector and dollar demand from the foreign banks on behalf of their institutional clients. "The plunging indices of the stock market are having a contagion effect on the inter bank foreign exchange market," opined dealers. The forward premium, too, went up in the market. The six month forward premium closed at 7.01 per cent as compared to 5.65 per cent last Friday. Marginal improvement in the foreign exchange reserves is also a cause of concern for the bankers.



NIGHTMARE ON BOURSES: Tumbling share prices gave stock exchanges in (from L) Mumbai, Spain, Singapore and Thailand the jitters today.

PHOTO AP/AF

Don't attack us, we're different, say UK Sikhs

By Rashmee Z. Ahmed
Times News Network

LONDON: British Sikhs have begun an urgent campaign to explain who they are and how they differ from the similarly turbaned and bearded Taliban, but some say it may already be too late. Community leaders are shuddering over at least 16 attacks on Sikhs in the northern city of Birmingham and many Sikhs have reported a markedly hostile atmosphere as they go about their daily business.

The campaign comes just a day after news that a Sikh shop-keeper in Arizona in the US was killed in a hate attack.

"We are trying to say, please don't attack us, we are different from the Taliban, we too are saddened by these events in America," says the prosperous, turbaned, 34-year-old owner of an info-tech company, who organised an urgent community meeting on Sunday at Europe's oldest gurdwara, the Central Gurdwara in west London. The young man with a British accent and a growing sense of anger, insists on anonymity. He told The Times of India that it was a shame that more than half-a-century after Britain became host to the 600,000-strong Sikh community and three years after celebrating the tercentenary of the founding of the Khalsa, it was still unable to recognise Sikhs as different from the Taliban.

Community leaders, backed up by a visibly disturbed Indian high commission here, blame the growing hostility on the ignorant and inchoate images in Britain's generally-sensational tabloid press.

Said a retired, Sikh Indian Foreign Service officer, who subsequently worked in the British Civil Service, "Two days after the terrorist attacks in America, the Evening Standard tabloid printed a photograph of Osama bin Laden alongside that of the Sikh who was arrested in New York". On Sunday, Britain's best-selling paper, the trashy but much-thumbed News of the World printed much the same photograph of the Sikh man, alongside those of the suspects arrested by the FBI.

Indian diplomats deplore the dangerous juxtaposition of pictures, even as community leaders despair because "a picture says more than a thousand words". Alarmed Sikhs have complained to Britain's Press Complaints Commission, and the National Sikh Convention invited Asian MP Keith Vaz and other politicians to a well-attended community meeting at a gurdwara in Wolverhampton, near London. The prayers were for the thousands killed in last week's terrorist attacks, as much as for Sikhs caught up in the backlash.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

American embassy condemns attacks on Sikhs

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STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept 17. - The political counsellor in the US embassy in India, Dr Robert Bogg, condemned the attacks on Sikhs in the USA. The attacks on Sikhs in the aftermath of last week's terrorist strikes on the USA were described by Dr Bogg as a "crime". He said all-out efforts would be made to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

Dr Bogg held a half-hour meeting with the Union minister for chemicals and fertilisers and senior Akali Dal leader, Mr Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, today on this issue.

"The US government is very concerned," said Dr Bogg. Mr Dhindsa said he was satisfied with the US response. He said Americans should be educated about the identity of the Sikhs. Mr Dhindsa said the Indian mission in the USA too was in touch with mayors and governors of different American states in this regard.

The Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee today presented a memorandum to the US embassy seeking protection for Sikhs in the USA in view of the recent spate of attacks on them.

Members of several Sikh forums have asked their community members in America to cooperate with the authorities and work for peace. The chairman of South Delhi Singh Forum, colonel (retd) Mahinder Singh said: "Sikhs community

UK SIKHS ASSAULTED

LONDON, Sept. 17. - Attacks on Sikhs in the USA have spilled over to Britain. About 16 cases of assault on Sikhs, living in UK, have been reported so far.

An elderly Sikh was injured when he was hit by a baseball bat. "Most of the cases were minor assaults," representatives of the community said here last night. Central Gurdwara in London held special prayers last night and passed a resolution expressing deep shock at the loss of thousands of innocent lives in the terrorist attacks in the USA.

- PTI

members should not retaliate and should seek the help of the local administration to clear the misunderstandings".

He said over six lakh Sikhs live in New York and Chicago. "If the attacks continue it would demoralise them and affect their business establishments there". The general manager of Rakabganj gurdwara, Mr Ajit Singh, said: "We condemn the terrorist attacks on America and appeal that Sikhs should not be mistaken for Arabs".

Travel operators said many people have cancelled their trips to America. A Continental Air Travel official said: "There has been a ten per cent decrease in the number of tourists going to America this week".

THE STATESMAN

18 SEP 2001

Scapegoats & Victims

The first 'victims' of America's self-avowed global war against terrorism have fallen. Not in the rugged, lawless wilderness of Talibanised Afghanistan, but in the eminently civilised ambience of mainland America itself. On Saturday night, a 52-year-old Sikh businessman was shot dead in Arizona by assailants who mistook him for an Arab. In a separate incident, a middle-aged Pakistani was killed in his grocery store in Texas for the same reason. Across the US, scores of other Asian citizens have had to face the vengeful wrath of outraged Americans overwhelmed by the horrific terror attacks last Tuesday which, apart from killing thousands, wounded the self-esteem of the world's mightiest nation. As in the case of the unfortunate two who had to pay with their lives, the 'crime' of the targeted Asians was that they shared a likeness in appearance to the most recognised face of terrorism in the American consciousness: Osama bin Laden. It would be easy to attribute these hate crimes to the mindless prejudice of a handful who could not distinguish the perpetrators of terror from innocent law-abiding citizens. The truth, unfortunately, is more complicated. For one, the intolerance that is currently sweeping America cannot be seen in isolation from the relentless moral hysteria and war-mongering which has ruled the airwaves since the outbreak of Black Tuesday. As always, the representations in the media are merely a symptom of a larger malaise. From the White House down, the American leadership has reacted to the terrible events in a language which is liable to rouse the worst passions.

From the Manichean rhetoric of good and evil to blanket invocations of 'Islamic terrorism' to a 'clash of civilisations', official America has actively stoked the fires of popular prejudice in the wake of Tuesday's terrorist strikes. While this may have won the leadership the gratitude of a people looking for easy answers and identifiable scapegoats, it has also spawned a new moral calculus in which the minorities, particularly the Muslims, have become 'legitimate' targets for the expression of one's patriotic sentiments. The dangers of demonising a whole community, even assuming that there exists a monolithic Islamic community, for the crimes of its fanatical fringe are too frightful to contemplate. In this age of media saturation, it is perhaps inevitable that an average American will know little of her own past, let alone larger western history, but the leadership must be only too aware of the horrors that are unleashed when any country is encouraged to look upon its minorities with suspicion. It is time president Bush displayed the same resolve in combating the anti-Muslim feelings amongst his people that he has so far proclaimed in America's fight against global terrorism. Beyond the immediate events, however, there is a larger lesson in the American situation for the entire democratic world. Namely, that modern mass democracies, for all their apparent virtues of tolerance and reasoned discourse, often fail to protect their minorities just when it is most required — in the face of catastrophic tragedies. The anti-Sikh pogrom in the aftermath of Mrs Gandhi's assassination or the anti-Muslim riots which followed the Babri Masjid demolition are simply more virulent expressions of that same tendency. It is, therefore, imperative that even as we condemn the anti-minority mood in America, we must strengthen our resolve to protect the rights of the minorities at home.

THE PRESS OF INDIA

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Arab grievances lend to conspiracy



By Kesava Menon

MANAMA (BAHRAN), SEPT. 17. While almost all the West Asian and North African governments have, at least in principle, agreed to support the U.S. campaign against global jihad, the Osama mystique continues to be a powerful element among the people. This tendency feeds some weird conspiracy theories to explain the developments that have occurred since last Tuesday and is also sought to be justified by a deep-rooted sense of grievance. But while regional governments have to be sensitive to this factor it does not appear, to go by the lack of open demonstrations against the U.S., that these governments will be swayed by the sentiments.

A belief that there is some justification for global terrorism can be traced back to a sense that the West has treated the Arab and Muslim world very unjustly. The strongest evidence of this is found to be in the fact that the West, especially the U.S., has consistently supported Israel, which is considered an artificial entity, foisted on the Arab homeland.

Israel has been created and supported, so runs the belief, in order to keep the Arabs forever subjugated and their assets under the West's control. Piled on top of this grievance is the fact that Israel continues

to occupy Palestinian and Syrian territory in violation of international law. The West's failure to persuade Israel to give up its illegal occupation is considered the most current cause for the deep sense of grievance.

An outsider to the Arab world finds it difficult to appreciate the thesis in its entirety. Whether Israel's creation could be justified or not is a matter that can be debated till eternity.

The fact is that two of Israel's Arab neighbours have, by signing peace treaties with it, recognised Israel's right to exist in the region. Virtually every other Arab Government (Iraq being the exception for understandable reasons) was till a year ago, getting ready to follow suit once Israel withdrew from the Palestinian and Syrian territories. Similarly, the Arab world is incensed at the measures Israel has taken to crush the on-going Intifada, including the use of air power, assassinations, use of excessive force and the tough strictures imposed on the Palestinian economy and the movements of its civilians. Yet at the same time, the Arab governments have not given up their attempts to deal with Israel either directly or indirectly even if it is for the limited purpose of bringing an end to the current violent conflict.

U.S. ATTACKS / SURVEILLANCE NEEDS TEETH, SAYS ASHCROFT

FBI asks Congress to ease wiretapping laws

110-14
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By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 17. Even as the Bush administration says that time is running out for Osama bin Laden and Afghanistan, there appears to be a sudden rush to tighten the laws to come to terms with terrorists.

The administration has hinted that the domestic law against assassination of foreign leaders by the Central Intelligence Agency may be evaluated in the broader context of the efforts against terrorism. The Federal Bureau of Investigation is asking Congress to ease the domestic wiretapping laws that will assist law enforcement authorities to hunt down confirmed and suspected terrorists in this country. The FBI fears that there could still be terrorists hiding in the country and hence the urgent necessity for sharper tools.

The Attorney-General, Mr. John Ashcroft and the FBI chief, Mr. Robert Mueller, have appealed to Capitol Hill to come up with legislation this week. In Mr. Ashcroft's opinion, law enforcement authorities have better tools going after organised gambling than terrorists. "We need to upgrade," the Attorney-General insisted. The

Justice department and the FBI point out that under current laws, mere suspicion of terrorist activities does not warrant a legal reason for wiretap; and that the authorisation should be focussed on the person rather than on the telephone equipment he or she uses. According to Mr. Ashcroft with the advent of disposable phones, "it simply doesn't make sense to have the surveillance authority associated with the hardware".

The administration is not merely interested in giving enforcement agencies sharper tools to fight terrorists but on the laws associated with terrorism. The Justice Department is working on a crucial area: dealing with those convicted of harbouring terrorists. Under the present scheme of things, people who harbour terrorists face up to five years in prison. The Attorney-General has suggested that this should be raised to the same level of punishment for espionage — in certain cases, the death penalty could be given upon conviction.

Top lawmakers in this country, who have been routinely briefed by both the FBI and the CIA on the status of the investigations, are also inclined to drafting new

laws to tighten surveillance and enforcement. "We need to modernise our laws to make sure that no stone goes unturned in this investigation," remarked Senator Orrin Hatch, the ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The Bush administration is seeking to bring into law that will warrant a legal wiretap on a broad set of equipment used by terrorists. The traditional attention on a land line telephone is no longer sufficient in the war against terrorism and steps are being taken to identify the different types of telephones, computers and other communication devices that are being used in terrorist acts.

The administration's efforts to broaden law enforcement tools in the wake of last Tuesday's horrific terrorist attacks on New York and Washington coincide with two more arrests by investigating agencies. Authorities say that the arrests are necessary to keep witnesses in custody.

The Justice Department has said a federal grand jury is working on warrants for material witnesses. Details have not been disclosed because of the grand jury secrecy rules.

THE HINDU

18 SEP 2001

We want Osama dead or alive: Bush

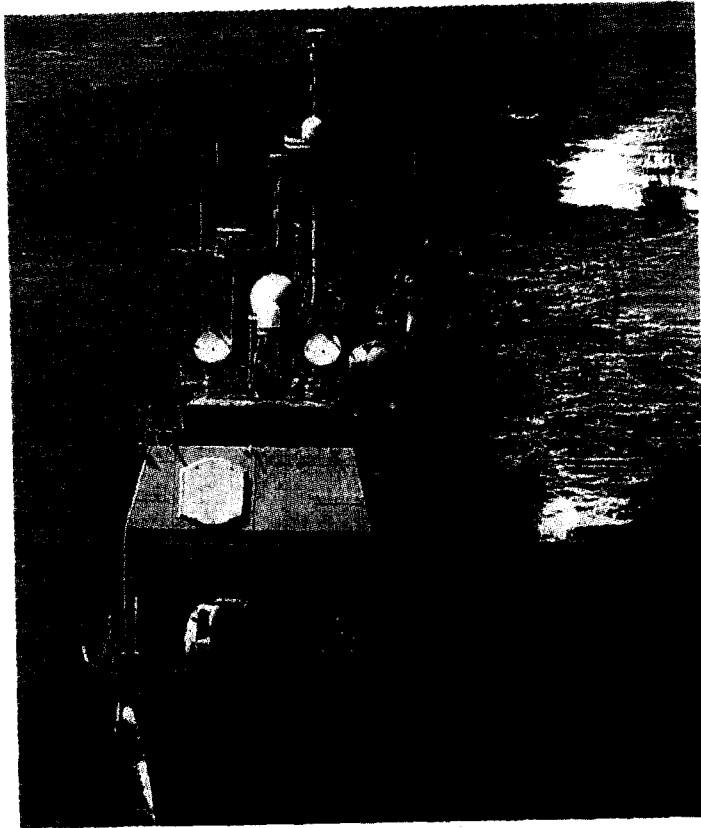
WASHINGTON, SEPT. 17. Invoking the rough justice of the American frontier, the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, said today that the United States wanted Osama Bin Laden, the suspected mastermind of the September 11 terror attacks on New York and Washington, brought to justice, "dead or alive".

Mr. Bush made the comment at the Pentagon after an hour-long meeting with the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, to discuss the military's plans for mobilising reservists to beef up domestic defences against terrorism.

Asked whether he wanted Osama dead, Mr. Bush told presspersons, "I want justice. There's an old poster out west that as I recall said, 'Wanted: dead or alive.'" Cheers erupted in the hallways as he emerged from the meeting, which also was attended by the National Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, and the Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mr. Richard Myers.

His voice at times rising with anger, Mr. Bush said the U.S. was embarking on a long struggle against terrorism, and the immediate focus was on Osama, his network and those providing him a safe haven in Afghanistan. "The people who think they can provide them safe havens will be held accountable, the people who feed them will be held accountable. The Taliban must take my statement seriously."

The White House spokesman, Mr. Ari Fleischer, said a Presidential directive barring the Government from engaging in assassination did not prevent Washington from acting in "self-defence". The directive remained in effect, but "it does not limit the U.S.



The U.S. Navy missile cruiser, USS Vincennes, departs from Yokosuka naval base, southwest of Tokyo, on Monday.

ability to act in its self-defence".

In New York, workers returned today to the city's financial district with a mix of pain and can-do spirit. Thick smoke and dust lingered in the air and rescue crews waded into a sea of rubble and body parts. The New York Stock Exchange and the Mercantile Exchange — as well as the City Hall, other Government buildings and courthouses — reopened.

Dow Jones drops

Selling swept Wall Street as the stock market reopened today, sending the Dow Jones Industrials down as much as 600 points and below 9,000.

for the first time in two-and-a-half years. — AFP, AP

U.S. warships leave Japan

TOKYO, SEPT. 17. Two U.S. Navy ships left their home port in Japan today as the U.S. military reportedly prepared for retaliation for the attacks.

The guided missile cruiser, USS Vincennes, and the guided missile destroyer, USS Curtis Wilbur, left the Yokosuka base at the mouth of Tokyo Bay, the U.S. Navy spokesman, Lt. Chuck Bell, said. Another guided missile cruiser, USS Cowpens, had already left Yokosuka on Saturday.

CTBT, NMD & New War

Don't Play Second Fiddle to US Tunes

By VIDYA SUBRAHMANIAM

LAST week's suicide air attacks on America have evidently lent a new legitimacy to hysteria. Soon after president Bush declared that "no one can do this to America and get away," a BBC newscaster casually tossed a question about tactically nuking Afghanistan to Kevin O'Brien, terrorism specialist. O'Brien didn't blanch at the suggestion; he merely said he would be concerned if they (the American alliance) "used it at this point."

The irony is America was brought to its knees, not by a rogue nuclear nation against whom president Bush has been arming himself with his ingenious Nuclear Missile Defence, but as columnist Maureen Dodd points out, "by a handful of guys with box cutters and plastic knives." Dodd also quotes US defence officials as saying the air attacks happened because "we're not so good at the threats coming from inside".

Let's face it. The attacks on the US constitute the world's biggest intelligence failure since Pearl Harbour. And part of the reason for this incredible lapse is America's completely misdirected and increasingly manic obsession with fortifying its skies against nuclear missile attacks while ignoring domestic threats. Indeed, even as planes taking off from America's own territory ripped through the economic and military symbols of the world's only superpower, its president was assiduously pursuing another passionate, and no less dangerous, mission.

Consider the following: In January this year, the US air force's Space Warfare Centre spent a fortune simulating an attack from an unnamed red country. In July, the defence department spent a 100 million dollars in its fourth attempt to intercept a long-range ballistic missile carrying a mock warhead. Analysts say it will take many tests and at least a decade for the US to build a reliable NMD. Not that this would deter Mr Bush. Last month he went another step and offered to let China do further nuclear tests as well as expand its missile force in return for support to the NMD. Mr Bush was very subtly letting the world know of the US's own plans to conduct more nuclear tests, when, before his disbelieving eyes, terrorists plunged hijacked domestic planes into landmark American buildings.

The daring attacks on New York

and Washington apart, American intelligence has routinely failed over the years, from the 1995 nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway system to the monetary crisis in Mexico to India's nuclear weapons tests to terrorist bombings of various US missions.

The tragedy is that this hasn't stopped the world's blind faith in the US's ability to offer protection. India itself wants to plunge headlong into anything the US asks to do, whether that is the CTBT, the NMD or the war now proposed in our backyard. Strobe Talbott took Jaswant Singh through a dozen gruelling rounds of talks on the CTBT before the US Senate imperiously thumbed down the treaty. No apologies to us, of course. Then came president Bush, waving the NMD to the consternation of most of the world. Most of the world, except us. India signalled its support

such weapons are not already in the hands of non-state players?

Which is what makes Mr Bush's "prolonged war" in our immediate neighbourhood so frightening. From all accounts, Osama bin Laden — assuming he is guilty — has a breathtaking network of men and material spread across the globe. That some of his recruits trained and worked in the US is now clear. So how is Osama's "den of evil" to be smashed? Even in the unlikely event of Laden perishing in a military offensive on Afghanistan, there's no knowing how many of his worldwide volunteers would take up from where he left off. God help us if "the prolonged war" should extend to the madrasas in Pakistan or to possible hideouts in J&K. Then we would truly be caught between vengeful Americans on one hand and angry jihadis willing to use any kind of weapon on the other.

No, we cannot go along in this war. The US leaves behind a huge mess wherever it goes, and in this case the mess will be right in our backyard. Even worse would be to assume that we can acquire America as an ally. The mutual support thesis which was the basis of India's eager response to the CTBT and NMD has already been shown up for what it is: A naive calculation.

Soon after Black Tuesday, India made the necessary noises about the tragedy. But alongside there was unhidden glee that Pakistan had finally got its comeuppance. Official India typically decided that America would crack down on Pakistan and insist that it clean up its act in Kashmir. A necessary corollary of this was further bonding between the US and India. How pathetically wrong this assumption turned out to be. So, even as Jaswant Singh was unilaterally offering India's help to "good friend America", general Musharraf was seizing his own opportunity in what everybody decided was Pakistan's nemesis.

This is not to say that president Bush will agree to any of Pakistan's demands, which predictably includes US intervention in Kashmir. Musharraf also has the awesome task of contending with the Taliban and other home-grown jihadis. What India must understand is the fickleness of US policy. If the US had begun tilting our way, it can as easily reverse the tilt towards Pakistan.

IN BRIEF

- America was attacked from within while it was spending a fortune on NMD
- The myth of nuclear deterrence has been shattered forever
- India should understand that there is little point matching steps with the US

to Bush Jr's crazed plan to erect an astrodome over the US, ahead of every major power. And our security experts began lobbying for the NMD, arguing exactly as in the case of the CTBT that this way lay India's self-interest. Their case: With Pakistan out of America's favour and China posing a threat to the US, an Indo-US compact on the NMD would lead to unimaginable strategic and material gains for India. Earlier the logic was that as a nuclear power we could accept not to test under the CTBT — and benefit. Now it was that as part of the NMD, we could test all we want — and benefit!

Mr Bush may still push for the NMD, but the suicide attacks have forever shattered the myth of nuclear deterrence. There can be no deterrence against men possessed of a suicidal rage. And none at all when such men are assured the support of a network operating from within the US. What if the hijackers had dropped a suitcase nuclear bomb? Or if they had employed a chemical or biological weapon? Can anyone certify that

WHICH COUNTRY STANDS WHERE

President George W. Bush is trying to rally a global coalition for a military retaliation of the September 11 attacks. The following are the key responses so far:

STRONG OFFERS OF SUPPORT

Belgium: Foreign minister Louis Michel has said troops would be sent in to help a US military retaliation.

Britain: Prime Minister Tony Blair has pledged to stand "shoulder-to-shoulder" with Bush and has worked to bring less enthusiastic European states on board.

India: Has offered to allow US military use its facilities.

Israel: Giving vital intelligence support on Islamic militants. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has refused to make concessions to the Palestinians to help the US recruit Arab and Islamic nations into an anti-terror alliance.

Kuwait: Freed from Iraqi occupation by a US coalition in 1991, has offered all possible help.

The Philippines: Has expressed all-out support for any use of force by the US.

Spain: Has offered air bases for retaliatory strikes; has promised to act "without any reservations".

QUALIFIED SUPPORT

Pakistan: Offered full cooperation and sent delegates to Afghanistan on Monday to try to persuade the Taliban to hand over bin Laden. Yet to make a decision on specific help. Fears Taliban strike if it helps the US.

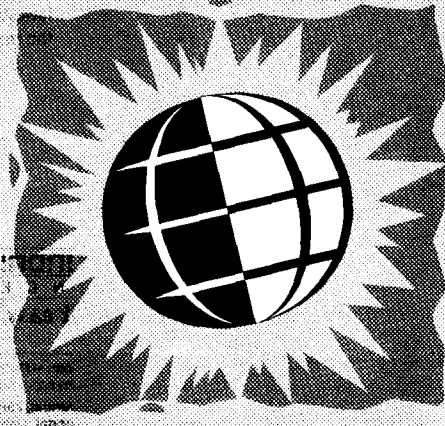
Bangladesh: Has pledged support. Dhaka has denied reports that the US had asked for airspace and port facilities. Embassy source says request had been made.

Canada: Has pledged support but has not clarified whether that could include participation in a military response.

France: President Jacques Chirac has said he would be "totally supportive", but Prime Minister Lionel Jospin said it was up to Paris to decide how to help retaliate.

Germany: Defence minister Rudolf Scharping suggested in vague terms on Monday that Germany could participate in a military response. Foreign minister Joschka Fischer expressed caution and recalled that Parliament has last word.

Indonesia: Hamzah Haz, vice-president of the world's biggest Muslim nation and fourth most populous, has condemned the attacks on US but warned America against making Islam a scapegoat.



Muslims in general. Gulf source says country prepared to share intelligence.

Syria: Has expressed strong support, but earlier this year failed to follow through on commitment to the US.

United Arab Emirates: Has said it is reviewing ties with the Taliban and would help in "any possible way". Called for immediate Nato move to fight "terrorism" while stressing that success of such a move would hinge on a just solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Other Gulf Arab states are likely to link support for any US military action to the extent of US pressure on Israel

NEUTRAL

Iran: Iranian leaders from reformists to conservatives have strongly condemned the attack in an unprecedented show of sympathy with their long-time enemy. Likely to draw on precedent and go for neutrality.

Sweden: Foreign minister Anna Lindh has said country did not want to join Nato but was reviewing its neutrality.

United Nations: Security Council has expressed "readiness to take all necessary steps to respond to the terrorist attacks" but this falls way short of formally authorising any military response which would require another resolution.

OPPOSITION

China: Has said it is ready to join the US in fighting "terrorism", but warned military intervention would only "aggravate terrorism and violence".

Iraq: A possible target along with Afghanistan. Accused America of terrorism and said the attacks were carried out by American dissidents.

investigation must precede any action. Defence officials have said Moscow will help with intelligence, but military participation is unlikely. Has warned Nato against using former Soviet central Asia for military operations.

Saudi Arabia: Has condemned the terror attacks, but Crown Prince Abdullah has urged Washington not to rush to conclusions about who staged them and avoid blaming Arabs and

FROM RANDALL MIKKELSEN

Washington, Sept. 17 (Reuters): Having swiftly rallied Americans to the flag in anticipation of war, US President George W. Bush must now meet public expectations for decisive action.

But a shadowy enemy and a prolonged campaign to root out those responsible for the nearly 5,000 people missing or dead from last week's hijack plane attacks in New York and Washington may frustrate America's desire for swift, obvious military action, analysts said.

"There is no instant gratification in this business," said Ronald Tammen, a former professor at the US military's National War College who is now director of the Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University in Oregon. American response to the tragedy has swelled support for Bush, giving him the highest public rating he has enjoyed since his short presidency began in January.

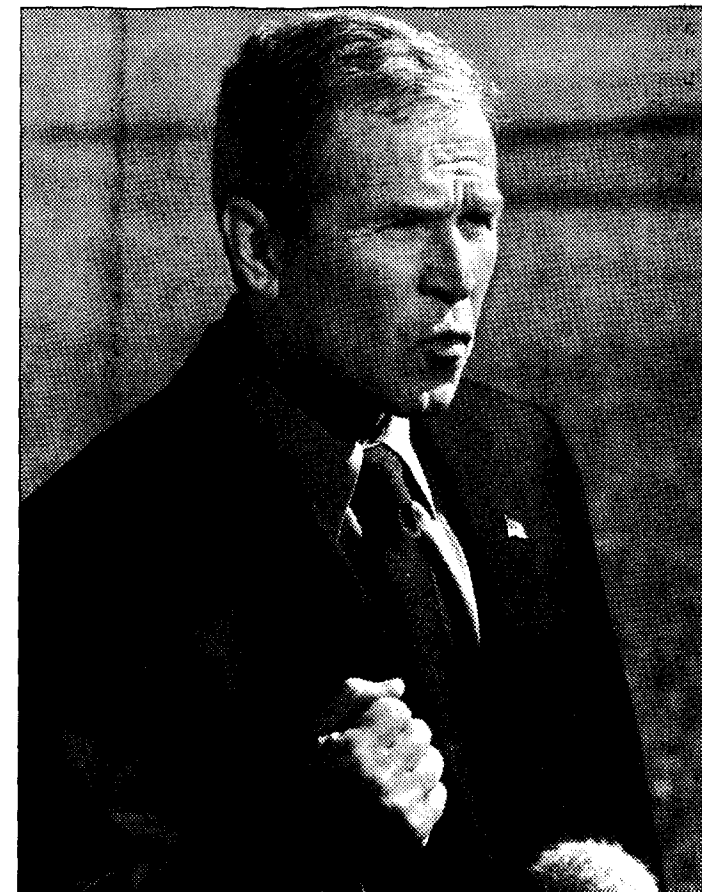
Bush raised the rhetorical level and political stakes today, saying the United States wanted prime suspect Osama bin Laden "dead or alive," giving the conflict a distinctly personal tone despite White House assertions the battle was against a far-flung network.

The potential danger for the President is that his tough rhetoric could outpace the reality of a conflict, which does not provide easily located geographic targets, making prospects for a swift and demonstrable response difficult to meet. "If the President's going to go in, and pick up a few terrorists here and there, nobody's going to be happy," said Catholic University political scientist Mark Rozell.

Polls show widespread support for the President in the wake of Tuesday's attacks in which hijackers crashed two planes into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York and smashed a third into the Pentagon in Washington. A fourth hijacked plane crashed in Pennsylvania.

The latest toll of missing people in New York is 4,957, with 190 more confirmed dead. Another 188 died at the Pentagon and 45 in the crash of a hijacked plane in Pennsylvania. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said a longstanding presidential order against assassinations did not apply in cases of self-defence.

Stakes go up in Bush vs Osama



George W. Bush makes a statement after returning to the White House from Camp David. (Reuters)

A Reuters/Zogby poll released today showed 71 per cent of American voters are ready to see the United States go to war against countries which "harbour or aid terrorists," even if it means suffering substantial US casualties.

But less than half—48 per cent—thought the campaign would succeed in its goal of rooting out terrorism, while 42 per cent said it would not. Bush had sky-high approval ratings, with 87 per cent rating his performance so far in the crisis either excellent (57 per cent) or good (30 per cent).

"It's a gift we give our Presidents in a time of crisis—a full mandate," presidential historian Douglas Brinkley said. Bush also won quick and united support for action from Congress, in contrast with a lengthy debate over the legitimacy of US intervention ahead of the 1991 Gulf War.

Analysts said the President stumbled on the first day of the crisis, with the White House inadequately explaining his delay in returning to Washington from

Florida and his initial statements failing to inspire confidence.

But he soon found his stride, with a teary, determined statement in the Oval Office on Thursday, a fiery speech to rescue workers in New York the following day and an address at a national prayer service that mixed a call for healing with a call to arms.

"He had a rocky first day and a quick recovery and now has done everything that is required of a President in terms of a crisis," Tammen said. Bush has spoken in public every day since the crisis, and over the weekend he began to emphasise it will take time to defeat terrorism and asking the American people to be patient.

That is a sign, analysts say, that he recognises the dangerous expectations that have been aroused. "They've been trying to tamp down expectations... It (the government) certainly is coming to a sophisticated awareness about the limitations to US options in the near term," Tammen said.

BBC apology for live telecast of hostile debate

London, Sept. 16 (Reuters): The head of the British Broadcasting Corporation, Greg Dyke, apologised on Saturday for broadcasting a live discussion programme in which audience members blamed US foreign policy for Tuesday's terror attacks.

More than 2,000 viewers complained after seeing former US ambassador to Britain Philip Lader brought close to tears after attempts to express his sadness over the attacks were shouted down by people expressing anti-American views.

"On balance, I think it was an inappropriate programme to broadcast live just two days after the attacks in the United States and I would like to apologise to viewers who were offended by it," Dyke said in a statement.

The scenes on the *Question Time* programme on Thursday night prompted Dyke, the BBC's director-general, to add: "With hindsight, this programme should have been recorded and edited before it was broadcast."

"I have today spoken to Philip Lader and apologised for any distress the programme may have caused him," Dyke said.

One audience member had asked whether the attacks were the result of a failure of US foreign policy "with millions of people around the world despising the American nation," according to the *Independent* newspaper.

Lader, who was slow hand clapped by some members of the audience, was tearful. "I find it hurtful that you are suggesting that a majority of the world despises the United States," he said according to news sources.

The *Sun* newspaper said that one Arab woman replied: "It is the American government which is talking about war."

The programme's presenter, David Dimbleby, struggled to control the discussion and tempers became raised, according to the BBC.

The corporation said that many of those who complained about the programme said the audience seemed to contain a disproportionate number of people with anti-American views.

The BBC said that the programme tried to pick audiences with a broad range of views and had hoped to stage a frank discussion about the attacks.

THE TELEGRAPH

DELEGATION LEAVING FOR AFGHANISTAN

Pak. wants Taliban to hand over Osama

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 16. An official delegation of the Pakistan military Government is leaving for Kandahar tomorrow for a meeting with the Taliban chief, Mullah Mohammad Omar, to persuade him to hand over the fugitive Saudi billionaire, Osama bin Laden, to avoid possible retaliation from the United States.

The decision to send an official delegation to prevail upon Mullah Omar was taken by the Government after the President, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, held a series of meetings. He consulted Editors, representatives of political parties and the 'ulema' (religious leadership) amidst reports of unease within society over the prospect of the Government providing the facilities demanded by the U.S. to launch strikes against the Taliban Government.

The efforts of the military Government came even as Mullah Omar reportedly issued a new 'fatwa' for jihad against the U.S. for wanting to unjustly target the Muslim world. Reports from Afghanistan said that the Taliban chief had called an emergency meeting of senior clerics to discuss the situation.

Extradition to Europe?

Indications are that the delegation would try to persuade Mullah Omar to extradite Osama to an European country in the larger interests of the people of Afghan-



A paramilitary trooper keeping vigil with his machine gun at Torkham on the Pakistan-Afghan border on Sunday. — AFP

istan and Pakistan and to avoid bloodshed in the region in the event of retaliation by the U.S. It is difficult to guess as to how successful the delegation would be given the adamant posture of the Taliban chief and the threatening noises by the regime.

The Taliban had conducted negotiations with the U.S. — prior to the latest attacks — on Osama's extradition. It had suggested three specific proposals, involving the trial of Osama by a 'shariat court', but they were not acceptable to the U.S.

The nature of the challenge faced by Gen. Musharraf was evident from his speech to the religious leaders he had invited for consultations. He was at pains to

emphasise that every decision of his Government was directed towards the objective of "unity, integrity and welfare of the nation".

He told the 'ulema' that he was undertaking the process of consultation to seek the opinion of various sections of society, including the leaders of various schools of thought.

More reports
on Page 13, 14

It was his firm faith that "every thing would be alright, if Pakistan is intact. Hence, it is imperative that all should join hands to consolidate the integrity and sovereignty of Pakistan."

Earlier, in his address to Editors and columnists, Gen. Musharraf assured that he would keep the "supreme" national interest uppermost in his mind while taking decisions in the emerging confrontation.

"We are alive to the gravity of the situation and know that in the lives of nations such situations do arise and require taking important decisions."

Reports indicated that in the coming days, Gen. Musharraf could travel to China and Saudi Arabia to appraise the governments there about the situation arising out of the strikes on the U.S. cities and the decision of his regime to help bring to book those responsible.

'Keep India out'

Meanwhile, CNN reported that the Musharraf Government was doing some tough bargaining with the Bush administration in return for its unqualified support for operations against the Taliban. Some conditions, reportedly put forth by Pakistan, include U.S. role in resolution of the Kashmir dispute, a financial package to bail out the country from its present economic crisis and a guarantee to keep India and Israel out of any possible operation against the Taliban.

Osama again denies role in attacks

By B. Muralidhar Reddy

ISLAMABAD, SEPT. 16. The Saudi dissident, Osama bin Laden, wanted by the United States in connection with the terrorist attacks, has once again "categorically denied" his involvement even as the Taliban chief, Mullah Omar, ruled out handing him over.

"I categorically say that I did not do it," Osama said in a statement faxed to a Peshawar-based news agency, Afghan Islamic Press (AIP). It is for the second time in the last five days that he has denied involvement in the terrorist strikes.

The agency claimed that the hand-written statement in Arabic was faxed to it in the morning by one Mr. Abdul Samad, who claimed to be an aide in Osama's political office.

In his statement, Osama, who is in Afghanistan as the "official guest" of the Taliban regime, said, "I live in Afghanistan and have vowed (obedience) to the Amir-ul-Momineen, (official title of Mullah Omar, the spiritual leader of the Taliban regime) who does not allow such activities."

It is a mystery as to how Osama could have faxed the message given the Taliban claim that he had been stripped of his fax, mobile phone and other communication gadgets after he was blamed for the bombings of U.S. missions in 1998.

Two days after the attacks in New York and Washington, a section of the Pakistani media carried a statement of the Saudi billionaire. One Urdu newspaper, *Ausaf*, claimed it received the statement through one of Osama's aides who travelled by road from Kandahar.

A Pakistan news agency, PPP, reported that FBI officials were investigating about who delivered the letter to newspapers. The report triggered a row here and questions are being asked as to how a foreign agency could question the sources of journalists in another country.

THE HINDU

Red Cross staff flee Kabul

REUTERS

5-6 17/9

ANTI-TALIBAN FORCES VOW TO FIGHT USA

us (w)

KABUL, Sept. 16.— The last Western aid workers left Kabul today, a day after the ruling Taliban told them they could not guarantee their security amid expectations of attacks by the USA.

Five expatriates with the International Committee of the Red Cross, along with an unspecified number of other workers with Western agencies, left Kabul by plane for neighbouring Pakistan.

Ten other ICRC staff and foreigners working for other agencies elsewhere in the county were expected to leave by road later in the day.

Other Western aid agencies, including the United Nations, have already withdrawn.

Mr Robert Monin, the head of ICRC delegation in Afghanistan, told reporters that local staff would continue to work in their absence. He said he hoped the evacuation was temporary.

"We have not received any formal or informal letter from the Taliban about (leaving), but will have to go," said an ICRC official a day after hearing the Taliban's announcement.

Frightened Afghans also continued to flee, ignoring the Taliban's calls to stay and wage a jihad against the USA and its allies if Washington attacks.

"People are so tense. Any moment of calm is seen as the calm before the big storm," one Kabul shopkeeper said today.

Thousands of Afghans have poured across the border into Pakistan in the past few days, swelling refugee camps already near bursting point with around two million residents.

But the hardline Islamic Tali-

ban remain unbowed, calling for Muslims to fight to the death against American aggression and threatening to attack neighbouring countries helping Washington — remarks clearly aimed at Pakistan, formerly the movement's main backer.

The departure of foreign aid workers has been felt in particular by the residents of Kabul, a city devastated by years of war and where even the most basic of services have broken down.

Their plight struck a chord even with a normally fiercely anti-Taliban group, which today urged the USA to show restraint.

"We sincerely hope that the great American people could differentiate between the people of Afghanistan and a handful of fundamentalist terrorists," said a statement from the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan.

US President Mr George W. Bush on Saturday declared the USA was "at war" with global terror and named Bin Laden, sheltered by the Taliban, as the prime suspect.

Although previous attempts to kill or capture Bin Laden have failed, Mr Bush said this time the perpetrators of the attack would be "smoked out" wherever they hide. Those who protect them also face retribution, he said.

The Taliban insist neither they nor Bin Laden had the capacity to organise an international plot that saw trained pilots hijack large passenger jets and crash them into the World Trade Center towers in New

York and the Pentagon in Washington, leaving up to 5,000 people dead.

For many ordinary Afghans — poor, uneducated and unfamiliar with the ways of the West — such a sophisticated conspiracy is simply unbelievable, and they feel the victims yet again.

It is this feeling of victimisation, nurtured over two centuries of attempted occupation by foreign powers, that is bringing some Afghans together.

While many people tried to flee the country, others in refugee camps in Pakistan — many no friends of the Taliban — vowed to return and fight should the USA attack.

"We will go back and fight as we did with the Russians," said Mohammed Ibrahim, referring to the ill-fated Soviet invasion of the 1980s. "We may have been fighting among ourselves, but when Afghanistan is under attack we will come together... we will unite." The extent of US retaliation against the Taliban probably rests most with Pakistan.

Pakistan is one of only three countries to recognise the Taliban government, but has already withdrawn all but a skeleton staff from Kabul.

There has yet to be any clear word from Islamabad on just how much assistance it will give, although US secretary of state Mr Colin Powell said Pakistan had offered to help "in whatever might be required."

President General Pervez Musharraf, facing what commentators say is Pakistan's toughest decision since inde-



An Afghan woman with her child at the Jalozai refugee camp in Pakistan on Sunday. — AP/PTI

pendence from Britain in 1947, possible backlash from a power looked likely to support US ful Islamic fundamentalist lobby military action while facing a by at home.

Cheney, Rumsfeld warn Afghanistan

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 16. The U.S. Vice-President, Mr. Dick Cheney, today warned fugitive terrorist Osama bin Laden and nations supporting him that they faced the "full wrath" of the United States.

In a first major television appearance on NBC's Meet the Press programme, Mr. Cheney also singled out Afghanistan for special mention in the war against terrorists and terrorism.

Maintaining that he had "no doubt" that Osama bin Laden was behind Tuesday's terror and that Afghanistan fits the description of a nation providing base, training facilities and sanctuary to terrorists. "They have to under-

tan was in fact a close friend and ally of the United States in the past, a relationship that had become "somewhat strained" as a result of Congressionally mandated sanctions.

"But we are clearly in a situation here where that relationship is important. It is important to us, it is important to the Pakistanis. Pakistan borders Afghanistan, they are only one of three countries that have diplomatic relations with the Taliban in Afghanistan. They (Pakistan) can be very helpful in this case. We expect they will be," Mr. Cheney remarked.

"It is a clear cut choice and I am delighted to see that Pakistan has, in fact, stepped up to the task," the Vice-President remarked.

Meanwhile, the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald Rumsfeld, said on another network that the U.S. would go after nations that harboured terrorists and their organisations. Mr. Rumsfeld, however, did not spell out the names of countries that Washington believes are harbouring terrorists.

AP, AFP report:

The Attorney-General, Mr. John Ashcroft, said the administration would ask Congress this week for increased authority to use wire-taps to seek out and prosecute suspected terrorists. He was interviewed on "Fox News Sunday."

"It will be a comprehensive look at our laws in the context of terrorism — not only looking at prosecuting people for terrorist acts, but

how we can prevent terrorism in this country," said Justice Department spokeswoman, Ms. Mindy Tucker.

Passport found

A passport belonging to one of the hijackers who took part in this week's terrorist attacks has been recovered several blocks from the World Trade Center building where the plane crashed, New York police has said.

Law enforcement officials advanced in their attempt to track down associates of the terrorists. With one man already in custody, authorities issued another warrant and arrested a second man in New York as a possible material witness, Ms. Tucker said on Sunday. Twenty-five people were detained for possible immigration violations.

Meanwhile, in Macau, the police detained five Pakistanis on suspicion of links to the attacks, the Lusa News Agency reported.

The report quoted a spokesman for the Macau Government as confirming the detention and nationalities of the five men, saying the operation had been mounted following a request from the U.S. consulate in Hong Kong.

Bomb threat to Boston harbour

The U.S. Coast Guard closed the Boston Harbour this morning following two bomb threats, a spokesman said. The closure prevented the luxury liner queen *Elizabeth II* from docking.

Indian shot dead

NEW YORK, SEPT. 16. A 52-year-old Indian of Sikh denomination and a Pakistani were shot dead in Arizona and Texas in continuing attacks on ethnic immigrants, following last week's terrorist strikes in the U.S. Four gunmen drove up in two pick-up trucks to the gas filling station owned by Balbir Singh Sodhi at Mesa in Arizona and shot him dead last night, possibly mistaking him for an Arab.

In a separate attack, a Pakistani immigrant, Waqer Hasan, 46, was shot dead in his grocery store in Dallas, Texas. The Ministry of External Affairs has expressed concern over the killing of Sodhi and the authorities have sought the help of the U.S. to prevent further attacks on Sikhs. — PTI

Badal's plea to PM — Page 14

stand... that if you provided sanctuary to terrorists, you face the full wrath of the United States," Mr. Cheney said.

Delighted over Pak. response

The United States has also expressed "delight" that Pakistan has "stepped up to the task" and the Bush administration has held out the possibility of enhanced economic assistance to Islamabad as reward for signing on to the American operational agenda vis-a-vis the pursuit of Osama bin Laden and Afghanistan.

In what are significant remarks on the role of Pakistan, the Vice-President argued that Pakis-

Bush calls up Vajpayee

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, SEPT. 16. The U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, tonight spoke to the Prime Minister, Mr. A.B. Vajpayee, over telephone and discussed with him the situation arising out of the terrorist strikes of September 11 in New York and Washington.

In the conversation which lasted for about 10 minutes, Mr. Vajpayee said he was sending the National Security Adviser, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, who is in Moscow, directly to Washington for detailed discussions. According to the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Mr. Bush welcomed the

suggestion and said that Mr. Mishra will be received by the U.S. National Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleezza Rice.

Both leaders agreed that India and the U.S. should help each other by exchanging information about terrorist organisations spread across the globe.

Mr. Vajpayee said that India shared the "pain and anger" of the people of the U.S. and assured Mr. Bush that New Delhi will extend the fullest cooperation for bringing the terrorists to justice. The Prime Minister also drew the attention of Mr. Bush to the recent attacks on Sikhs in the U.S.

THE HINDU

17 SEP 2001

Officials will visit Kabul to demand Osama's handover

Pak ultimatum warns Taliban of attack

5/1
17/9

ASSOCIATED PRESS & REUTERS

ISLAMABAD, Sept. 16. — A team of Pakistani officials will visit Afghanistan tomorrow to demand that the Taliban hand over Osama Bin Laden to the USA, an official said.

The decision was taken yesterday amid countrywide demonstrations by hardline Muslims, who oppose Pakistan's move to give "full support" to the USA should it retaliate against the Taliban for harbouring the prime suspect behind Tuesday's terror attacks.

Meanwhile, with stocks plunging because of possible US attack in Afghanistan, Pakistan today decided to shut down its stock exchanges for three days. In the key exchange in Karachi, the 100-share index dived more than 9 per cent in three days after the terror strikes.

The Pakistan team will visit the Taliban headquarters in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar and will issue an ultimatum to the militia: either handover Bin Laden or risk a massive retaliatory attack by the USA, the official said.

There was no indication that the Taliban will be given a deadline to decide. Quoting CNN, PTI however said Pakistan today gave a three-day deadline to the militia to hand over the Saudi dissident.

Army rulers of Pakistan have also urged some clerics to use their influence with Taliban leaders to get them to hand over Bin Laden. But the clerics have refused.

"We told the government that we're very sorry but we can't do that and we don't have that kind of influence over the Taliban," said Amir-ul Azeem, spokesman of the Jamaat-e-Islami (Party of Islam).

Bin Laden, already indicted in the USA for the bombings of

two US embassies in Africa in 1998, has been living in Afghanistan since 1996. The Taliban has refused to hand him over despite two rounds of UN sanctions that have cut off funds to the national airline and isolated the militia.

The Taliban holds Bin Laden as a guest. Its supremo, Mullah

Newspapers in Pakistan have received an electronic mail from a man purporting to be bin Laden. The mail railed against the USA, issued an order to kill Americans and "their allies, civilian and military," calling it a duty of every Muslim.

The word of the Pakistani

how much help it will give, but the US secretary of state, Mr Colin Powell, said it had offered to help "in whatever way might be required".

Mr Powell today praised Islamabad for backing Washington's fight against terrorism and said the USA would bear in mind the internal problems



IN SEARCH OF SAFETY: Afghans wait to cross over to Pakistan at Torkham on Sunday. Fearing that the USA might launch an attack, thousands are fleeing Afghanistan. — AP/PTI

Mohammed Omar, had said that delivering bin Laden to non-Muslims would be akin to betraying a tenet of Islam.

Yesterday, the Taliban had called an "urgent" meeting of Afghan clerics. All of them voiced their support for the militia and condemned the USA.

delegation's trip came a day after Pakistani military and diplomatic officials said Islamabad had agreed to a list

■ Editorials: Terror threshold; Marxist mistake, page 8

of US demands for a possible attack on Afghanistan.

Islamabad is yet to say just

this could cause in Pakistan.

"In our conversations with the Pakistani government in the days and weeks ahead, we'll be mindful that they have internal problems that they are dealing with," Mr Powell said in Washington on CBS' Face the Nation

■ See TALIBAN: page 6

Cheney vows to track down Osama

THEATRE
PADATIK's latest comedy "Chhoo Manter" (Hindi). Direction: PRADIP ROY, today at ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS, 3 p.m. Tickets at hall.

TENDERS
Sealed quotations are hereby invited from resourceful and experienced vendors / agencies for supply and erection of self-protective...

QUOTATION

The tender of the contractors who do not deposit the earnest money in the manner prescribed above, will be summarily rejected.

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in favour of the at-Call. In the shape of "Deposit- scheduled Bank of India guaranteed in the State Bank of India or any other bank approved by the Reserve Bank of India. Earnest Money should be deposited in the State Bank of India or any other bank approved by the Reserve Bank of India. Earnest Money should be deposited in the State Bank of India or any other bank approved by the Reserve Bank of India.

Complex TRUST (B013717) of KOPT, HDC will be scheduled for the next working day. Tender Document will not mean that a particular bidder will be automatically considered qualified and their bids will be reviewed at the time of evaluation of bids also. The Trustees reserve the right to reject or to accept the tender in whole or in part without assigning any reason whatsoever therefor. In case there is any untimely submission, the next working day of KOPT, HDC will be scheduled for the same.

Why was America singled out for so devastating an attack?

Target of terror

BY AMULYA GANGULI

HT-8
1979
USW

THE SIGHT of Palestinians celebrating the terrorist attack on the US left a distasteful impression on a world shocked and horrified by the events of Black Tuesday. But notwithstanding the current outpouring of sorrow and sympathy for them, the Americans must wonder why their country has never really had as many friends as it can expect as an upholder of freedom. As an Arab journalist told BBC, they must examine their policies, particularly towards West Asia, in this context.

Throughout the Cold War, it was the Soviet Union which had more countries on its side such as those in the non-aligned-camp, than the US. Yet, there was nothing very endearing either about the Soviet ideology or the country's leaders. Stalin was a monster. His successors were either buffoons like Khrushchev or stodgy apparatchiks like Brezhnev or grim Grom(yoko). Any admiration felt for that country was limited to the great writers of the Czarist period.

The US, on the other hand, was a vibrant democracy. It should have been a natural ally of a country like, say, India. But it wasn't. Why? Why does the US arouse so much animus that highly trained pilots, who must be well educated and not products of medieval Afghan or Pakistani *madrassas*, would participate in suicide missions? Why did no one ever undertake such a mission to shake up Stalin's Russia or Mao's China during their most repressive days when millions perished in famines?

Perhaps the explanation lies in the fact that no other country plays the boss so aggressively as America. In its time, Great Britain was also a superpower which ruled over half the globe. But except for the anarchists, the nationalist Indian leaders, as also those of other colonial countries, had a feeling of respect for the British despite their racial arrogance. The US, however, as the successor of the British as a superpower, has fostered the image of the Ugly American.

But there is a curious paradox. Everyone wants to go to America or would like their country to become like America. But it is the Americans whom they don't like although, unlike the British, the Americans are far less abrasive in racial terms.

There is another curiosity. Occasionally, the US likes to retreat into a shell to pursue an isolationist policy. This trend



BITTERNESS OF HISTORY: Palestinians in East Jerusalem celebrating the terrorist attacks on the US

has reappeared under George W. Bush who has taken a unilateralist stance on sensitive issues such as star wars, global warming, germ warfare, etc.

However, when the US breaks out of its isolation, as during the two World Wars and in Korea and Vietnam, it tries to mould the world according to its own preferences. This is when it finds itself in a minority and arouses resentment against its behaviour by suggesting that it is the majority who are wrong. Indeed, a former US ambassador to the UN, John A. Scali, had used the phrase 'tyranny of the majority' to describe the behaviour of those who opposed the US in the world organisation.

This attitude was evident after Taiwan's expulsion from the UN and communist China's admission in its place in what the then US ambassador to the world body, George Bush (the present president's father), described as a "moment of infamy". At the same time, Bush had noted that although Taiwan's expulsion was "a serious mistake... no one can escape the fact that, unpleasant though it may be, the votes which have just been cast do, in fact, represent the views of the majority of the UN members".

That a democratic country should be so uneasy about the very basis of democratic functioning explains the reasons for

America's unpopularity. In trying to reshape the world according to its own lights, the US didn't care to spread democracy. Instead, it propped up some of the most corrupt dictatorial regimes the world has ever seen simply because their leaders were, in the words of an American, "our sons of bitches".

Therein lies the crux of America's problems. The US today has disowned many of its unworthy 'sons', but the anger it aroused among the ordinary people, who bore the brunt of the repression under these American-backed tyrants, still smoulders. How different the West Asian scene would have been if Iran's elected prime minister Mohammed Mossadeq had not been toppled by the CIA in order to install the megalomaniac Reza Pahlavi, who paved the way for the rule of the mad *mullahs* in that country.

How different would have been the African scene if the Americans had not favoured the cruel and despotic Mobutu instead of the 'communist' Patrice Lumumba, about whom the US Senate intelligence committee said in 1975 that there were grounds for "a reasonable inference" that President Eisenhower had authorised Lumumba's assassination.

How different the South Asian scene would have been if the Americans had

not set up their military puppets in Pakistan who bolstered Islamic fundamentalism in that region. If, in fighting the 'evil empire' of the former Soviet Union, the Americans had exported their own democratic creed instead of believing that authoritarianism is better than totalitarianism, then they would not have brought about today's fearful clash of civilisations.

There is little doubt that the Islamic zealots today represent the most serious menace to modern civilisation since Hitler. Moreover, unlike the Nazi dictator, they are driven by religious frenzy, which makes them even more dangerous. They are even willing to kill themselves in order to rain death and devastation on the enemy. Apart from the Japanese kamikaze pilots and the LTTE and Palestinian suicide squads, there haven't been too many organised groups whose members are willing to make the supreme sacrifice for the sake of their cause.

Yet, this menace might not have arisen if the US had followed its own precepts, at least in countries like Pakistan, Iran, Iraq and Egypt where it had considerable influence. They could have been asked, openly and repeatedly, to emulate the Kemal Ataturk model of secular governance, which has kept the fundamentalists at bay in Turkey. Instead, as in the case of South Africa's apartheid or Israel's Zionist excesses, the US allowed the Muslim countries to follow their own self-destructive course as long as they remained submissive to America in the diplomatic field.

So myopic was this attitude that the US even encouraged the fundamentalists to gain ground in Afghanistan in order to pit them against the Soviet Union. Now not only is America having to pay a heavy price for such foolish policies, but India too, sits on the edge of a black hole of Islamic fundamentalism. Given their insane pursuit of the *jehadi* enterprise the bigots trained in Pakistan and Afghanistan can cause havoc anywhere in the subcontinent.

What may have saved India is that does not arouse the kind of antipathy among ordinary Asians as the US does. The reason may be cultural. Or, when the fundamentalists are concerned, the result of the presence of a large number of Muslims in India. It is, after all, the largest Muslim country in the world after Indonesia. But the menace is there, even if its current focus is on the US.

US lesson: Money can't buy safety from terrorism

Washington, September 15

WHEN VISITORS were taken into the National Security Agency (NSA) in Fort Meade, Maryland, their hosts, it is reported, used to play them an audio tape of Osama bin Laden talking to his mother. His satellite phone call had been intercepted by the largest and most powerful spy agency on earth.

The smug message to outsiders was clear: If we can listen to America's most wanted man making small talk with his family then believe us, he can't use the bathroom without Washington knowing.

But the NSA has probably stopped showing off like that. For this story demonstrates the US problem—they and their western allies possess a unique array of surveillance technology, which became ultimately pointless. And the west's great intelligence failure will outclass Pearl Harbor in the history books.

US Intelligence has a budget approaching \$30bn, roughly the size of the GDP of Kuwait. It employs over 100,000 people, and owns vast arrays of hardware.

The FBI is one of the largest law enforcement agencies ever, with annual funding of about \$3bn, it has 11,400 special agents

and more than 16,400 other employees in 55 American cities and abroad. The FBI spends one-sixth of this budget on intelligence gathering alone.

The existence of the national reconnaissance office (NRO) was declassified only in 1992. With its \$ 6.2 bn annual budget, its mission is to run spy satellites—space-borne assets needed to enable US global information superiority.

The 21,000-strong NSA has the world's largest collection of linguists and mathematicians, are based at Fort Meade, with the rest scattered overseas.

Nine other agencies, ranging

from army intelligence (budget \$1bn) through to the departments of treasury, energy, transportation (more than \$1bn) and the national imagery and mapping agency (\$1.2bn) are also involved in intelligence gathering. Add into the equation intelligence work by non-intelligence agencies and the budget exceeds \$27bn. Their efforts are governed by the vast array of technology at their disposal.

Listening stations: The main allied station in West Asia is now the British station, Ayios Niko- laos, in eastern Cyprus. Satellite interception antennae are directed at Arab, Turkish and interna-

tional communications satellites.

Space surveillance: These satellites can obtain pictures of training camps, using infra-red or heat photography to determine if camps are occupied.

Listening satellites: Another network of between eight and 12 satellites intercept signals from the earth's surface. Menwith Hill, in Yorkshire, is the largest electronic surveillance field station in the world. It directs and controls a constellation of listening satellites now directed mainly at West Asia.

Spy planes: Under the code-name "paper mate", the Royal Australian Air Force sends spy

planes over Pakistan to detect nuclear preparations.

Echelon: This controversial global monitoring system targets international civil communications channels passing through satellites.

Internet: Dictionary type systems also monitor the Internet. NSA's taps into Internet cable are among the spy agency's most sensitive secrets, because they scoop up huge quantities of messages sent by US citizens.

The NSA has had to construct databanks capable of holding petabytes of data. Such databanks are up to one million times bigger than an average PC.

Submarines: The US Navy's special tapping submarine, USS Parche, won special commendations for its work throughout the 1990s.

Embassies: Most American and many allied embassies and consulates are equipped with "special collection" equipment. For many years, the US embassy in Moscow tracked conversations Soviet leaders had from their limousines. Yet this array of technical hardware goes hand in hand with a lack of human intelligence almost a pre-requisite for the uncovering of terrorists' intentions.

The Guardian

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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U.S. may turn to India if Pak. denies airbases

169 By Atul Aneja USA
NEW DELHI, SEPT. 15. The U.S. may ask India for airbases along the west coast, in case Pakistan refuses its airbases for launching punitive raids on Afghanistan.

According to highly-placed sources in the Government, the U.S. may prefer the use of Pakistani airfields, especially Peshawar and Quetta, with Kohat as a possible third option. But in case Pakistan denies its base facilities, the U.S. is expected to look towards India as the next best option. India is likely to comply in case the U.S. makes the request.

The U.S. forces may prefer the use of Indian airbases in Pune, Mumbai and Goa, if necessary as its planes can then overfly Karachi before moving towards the Afghan border. These bases will be useful for landing some of the planes which may take off from U.S. aircraft carriers which are expected to be positioned in this area soon.

Access to land bases will help the U.S. forces launch more air sorties for attack and relieve some pressure on the crew of the carriers. As of now, the U.S. aircraft carriers, Enterprise and Kitty Hawk, are present in the Persian Gulf and

the Indian Ocean. Unlike in the past, the U.S. may prefer aircraft for strikes as its missile attacks on training camps in Khost in Afghanistan on an earlier occasion were not successful enough. The anticipation here is that Russia may also launch missile attacks in northern Afghanistan but not commit troops because of its traumatic experience in that country in the eighties. A scaled-down Israeli military involvement in specific pockets in West Asia also cannot be ruled out.

U.S. retaliation against the terrorist strikes in New York and Washington is likely to be carried out in two phases. The U.S., in the first phase, will launch "destructive strikes", mostly in Afghanistan. Cities south of the Salang pass are likely to take the brunt of these extremely heavy attacks which will be well-publicised on American television.

In the second phase, which is likely to be a long haul, the U.S. is expected to target specific training camps and sanctuaries and other support for terrorists across the globe. As of now, terrorist camps in Pakistan occupied Kashmir are not in focus, but their presence is likely to be closely scrutinised during the second phase of the campaign.

THE HINDU

10 SEP 2001

Fissures develop in pro-U.S. alliance

By Hasan Suroor

LONDON, SEPT. 15. After the initial show of solidarity, several of the U.S. allies are reported to be less enthusiastic about going the whole hog with the Bush administration's military action to hunt down the perpetrators of Tuesday's catastrophe in New York and Washington.

In Britain, the Prime Minister, Mr Tony Blair, continued to be under pressure not to sign a "blank cheque" and in his speech in Parliament on Friday he was careful to stress that he believed a decision on the nature retaliation would be based on hard evidence and taken in a "calm, considered and careful way".

Yet, Mr. Blair remained by far the most vocal supporter of any U.S. retaliatory action while elsewhere in Europe caution was emerging as the buzz word amid growing fears that anything that might smack of an attack on the Muslim world could have serious foreign policy implications vis-a-vis the West Asia. Mr. Chris Patten, E.U. commissioner, echoed these fears saying that while the U.S. could count on Europe's 'strong' support there was need to look beyond Europe. "Samuel Huntington's thesis about the clash of civilisations (Christianity vs Islam) must not be allowed to become self-fulfilling. We should not try to mobilise the resources of the northern and western worlds against all others," he wrote in *The Guardian* today.

In France, where there are nearly six million

Muslims, differences have been reported between the Socialist Prime Minister, Mr. Lionel Jospin, and the President, Mr. Jacques Chirac, with the latter taking a more overtly pro-U.S. line. Mr. Jospin, on the other hand, has indicated opposition to automatic support to any U.S. military action. "Our humane, political and functional solidarity (with the U.S.) does not deprive us of our sovereignty and freedom to make up our minds," he said.

While calling for strong action against terrorists, he cautioned against a "conflict between the Western world and the Islamic world where we have many friends and partners".

Observers said that with Presidential election due next year, French politicians would not like to be seen doing anything that might alienate the domestic Muslim population. France, they pointed out, was likely to be particularly averse to endorsing a military strike against Iraq because of its growing business ties with Baghdad.

In Germany, the Defence Minister, Mr. Rudolf Scharping, raised the question of what should be regarded as an 'appropriate' response to Tuesday's terrible events. The response, he told German television, should not take the form of "revenge and retribution". The idea should be to fight and break international terror. The Foreign Minister, Mr. Joschka Fischer, however, was more outspoken in his support.

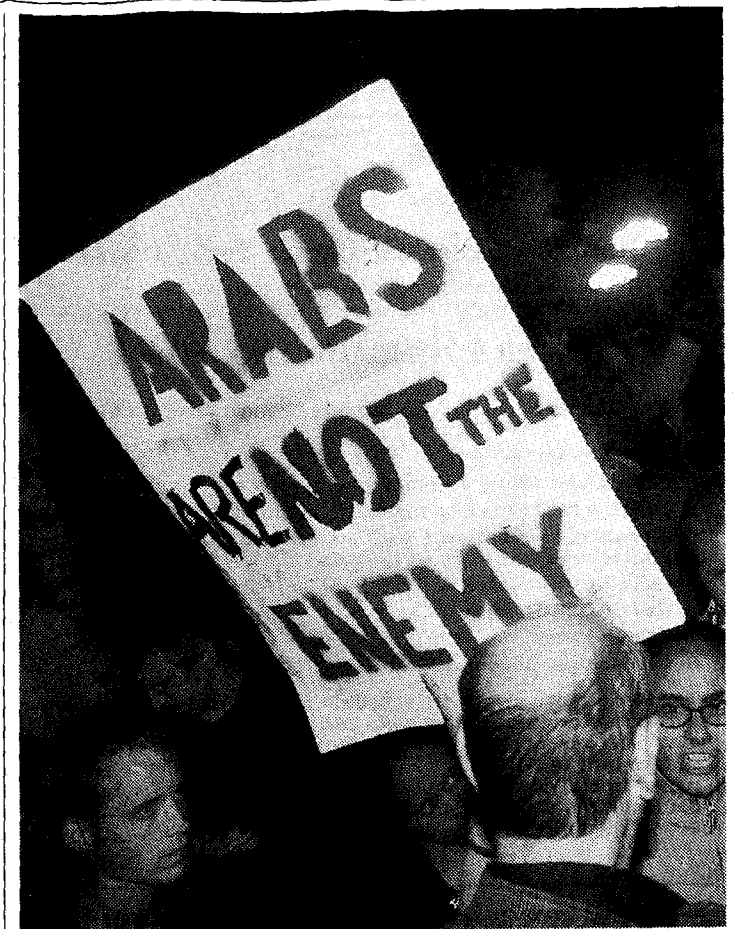
According to commentators, the overall

sense in European capitals was that while they strongly supported the U.S. resolve to hunt down the terrorists behind the attacks in New York and Washington, the issue should not be posed as "West vs the Islamic world".

Significantly, a leading E.U. anti-terrorism expert has raised doubts whether Osama bin Laden is indeed the man behind the American nightmare. Mr. Jurgen Storbeck, director of Europol, told *The Daily Telegraph* that Osama was "not the automatic leader of every terrorist act carried out in the name of Islam". "If one wants to avoid error, one must ensure that the investigation has a wide scope," he said.

The British media, meanwhile, highlighted the strong Russian opposition to allowing bases in Central Asia for an attack on Afghanistan. "I don't see any basis for even the hypothetical possibility of NATO military operations on the territory of Central Asian nations that belong to the Commonwealth of Independent States," said the Russian Defence Minister, Mr. Sergei Ivanov, setting at rest speculation that Russia and its allies would help U.S. mount a military operation against Afghanistan.

According to *The Guardian*, the increasing sense of caution among U.S. allies suggested that "first cracks" had begun to appear in the U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush's "fledgling international coalition against terrorism..." Peace groups in Britain called for resistance against what one activist termed as a "gung-ho" reaction to Tuesday's events.



A woman carries a sign supporting Arabs at New York's Union Square, not far from the site of Tuesday's terrorist attack the World Trade Center, on Saturday. — AP



The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush and the First Lady, Ms. Laura Bush, stand as the American flag passes during a national day of prayer and remembrance service at the National Cathedral in Washington, on Friday. They are joined in the front row by the former President, Mr. George Bush, and Ms. Barbara Bush, and the former President, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the New York Senator, Ms. Hillary Rodham Clinton, with their daughter, Ms. Chelsea. The President addressed the gathering and called for "patience and resolve" in responding to the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. — AP

Choose your side, West Asia told

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 15. The Bush administration on Friday took the unusual step of summoning as many as 15 top envoys from West Asian countries and tell them that when it comes to terrorism, nations are either on the side of America or in the opposition. "The time has come to choose sides" was apparently the essence of the message to the diplomats.

The Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, has said that the anti-terrorism campaign involves not just the West but all civilisations. "This has become a new benchmark, a new way of measuring the relationship and what we can do together", Gen. Powell remarked at a press briefing.

The envoys were given or read out a list of things that were expected of the countries to do. The list apparently included the kind of actions against terrorists expected by Washington including arrest and prosecution. And American embassies around the world are also being sent the "requirements" which are to be discussed with host countries.

The Republican administration is making it known that it is looking for as broad-based a coalition as possible in tackling the global problem of terrorism. The administration has been talking to the Palestinian representative here

and in a significant development, Gen. Powell has been on the telephone line to the Foreign Minister of Syria. Until now, Damascus has been seen as country sponsoring terrorism and it is still classified in the State Department's list.

The Damascus angle is getting prominence here after the Syrian President, Mr. Bashar Assad, had sent separate letters condemning the terrorist attacks and calling for an international effort to prevent its recurrence. The proposals of the Syrian leader are being taken seriously, State Department officials have said.

Gen. Powell is believed to have told his counterpart in Damascus that Washington expected the fullest cooperation in the hunting and tracking down of suspects involved in the terrorist attacks. He is also said to have discussed the kind of role Syria could play in tracking down Osama bin Laden and his associates.

The Bush administration is making it very clear that there is a price to be paid for friendship with the U.S. — to get on board with Washington in the fight against terror. The message is being conveyed in a series of telephone calls senior officials have been making to their counterparts the world over. For instance, the Secretary of State has made telephone calls to a number of

Asian countries including Japan and India.

The anti-terrorism determination of this Republican administration is getting ample support from Capitol Hill where last night the House of Representatives, after a debate of several hours, passed the Resolution authorising the use of force against terrorists. And Congress has been quite liberal, giving the President \$ 40 billions — twice the sum he asked for.

But senior members of Congress are also sounding a note of caution in the manner the administration has been going about. On the one hand, Republicans are arguing that this is a moment of urgency that requires Capitol Hill to act decisively. On the other hand, some law makers are also reminding the administration and the White House that the Joint Resolution allowing military action against terrorists does not amount to a blank cheque to conduct war.

The administration is being reminded by senior law makers that the Joint Resolution is not a full declaration of war; nor is there any intention on the part of Congress to either give up its Constitutional Rights or come up with another version of the 1964 Tonkin Gulf Resolution that President Lyndon Johnson used to escalate the Vietnam war.

WE WILL SMOKE THEM OUT OF THEIR HOLES: BUSH

'Osama cannot hide from U.S.'

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 15. The President George W. Bush vowed on Saturday that U.S. troops would hunt down terrorists and "smoke them out of their holes" in a long, unrelenting response to Tuesday's ghastly attacks. Americans must brace themselves for great sacrifices, he said, "because the conflict will not be easy." He said simply: "We're at war."

The President's spokesman said Mr. Bush had not ruled out using ground troops in his planned war on global terrorism.

For the first time, Mr. Bush identified Osama bin Laden as a suspect in the attacks on Washington and New York, plus the downing of a commercial plane over Pennsylvania.

"If he thinks he can hide and run from the United States and our allies, he will be sorely mistaken," the President said.

"Those who make war against the United States have chosen their own destruction."

"We will find those who did it. We will smoke them out of their holes, we'll get them running, and we'll bring them to justice. We will not only deal with those who dare attack America, we will deal with those who harbour them and feed them and house them," he said.

"They have stirred up the might of the American people," Mr. Bush said as he met with his National Security team at the Marine-guarded Camp David presidential retreat in western Maryland.

Mr. Bush met his top advisers,



The U.S. President, Mr. George Bush, with his advisers at Camp David on Saturday. He is flanked by the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell (right), and the Vice-President, Mr. Dick Cheney.— AP

including the Vice-President, Mr. Dick Cheney, the Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, the National Security Adviser, Ms. Condoleezza Rice, the Defence Secretary, Mr. Donald H. Rumsfeld, and the Attorney General, Mr. John Ashcroft.

Prolonged war

Mr. Bush warned that the war would be prolonged and carry great risks. "I will not settle for a token act. Our response must be sweeping, sustained and effective," the President said in his

weekly radio address. "We have much to do and much to ask of the American people."

Mr. Bush moved from consolidating a heartbroken nation to readying Americans for a new kind of war, calling 50,000 military reservists to duty and shouting words of defiance amid the ruins of the World Trade Center.

Standing on rubble amid cheers "USA! USA!" Mr. Bush vowed that the attackers of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon "will hear all of us soon."

A report from Islamabad, quot-

ing *The News* daily, said that according to unofficial reports, a contingent of over 50 personnel from the special services group of the U.S. Marines "Green Seals" had landed for conducting "target oriented" operations against Osama bin Laden. In the U.S., the first arrest in the investigation came on Friday. The suspect, whose identity was not made public, was arrested because authorities believe he has information about the attacks and poses a high risk of fleeing the country.

Two other men picked up in Fort Worth, Texas, were flown to New York for questioning, officials said.

A report from Berlin said the German authorities today identified a third terrorism suspect who lived in Germany and seized new evidence in the investigation into links to the attacks in the U.S.

Ziad Jarrah, who flew on a plane that crashed in a field 130 km from Pittsburgh, was reported missing by his girlfriend in the western industrial city of Bochum, the federal prosecutor's office said in a statement. — AP, Reuters



Can the attacks on New York and Washington be compared to Pearl Harbour?

Ideologically, yes. While Fascism masterminded Pearl Harbour, misguided fundamentalism is behind this attack



K.P.S. Gill

WHEN the world is confronted with the unprecedented, it grapples with language to express the enormity of what has occurred. Awestruck by the devastation of the suicide-aviation terrorism at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, some people have coined a catchphrase — Pearl Harbour II.

Certainly, there are crucial parallels between that catastrophe in December 1941 and the events of this Black Tuesday. The first of these, as one observer astutely noted, is that it took the devastation of half of the US Pacific Fleet for America to recognise the dangers of Fascism and enter World War II; and it has taken the thousands of deaths in this latest terrorist outrage to bring it to recognise the real threat of global terrorism.

A second crucial parallel exists in terms of the enormous threat that absolutist ideologies pose to the fundamental values of humanity. The Nazi-Fascist ideology was based on three fundamental principles: group superiority, or, in the case of the Germans, the claims of the purity and pre-eminence of the 'Aryan race'. Liebenstraum, or the overriding right to an expanded 'living space' for this 'superior race'; and the reliance on overwhelming violence. Fundamentalist terrorisms of today — and I refer here not only to Islamist terrorism — share each of these elements, though their fundamental premise is religious-millennarian rather than race-political. In both cases, however, these premises are fundamentally flawed, and contain within themselves the seeds of their own destruction. One of my over-riding beliefs, in the context of Khalistani terrorism in Punjab, was that Sikhism and terrorism were essentially incompatible. The same is true of the followers of Islam.

There is, however, a crucial difference between Pearl Harbour and New York/Washington. When Pearl Harbour occurred, the world had already been divided along two irretrievably hostile and massive axes. The Islamist terrorists, however, are a minority — a lethal and committed minority, but a minority nonetheless even among their own co-religionists. Unfortunately, there has been a tacit acceptance for terrorism as a legitimate weapon even among those who do not share the extremist vision. The persistent belief among Muslims, and their insistence on their inability to live in a pluralistic society, have been encouraged by a short-sighted political leadership. When Muslim intelligentsia and leadership realise that terrorism and their

faith cannot share the same promises, Islamist extremism will be a marginal and minor activity.

The crucial difference between Pearl Harbour I and II consequently is that the first occurred after its supporting ideologies had consolidated themselves completely and been translated into mass violence, openly backed by some of the most powerful states of that age and 'Pearl Harbour II' has come at an earlier stage of ideological stratification and can still be fought at an intellectual level by the international community.

The initial response to terrorist attacks may, of course, be retaliation, but the continuing response will have to be a process of indoctrination, of re-education, and of widening cultural exchange. The

No. The analogy would mean stirring the impulses of racial hysteria and the misplaced hostility it spawned



Shastri Ramachandaran

THERE was a T i a n a m e n Chowk in Delhi. Only for a few days. Near a major traffic crossing. This 'renaming' was in memory of a weak-willed victim who had been psyched into self-immolation by hysterical anti-reservation agitators in August 1990.

Meritorious members of 'forward' communities felt their 'uprising' was no less momentous than pro-democracy protestors pouring into Beijing's Tiananmen Square in June 1989 to face the intimidating tanks and military assault of the

authentic account of both sides of a story. The 1970 film marked a cultural cross-over by Hollywood. Disney's *Pearl Harbour* was a romanticised account, made for a different world, that snagged eyeballs with fleeting images, making few demands on either mind or memory.

Unlike Hollywood heroes, real Rambos seem to be behind the times. So till Tom Brakow of NBC said: 'This is the most serious attack on the United States since Pearl Harbour', nobody even suspected this had anything to do with the Ben Affleck movie. After that it came naturally, likening the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon to the bombing of Pearl Harbour.

Even if history is bunk, the analogy between Pearl Harbour and what happened on September 11 is wrong. The two days of infamy are not comparable. In 1941 it was a military attack by a known enemy. In 2001, the enemy was invisible and unidentified.

As *Tora! Tora! Tora!* showed, the Japanese deserve to be condemned for the attack. Yet, the courage of the Kamikaze pilots and the masterly execution of a cunningly-scripted strategy have been well brought out. In the terror that has now struck New York and Washington, the monstrous mission was carried out by "faceless cowards". The film gives the reasons for the Japanese attack, their fears in a changing world and also focuses on battle traditions.

To compare the two would be to dignify the terrorists who masterminded the attack and the robotised fanatics who carried it out, most likely under the influence of drugs. The bombing of Pearl Harbour unleashed hatred against the Japanese and Americans of Japanese origin. That situation of racial stereotyping and its vicious aftermath is fraught with implications that cannot be over-emphasised in today's America.

Pearl Harbour stirred ultra-nationalist cries for revenge, and Japanese Americans were deprived of civil liberties and human rights. Far from that, today, the voices of reason, as reflected in US newspaper editorials, are stoutly opposed to any restriction on civil liberties of all Americans.

The Pearl Harbour analogy would mean stirring the impulses of that racial hysteria and the misplaced hostility it spawned. And in this hour of grief and sorrow, it can hardly be America's intention to incite hatred and violence towards Muslims everywhere, including in the US. In any case this "War" that Bush has declared is more complicated than World War II in to which Pearl Harbour drove the US.

(Shastri Ramachandaran is Senior Assistant Editor, The Times of India)

IN BLACK AND WHITE



TOI Illustration: Neelabh

extreme right has substantially been contained and intellectually defeated in Europe and America: this process will have to be replicated in what is called the 'Muslim World'. But the international coalition against misguided fundamentalism cannot be founded on the kind of perceptions and principles, for instance that the neo-Fascist British National Party seeks to pursue in the UK in seeking to construct a Sikh-Hindu-Christian axis to fight 'Muslim hooliganism' in that county. There are grave dangers in demonising Islam, as there are in a reflexive anti-Muslim fundamentalism that has been witnessed in the retaliatory violence in the US.

(K.P.S Gill was the former director-general of police, Punjab)

Chinese army. There is a similar knowledge explosion among the forward-thinking elite in the wake of the terrorist attack on the United States. Typical of this burst of informed literacy is the comparison between what happened on September 11, 2001 and the bombing of Pearl Harbour on December 7, 1941.

Till that Tuesday of Terror, for a generation unschooled in the history of the 1941 Japanese attack and the consequences that followed, *Pearl Harbour* was literally a prettified picture: Not a horror story, not a military atrocity but simply a backdrop to present on celluloid a trite love triangle. This film was not just 31 years after *Tora! Tora! Tora!*, which gave an

'Osama bin Laden functions like a Terrorist Foundation Inc'

**Interview
of the
Week**

STEPHEN P. COHEN

A SENIOR fellow of the Washington-based Brookings Institution, Stephen P. Cohen at the Brookings Institution is among the keenest students of South Asia for many years. His writings include several books on South Asia, including 'Nuclear Weapons and Conflict in South Asia' in 1998. Most recently, he has published an account of the military, social and economic reasons for India's emergence as a great power. 'India: Rising Power' is a definitive account on why the US must increase engagement with India. Cohen is currently working on a book-length project that will examine the social, economic, political, and strategic factors that will shape Pakistan's future, tentatively titled, 'The Future of Pakistan'.

A former professor at the University of Illinois, Cohen is currently also an adjunct professor at Georgetown University, Washington. He was earlier a member of the Policy Planning Staff of the US Department of State, and has worked at length on issues of South Asian security and proliferation.

As regards the events of September 11, Cohen favours a military solution that will obliterate the perpetrators of this crime, and calls for cooperation between the US and India on the issue of fighting the global forces of terrorism. He recognises the link between the Taliban and Pakistan but at the same time emphasises that he wants the two to be seen as distinct entities in the region. Excerpts...

■ **Do you think the attacks in New York and Washington define a paradigm shift in terms of how the US assesses terrorist threats and its response to them?**

It's too soon to predict that. If terrorism rises in the hierarchy of American concerns, what issues or problems would it displace? Proliferation? Opposition to Iran? Access to energy? Also, you have to distinguish between changes in the domestic priority (where the tradeoff might be some restrictions on freedom of movement, slower travel, etc) and changes in foreign policy priorities would we demand that involved coun-



For years, the Indians did not pay much attention to terrorism, and took the usual "third world" approach of blaming America for these events



tries choose us or the other side?).

■ **Do you think the attacks on the US lend themselves to a military solution or retaliatory action? What does the US see as a way out of this violent cycle?**

Military force is an instrument of policy and politics, although in this case there will be some domestic pleasure from simply going out and killing some bad guys. However, I don't see any kind of cycle: the people who perpetrated this were anti-American for a variety of reasons. Get them, and much of the

problem is reduced.

■ **Would you now subscribe to a Samuel Huntington kind of analysis where the attacks are being seen as a clash of civilizations, the open society versus the fundamentalists?**

No, they don't represent any civilization, they are fringe lunatics, which have been produced by many different cultures and civilizations.

■ **Has the status of the United States been affected by the plane attacks. And**

how do you think the Bush administration has handled the challenge?

So far the Bush administration has done what any US administration will do.

■ **Moving on, India in the past has expressed serious concerns on the issue of terrorism with very little reaction from the US. Do you see that changing now?**

This is not true at all. For years, the Indians did not pay much attention to terrorism, and took the usual "third world" approach of blaming America for these events. This policy has changed now that India has been hit by foreign and domestic terrorism, but also with an insurgency that is both home grown and supported from abroad (they are different things, by the way). Yet India would not accept an FBI coordinator in Delhi until quite recently. Now, fortunately, we see the issue in the same way and there is active cooperation on counter-terrorism.

■ **Could this form a basis for the US combining forces with India to combat terrorism from this region. Do you think India has a unique role because of its democratic status and geographical location to become a countervailing force in the region?**

It has, formed a basis for cooperation already.

■ **How do you assess the terrorist situation in South Asia given the activities of the Taliban in Afghanistan, abetted as it seems by Pakistan's support to their activities.**

To some degree this is like the Russian Matroushka dolls: Osama bin Laden functions like a Terrorist Foundation Inc. He is protected by the Taliban (for their own reasons), the Taliban is supported by Pakistan, Pakistan has been supported by China (which, of course, has its own concerns about the Taliban). Pakistan's support for the Taliban, official and unofficial, stems from the fact that it has, for the first time, a pro-Pakistani government in Afghanistan — although many Pakistanis are afraid of the Taliban's kind of Islam. So, the strategic factor — Pakistan's need for a reliable and dependent government in Kabul — and the terrorist factor are indirectly linked. We need to detach Pakistan from the Taliban, or detach the Taliban from its terrorist guests; this process will involve some coercion, but rewards may be an element here.

INDIAN EXPRESS

16 SEP 2001

It's U.S. vs Osama in first war of the century

16/9
By Manoj Joshi
Times News Network

NEW DELHI: Inexorably, the world's greatest military power is girding itself for the 21st century's first war—the battle against global terrorism. As U.S. deputy defence secretary Paul Wolfowitz puts it, "It's not just simply a matter of capturing people and holding them accountable, but removing the sanctuaries, removing the support systems, ending states which sponsor terrorism."

There is no doubt that the principal target is Osama bin Laden, the exiled Saudi millionaire, who had fought shoulder-to-shoulder with the U.S. against the Russians in Afghanistan. But American official statements make it clear that there is a grander design—one of ridding the world of the scourge of terrorism. It is not difficult to see why. Having done the inconceivable on September 11, the terrorists could do the unthinkable—detonate a nuclear or biological warfare device.

Having absorbed the shock of the horrific attack, the U.S. is now moving towards fash-



ioning its response. In the first stage, says secretary of state Colin Powell, the goal is "to build an international coalition against terror-

ism". The U.S. 6th Fleet is already stationed off Pakistan and has bases in Diego Garcia and Manama quickly to equip forces that will be flown out from the U.S. For the purpose, it has military basing arrangements with Egypt, Israel, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. It also has cooperation agreements with countries like Uzbekistan and Tajikstan. In the last few days, the U.S. has knocked Pakistani heads and compelled them to end their support of the Taliban. Whether or not Pakistan can live up to its commitment remains to be seen.

There are five major states bordering Afghanistan—Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikstan, Turkmenistan and Pakistan. Of these, the first three are hostile to Afghanistan and host forces hostile to the Taliban, while Turkmenistan is generally friendly to Afghanistan and Pakistan is its main supporter, providing fuel, military advisers and other material.

► U.S. may launch high-tech campaign to hunt down Bin Laden, Page 7

THE TIMES OF INDIA

16 SEP 2001

WELL-TIMED MOVE!

Musharraf forced to bell the cat 5/8

IN a well-coordinated move, Home Minister LK Advani elaborated upon what Prime minister Vajpayee hinted at in his broadcast to the nation. And he is right to have done so. The trouble with America has always been to see the world through Atlantic glasses. It is to be hoped that the shattering experience in New York and Washington on black Tuesday will have permanently cured the United States of this myopic vision. Terrorism is terrorism whether it is in America or Kashmir, or elsewhere in the world. There is hope that the lesson is being learnt but it is wise to expect hiccups along the way; realpolitik should not be allowed to look kindly on Pakistani or Palestinian terrorism for instance by thinking of it perhaps, just perhaps, as only a freedom struggle. Secretary of State Colin Powell has spoken of a wish list that has been handed over to Musharraf who has asked for time to consider it. President Bush put it more bluntly — America would wait and see how the Pakistanis behave as a follow-up to their condolences and concerns. There are two dangers on the horizon. One that it might turn out to be a US-EU coalition with Belgium and France already expressing reservations based on hard experience with America in the past. This will play into the hands of fundamentalists who are all but accused of perpetrating the terror against the US and dub it as a racial issue. The other is to limit the retaliation to one hard strike against the Taliban from the safety of cruise missiles and long-range bombers. This did not succeed in Viet Nam during the War and it did not succeed against Afghanistan when the US fired cruise missiles deep into Afghan territory. America is dangerous when it gets angry and it is angry now.

In the circumstances Advani has pipped Pakistan's military chief to the post. While the Pakistani dictator mulls the consequences of the jihadi groups his country has encouraged for so long, turning on him if he reins them in suddenly, Advani has made a firm offer of our military bases and allied facilities, leaving Pakistan behind. Musharraf is on the horns of a dilemma. He and the Pakistani establishment have funded, supplied, trained and encouraged terrorists and passed on equipment obtained from China to the Taliban. If China, correctly interpreting the American mood, plugs this flow, how will Musharraf manage? His government is at the mercy of the IMF and the World Bank and one word from the Americans will cut off the flow of aid. On the other hand as he got a retired Foreign Secretary to explain on television, Pakistan will not object to action against the Taliban on the assumption that bin Laden had a big hand in it, provided it was not seen to be launched from Pakistani soil. This is as clear an admission of Pakistani guilt over terrorism in Kashmir as the evidence that the Americans have so far not taken seriously of Pakistan army regulars infiltrating across the Line of Control in the guise of freedom fighters.

This is Musharraf's opportunity also. If he can persuade the army top brass, who are almost to a man Punjabi while he is a Mohajir, to come to terms with reality he is better placed than India geographically to assist the Americans. That is not the problem. What is at issue is the effect of such a move on domestic fundamentalists who have been fed on a diet of hatred and violence for so long. And who control the public mood in Pakistan. Will Musharraf be able and willing to bell the domestic tomcat. If he does this tragedy may just bring India and Pakistan closer together.

THE STATESMAN

Bush compares Kashmir to Kosovo, World Bank in economy

Musharraf reaps Agra dividends

7/1 2002

FROM K.P. NAYAR

Washington, July 26: The failure of Agra is beginning to take its toll on India. President George W. Bush has compared Kashmir to Kosovo, Northern Ireland and West Asia.

At the same time, Pakistan has earned praise from the World Bank for the management of its economy and a loan of \$700 million. In addition, a \$130-million loan from the Asian Development Bank is on its way.

These developments, although unconnected with each other, are being interpreted here as a fallout of the clever public relations drive launched by Pervez Musharraf in Agra and by his ministers abroad in the weeks prior to the Indo-Pak summit.

Bush spoke of "ethnic intolerance and narrow nationalism" in a speech during his just-concluded tour of Europe, adding: "We will pursue a world of tolerance and freedom. From Kosovo to Kashmir, from West Asia to Northern Ireland, freedom and tolerance is the defining issue for our world."

Speaking to American troops engaged in peace-keeping in Kosovo, he said: "As we head into the 21st century, we must not allow difference to be a licence to kill and vulnerability an excuse to dominate." The President's reference to Kashmir resurrected memories of remarks by his predecessor, Bill Clinton, nearly eight years

ago about human rights abuses from "the Caucasus to Kashmir".

Officials had dismissed Clinton's remarks in his first term as the handiwork of speechwriters who were new to the White House and not well-versed in the intricacies of diplomacy.

This time, too, that appears to be the case as the state department's bureau where policy is made on India and Pakistan, headed by Christina Rocca, has been extremely careful not to wound the sensibilities of either side on Kashmir. True, speechwriters may be unaware of the nuances of the state department's delicate diplomacy. But they are not inexperienced in speechwriting.

And the fact that Kashmir has sprung to their minds while thinking of ethnic intolerance, narrow nationalism, the licence to kill, freedom and domination is a reflection of how Musharraf has been able to catch the imagination of the world and focus it once again on Kashmir after a gap of at least five years.

For India, it is evidence that Kashmir has been brought back to the world stage once again. For Pakistan, it is proof that their President's gamble in going to Agra has paid off.

In South Block, however, officials are unlikely to unduly worry about remarks by Bush. They have just concluded three days of meetings with Rocca, who has assured her Indian interlocutors of the consistency of US policy on Kashmir.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5 ►

Musharraf

► FROM PAGE 1

In any case, India's is now a more comfortable presence in Washington. Having successfully weathered the storm caused by Pokhran II, Delhi is quite confident that its lobbying efforts here can prevent any slide back on Kashmir to the days of Clinton's first term.

There was clear evidence of this on Tuesday, when the House of Representatives adopted by a voice vote a legislation by Democratic Congressman Joseph Crowley providing for \$10 million towards relief efforts at the time of natural disasters in South Asia.

All the same, there are conspiracy theories circulating in South Block portraying the Bush statement as a carefully-planned sop to Pakistan just as Rocca is scheduled to arrive in Islamabad.

After all, Rocca's long-term objective as assistant secretary in the South Asia bureau is to bring to book terrorist Osama bin Laden for his crimes against America and her dealings with Pakistan are pivotal to that objective.

Announcing the loan of \$700 million, a World Bank official praised efforts by the Musharraf junta to bring order to Pakistan's economy and curb corruption. "This boost in lending reflects our confidence in the reform agenda developed by the new government," John Wall, country director for Pakistan and Afghanistan, said.

THE TELEGRAPH

27 JUL 2002

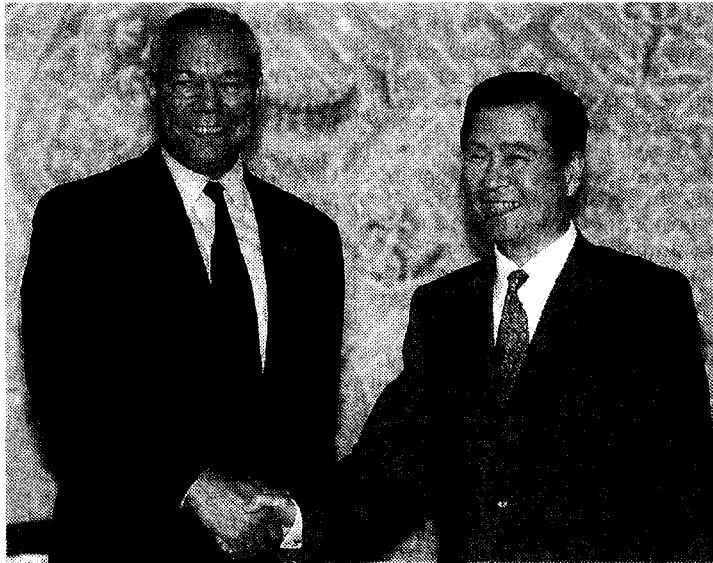
POWELL VISIT TO S. KOREA / RUSSIA URGED TO PREVAIL ON KIM JONG-IL

HQ-1A 2002 12/20/02
U.S. calls for resumption of dialogue

SEOUL, JULY 27. The U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell, encouraged Russia on Friday to tell the North Korean leader, Mr. Kim Jong-il, that it is in his interest to resume reconciliation efforts with Seoul and to reopen the stalled security dialogue with Washington.

Mr. Kim is en route by train to Moscow where he will meet with the Russian President, Mr. Vladimir Putin, during the first week in August. Gen. Powell was asked about the visit during a joint news conference with the South Korean Foreign Minister, Mr. Han Seung-soo. He declined to predict the outcome of the Moscow deliberations but said it would be very useful if the Russians would encourage Mr. Kim to visit Seoul for a second summit with the South Korean President, Mr. Kim Dae-jung.

"It also would be very useful if President Putin and other Russian leaders would point out to Chairman Kim the importance of resuming discussions with the United States," Gen. Powell said. He said North Korea's terrible economic problems can only be dealt with if Pyongyang is willing to resume the reconciliation process with the South and accepts the



The U.S. Secretary of State, Gen. Colin Powell (left), with the South Korean President, Mr. Kim Dae-jung, in Seoul on Friday. — Reuters

U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush's invitation to resume the U.S.- North Korean dialogue.

Mr. Han said the Moscow deliberations offered hope because Russia has been supportive of North-South cooperation and of a second summit between Mr. Kim

Jong-il and Mr. Kim Dae-jung. Mr. Han added there is no discrepancy between Washington and Seoul on the North Korean policy.

North Korea moved decisively in 2000 to mend ties with South Korea, hosting a highly successful North-South summit meeting. It

also conducted security talks with the United States that seemed to hold out the promise of a thaw. There has been no progress on either front of late.

Gen. Powell arrived here on Friday afternoon, the third stop on a five-nation Asia-Pacific tour. He came here from Vietnam after a visit to Japan and will travel to China on Saturday and Australia on Sunday. In central Seoul, some 300 anti-American protesters chanting "Stop the Star Wars madness!" rallied against the U.S. for pursuing a high-tech missile defence system that they say has disrupted relations between the two Koreas. "Colin Powell, you are not welcome to South Korea," read one placard.

In Vietnam, Gen. Powell said the U.S. was prepared to meet with North Korea any time, any place and to discuss any issue Pyongyang wishes to raise. The U.S. is willing to help North Korea economically if Pyongyang agrees to cut back its missiles and conventional forces. During meetings here with Mr. Kim and Mr. Han, Gen. Powell offered reassurances of U.S. support for their efforts to reach out to the North. — AP

SEE HISTORY

2 - JUL 28

US rejects ban on germ weapons

S Rajagopalan
Washington, July 26

THE UNITED States, which has drawn flak for abandoning the Kyoto protocol on global warming, has now turned its back on another international accord. It has rejected as "unworkable" a draft protocol to enforce a ban on biological weapons.

At issue is a draft being negotiated in Geneva for implementation of the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). More than 50 countries, including India, have accepted the draft as the basis for further negotiations, but the US insists that the instrument would jeopardise its national security.

The draft provides for inspection of sites that could be used for development of biological weapons in all member States. It

sets out a series of steps for verification, including spot checks.

The US, advancing an argument similar to its position on the Kyoto protocol, maintains that the draft would not achieve its goals. According to it, the proposed checks will not deter countries bent on developing biological weapons.

Washington contends that the draft protocol would hurt American interests. Its representative Donald Mahley said: "In our assessment, the draft protocol would put national security and confidential business information at risk." India views the draft protocol as a timely initiative that could bring the world community close to a final solution on a subject which has defied forward movement for a long time.

In all, 143 countries, including the US, have over the years rati-

fied the BWC that was hammered out nearly 30 years ago to ban the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological weapons. But the absence of a protocol thwarted its implementation.

The current draft protocol is the product of six years of negotiations. It is scheduled for completion by the time a review conference is held in November.

Mahley, detailing the American objections, said the safeguards to protect information gathered during on-site inspections are insufficient. It is another matter that even inspections of an intrusive nature may not necessarily yield useful, accurate or complete information.

As in the case of Kyoto protocol, the group with which the US is at serious odds is the European Union.